

# Preface

## Learning to Think Politically

Political thinking enables citizens to act responsibly, whether in casting a vote, forming an opinion about a public policy, or contributing to a political cause. It enables us, as citizens, to gather and weigh evidence, to apply foundational principles to current events, and to consider historical context when evaluating contemporary issues. In short, it allows us to have informed judgment. This text aims to help you learn how to think about politics. By introducing you to the tools that political scientists use, you will work through the process of forming a knowledgeable view about a political issue.

## Tools for Political Thinking: What Political Science Can Contribute

Fortunately, political science provides many tools to help you think effectively and accurately around political issues. This text will not tell you *what* to think politically. There is no correct way of thinking when it comes to the “what” of politics. People differ in their political values and interests, and thus also in their political views.

Instead, this text will help you learn *how* to think politically by providing you with analytical tools that can sharpen your understanding of American politics. The tools are derived from **political science**—the sys-

tematic study of government and politics—and help you think critically about:

- Reliable information about how the U.S. political system operates;
- Systematic generalizations about major tendencies in American politics;
- Terms and concepts that precisely describe key aspects of politics.

These tools enable you, as a citizen to dig more deeply into political developments than would otherwise be possible.

## Your Suggestions Are Invited

*The American Democracy* has been in use in college classrooms for nearly twenty years. During that time, the text (including its concise edition, *We the People*) has been adopted at roughly a thousand colleges and universities. I am extremely grateful to all who have used it. I am particularly indebted to the many instructors and students who have sent me corrections or recommendations. Professor Paul David in the University of Nevada system, for example, pointed out a mistaken entry on Nevada state politics. Joe Sheeler, a student at the University of Maryland, caught an error in a date in one of the chapters. You can contact me at the John F. Kennedy School, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA 02138, or by e-mail: [thomas\\_patterson@harvard.edu](mailto:thomas_patterson@harvard.edu).

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# Pedagogical Elements for Political Thinking

*The American Democracy* has developed a series of activities and exercises that increase your command of political thinking tools.

**NEW! Political Thinking** Demonstrates step by step how to apply a political thinking tool—a concept or principle—to better understand and evaluate a political event.

## POLITICAL THINKING Impact on Federalism?



Disruptive events—from the Civil War to the Great Depression to World War II—have had a large effect on American federalism. They have shifted power in a lasting way toward the federal government. Do you think the recent economic downturn—the worst since the Great Depression—will have a major impact on federalism? If so, what changes do you anticipate?



## HOW THE 50 STATES DIFFER POLITICAL THINKING THROUGH COMPARISONS

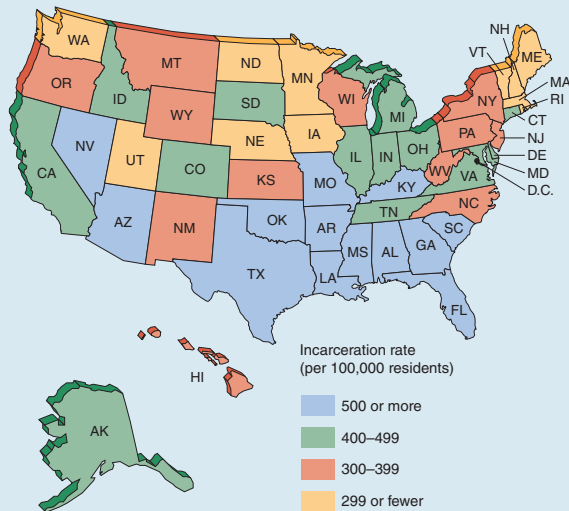
### Incarceration Rates

Although the states are required under the Constitution to uphold defendants' rights, their criminal justice systems differ markedly in other respects. Sentencing laws are an example. States differ in their sentencing practices—most obviously in the application of the death penalty. Some states prohibit it, and others apply it liberally. Texas, Florida, and Virginia are far and away the leaders in its application. Roughly a third of all executions in the past quarter-century have taken place in Texas alone. States also differ substantially in the proportion of their residents who are in prison. Louisiana has the highest incarceration rate, with 865 inmates for every 100,000 residents. Mississippi, Texas, Oklahoma, and Alabama are the other states in the top five. Maine has the lowest incarceration rate—159 inmates per 100,000 residents. On a per-capita ba-

sis, Louisiana imprisons more than five times as many of its residents as does Maine. Minnesota, North Dakota, Rhode Island, and Utah are the other states that rank in the lowest five in terms of number of inmates.

*Q: What do many of the states with low incarceration rates have in common?*

*A: Most of these states are relatively affluent and rank high on indicators of educational attainment, which are correlated with lower crime rates. Most of these states also have relatively small minority-group populations. Studies have found that minority-group defendants are more likely than white defendants to be convicted and, when convicted, to receive a lengthier sentence.*



Source: U.S. Department of Justice, 2010

## How the 50 States Differ POLITICAL THINKING THROUGH COMPARISONS

Uses color-coded maps to illustrate issues relevant to each chapter, enabling you to build analytical skills that help you understand how and why our 50 “united” states differ.



