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Why Politics Matters

4e

An Introduction to Political Science

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Why Politics Matters:

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Dedication

To my wife Lauren and our children Jack and Megan.

—K. L. D.

To my parents, Veena, Nikhil, Jaya, and to the memory of U.S. Congressman Edward J. Patten.

—J. N. P.

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Preface

Why Politics *Should* Matter to You

With the start of each new semester comes the initial thrill of meeting new students enrolled in our introduction to political science course. At Monmouth University, where we teach, the introductory course has always been considered the "gateway" to the discipline—a general education requirement that attracts majors from across the academic spectrum. We meet students studying everything from accounting, marketing, and management to anthropology, biology, and music. Thus, the learning environment includes a wide variety of interesting and creative students majoring primarily in subjects other than political science. Although each section will also have a number of politically active, politically motivated undergrads, the classroom is mainly filled with nonmajors. In many ways, it was this reality that made us consider not only how *we* were teaching this course but also how we could design an appropriate text for students from all academic disciplines.

Student Engagement Matters

Many of the books for this course are written for political science majors with a particular emphasis on comparative politics. But for today's students, a mix of majors and nonmajors and those completely new to political science, we wanted to offer a broader understanding of the discipline and an opportunity for you to discover which areas of political science are most interesting to you. Our solution was to design a curriculum that would keep both groups engaged in the learning process, major and nonmajor alike, by taking a "big-picture" approach, evenly surveying the major areas within the field of political science, and emphasizing how the theoretical concepts of the discipline play out in the world around us.

The first thing you may have noticed about this book is this unique organization. We work outward from the student:

Part I: Political Theory: You will learn about the foundations of ancient and modern political thought. This is an important place to start because it is here that the philosophical foundations for modern governments are formed. We believe it is crucial for you to have a general understanding of key political

theorists for you to more effectively assess and critique the behavior of governments in our modern world.

Part II: Comparing Governments: Chapter 4 looks at American government and builds on the previous section by examining how the American Framers were influenced by ancient Greek and modern political philosophers when they drafted the American Constitution. Here, you will become more familiar with how these political theorists influenced the structure of the American system of government. This section is given special emphasis because it was the "American experiment" toward popular government that ignited democratic fires across the globe, which continues to shape today's political landscape. It is also the system the majority of our readers will be most familiar with and is, therefore, a good springboard into our examination and comparison of other government structures around the world.

In Chapters 5 through 9, you will learn about how the world's political systems are organized, where they differ and are alike, and how they tackle universal issues and those unique to their own particular societies. We will compare the foundations, structures, and modern issues associated with democratic legislatures, executives, and judicial systems. Then, we take an in-depth look at authoritarian states and how they differ.

Part III: International Relations: You will learn how the wide array of political systems and cultures interact with one another in our modern international system. Having a broad understanding of political systems and distinct regional cultures will shed light on why nations fight wars, what we can do to try to prevent them, and the challenges and opportunities we face as we attempt to solve global issues.

These sectional stepping-stones from political theory, to American government and comparative politics, to international relations build upon each other, producing a scholar who is able to balance the knowledge of the domestic with that of the global. You will then be given the opportunity to reflect upon all of the issues previously covered in the text and, upon completion, you will possess the skills to see the world through the intellectual prism of the entire field of political science. We've found that this is an accessible and intuitive organization for students.

This foundational framework is paired with (1) a focus on application and critical thinking, (2) excerpts from the classic and contemporary thinkers who shaped this discipline, (3) the latest global events, and (4) vibrant illustrations to bring political science to life! It is because we take so much pleasure in teaching political science to students from all academic majors that writing

this book was a labor of love. It's fun to convey these important themes to our students, and we believe reading this book will be a stimulating, eye-opening, and enjoyable experience for you as well, as we set out to prove in the pages that follow.

Participation Matters

At the heart of this book, we strive to answer the questions we sometimes hear in the introduction to political science classroom: *Why do I have to take this course? I'm not a political science major and I don't plan to work in government, so why should this matter to me?* The answers surround each and every one of us, whether we know it or not. An understanding of politics is necessary for participation in a globalized world, a concept we stress in the book's opening chapter, "Why Politics Matters," and throughout with a special feature titled "Why Politics Matters to You!" You will come away aware of the challenges of the twenty-first century and with a new perspective on where political beliefs come from. You will be able to identify the opportunities available to you through which you can make an impact, and you will possess a strong confidence in your overview of the field at the book's completion. You are enthusiastically invited to join in this dialog. We've written the book in a conversational style, with thought-provoking questions at every turn.

Why Theory Matters—Applying Theory to Today!

Throughout, we'll look into the relationship between the theoretical underpinnings (theory) and the formation and interplay of political entities (practice). This theme is emphasized throughout the narrative and within special "Theory and Practice" features in every chapter. We highlight this important concept to encourage critical thought when assessing and interpreting our political world, as well as to help you apply these concepts to your life. You will come away with not just a series of case studies but also with the tools you'll need to analyze and affect your political surroundings well into the future.

New to This Edition

The fourth edition of *Why Politics Matters: An Introduction to Political Science* examines major political events such as the issue of abortion rights after the *Dobbs* decision, the new and growing influence of Super PACs on American