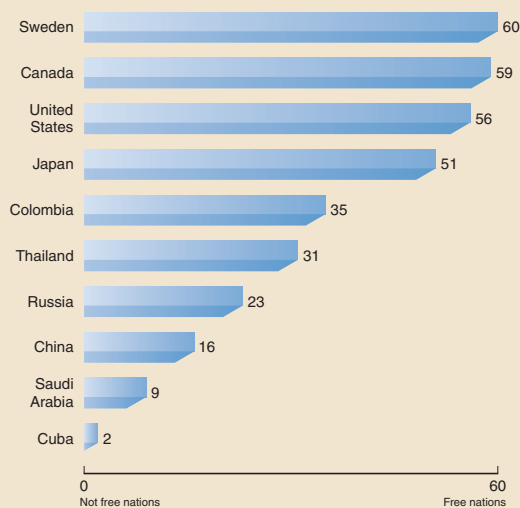
## HOW THE U.S. DIFFERS POLITICAL THINKING THROUGH COMPARISONS

### Civil Liberties

Individual rights are a cornerstone of the American governing system and receive strong protection from the courts. The government's ability to restrict free expression is limited, and the individual's right to a fair trial is protected by significant due process guarantees, such as the right to legal counsel. According to Freedom House, an independent organization that tracks civil liberties, the United States ranks in the upper tier (the "free" nations) for its protection of civil liberties. Many countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are in the lower tier (the "not free") as a result, for example, of their use of force against political opponents. The middle-tier nations (the "partly free") provide some protection of civil liberties but engage in political repression and inadequately protect the rights of the accused. In determining its civil liberties rankings, Freedom House evaluates countries for their policies in four areas: freedom of expression, associational and organizational rights, rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights. The highest possible score across these dimensions is "60." The United States received a score of "56," placing it slightly below a few countries, including Canada. The United States lost points for its record on labor rights and treatment of minorities. The chart shows how the United States compares with selected countries on the Freedom House index.

Source: Freedom House, 2010.

Civil Liberties Rankings



## How the US Differs POLITICAL THINKING THROUGH COMPARISONS

Encourages you to think outside our borders and reflect more broadly on how our national political priorities compare to those of other democracies.

## Debating the Issues POLITICAL THINKING IN ACTION

Examining the great debates in American political history provides you with the tools to understand how current controversies may reflect enduring issues in American politics.



## DEBATING THE ISSUES: POLITICAL THINKING IN ACTION

### Should Corporations Be Allowed to Spend Unlimited Amounts on Federal Election Campaigns?

Just as voting majorities and groups exercise power in the American political system, so do business firms. Corporate power is likely to increase as a result of a recent Supreme Court decision, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010). Before the Court's ruling, corporations and unions had been banned from spending money to influence the outcome of U.S. federal elections. Individuals within corporations or unions, just as any other American, could contribute money to political candidates, but corporations and unions were barred by law from spending organizational funds on elections. In *Citizens United*, the Supreme Court ruled that corporations and

unions have the same First Amendment free speech rights as individuals when it comes to spending money on campaigns. The ruling was widely regarded as having special significance for corporations. Unlike unions, which depend on membership dues and have somewhat limited funds, U.S. corporations reap billions in profits each year. The Supreme Court's decision has been praised by many—most of whom are Republicans—and criticized by many—most of whom are Democrats. Here are two responses to the Supreme Court's decision, one by Senator Mitch McConnell, a Republican, and the other by President Barack Obama, a Democrat.

#### YES

Contrary to what the President, and some of his surrogates in Congress say, foreign persons, corporations, partnerships, associations, organizations or other combination of persons are strictly prohibited from any participation in U.S. elections, just as they were prohibited before the Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision. I've explained what the ruling didn't do. Now let me explain what the ruling did do. The Court ruled unconstitutional sections of federal law that barred corporations and unions from spending their own money to express their views about issues and candidates. This was the right decision because democracy depends upon free speech, not just for some but for all. As Justice Kennedy, writing for the majority, concluded: "Under our law and our tradition it seems stranger than fiction for our Government to make political speech a crime." In *Citizens United* the Court ended the suppression of corporate and union speech. Many have predicted this would have dire consequences. What they fail to mention is that 26 states already allow corporate and union speech, something that has had no discernable adverse impact. Any proponent of free speech should applaud this decision. *Citizens United* is and will be a First Amendment triumph of enduring significance.

—Mitch McConnell, U.S. senator (R-Ky.)

#### NO

The United States Supreme Court handed a huge victory to the special interests and their lobbyists—and a powerful blow to our efforts to rein in corporate influence. This ruling strikes at our democracy itself. By a 5-4 vote, the Court overturned more than a century of law—including a bipartisan campaign finance law written by Senators John McCain and Russ Feingold that had barred corporations from using their financial clout to directly interfere with elections by running advertisements for or against candidates in the crucial closing weeks. This ruling opens the floodgates for an unlimited amount of special interest money into our democracy. It gives the special interest lobbyists new leverage to spend millions on advertising to persuade elected officials to vote their way—or to punish those who don't. That means that any public servant who has the courage to stand up to the special interests and stand up for the American people can find himself or herself under assault come election time. Even foreign corporations may now get into the act. I can't think of anything more devastating to the public interest. The last thing we need to do is hand more influence to the lobbyists in Washington, or more power to the special interests to tip the outcome of elections.

—Barack Obama, president of the United States

Q: Do you think corporations should be allowed to use their profits to influence the outcome of election campaigns? A larger question is whether corporations should have the same legal status as individuals when it comes to constitutional protections. Do you think corporations are entitled to the same free speech rights that citizens possess?

# Supplements Package

This text is accompanied by supplementary materials. Please contact your local McGraw-Hill representative or McGraw-Hill Customer Service (800-338-3987) for details concerning policies, prices, and availability, as some restrictions may apply.

## For Students and Instructors

### OnLine Learning Center

[www.mhhe.com/pattersonad10e](http://www.mhhe.com/pattersonad10e)

The book's website includes separate instructor and student areas. The instructor area contains the instructor's manual, test bank, and PowerPoints, while the student area hosts a wealth of study materials such as chapter outlines, chapter objectives, multiple-choice and essay quizzes, flashcards, and weblinks. All chapter-by-chapter material has been updated for the new edition.

### CourseSmart e-Textbooks

This text is available as an eTextbook at [www.CourseSmart.com](http://www.CourseSmart.com). At CourseSmart, students can take advantage of significant savings off the cost of a print textbook, reduce their impact on the environment, and gain access to powerful Web tools for student learning. You can view CourseSmart eTextbooks online or download them to a computer. CourseSmart eTextbooks allow students to do full text searches, add highlighting and notes, and share notes with classmates. Visit [www.CourseSmart.com](http://www.CourseSmart.com) to learn more and try a sample chapter.

## For Instructors

### Instructor's Manual/Test Bank

Available online, the instructor's manual includes the following for each chapter: learning objectives, focus points and main points, a chapter summary, a list of major concepts, and suggestions for complementary

lecture topics. The test bank consists of approximately fifty multiple-choice questions and five suggested essay topics per chapter, with page references given alongside the answers.

PowerPoints and CPS questions are also available to instructors.

### McGraw-Hill American Government Lecture Launchers

Lecture Launchers provide approximately two to three minutes of chapter-specific video to help instructors "launch" their lecture. Roundtable discussions, famous speeches, and everyday stories are followed by two "Pause and Think" questions per clip aimed at the heart of new debate. These invite students to consider who sets policy and how they can get involved. In addition to reinforcing the basics, these short video clips focus on civic involvement and consider the framers of the Constitution. Available in VHS and DVD, with selected clips also available on [PoliCentral.com](http://PoliCentral.com).

### Create

Craft your teaching resources to match the way you teach! With McGraw-Hill Create, [www.mcgrawhillcreate.com](http://www.mcgrawhillcreate.com), you can easily rearrange chapters, combine material from other content sources, and quickly upload content you have written, such as your course syllabus or teaching notes. Find the content you need in Create by searching through thousands of leading McGraw-Hill textbooks. Arrange your book to fit your teaching style. Create even allows you to personalize your book's appearance by selecting the cover and adding your name, school, and course information. Order a Create book, and you'll receive a complimentary print review copy in 3–5 business days or a complimentary electronic review copy (eComp) via email in about one hour. Go to [www.mcgrawhillcreate.com](http://www.mcgrawhillcreate.com) today and register. Experience how McGraw-Hill Create empowers you to teach your students your way.

## For Students

### Study Materials

Through the book's Online Learning Center, students have free access to the following materials: chapter outlines, chapter objectives, multiple-choice and essay quizzes, flashcards, and weblinks. In addition, the site offers a Presidential Timeline, a Spanish-English Glossary, and guidelines for avoiding plagiarism.

## Acknowledgments

Nearly two decades ago, when planning the first edition of *The American Democracy*, my editor and I concluded that it would be enormously helpful if a way could be found to bring into each chapter the judgment of those political scientists who teach the introductory course year in and year out. Thus, in addition to soliciting general reviews from a select number of expert scholars, we sent each chapter to a dozen or so faculty members at U.S. colleges and universities of all types—public and private, large and small, two-year and four-year. These political scientists, 213 in all, had well over a thousand years of combined experience in teaching the introductory course, and they provided countless good ideas.

Since then, scores of other political scientists have reviewed subsequent editions. These many reviewers will go unnamed here, but my debt to all of them remains undiminished by time.

For this new, tenth edition, I again received an enormous amount of sound advice. Reviewers are the lifeblood of a text, and I was fortunate to have the assistance of a skilled group of scholars. I am deeply grateful to each and all of them for their help:

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Thomas Patterson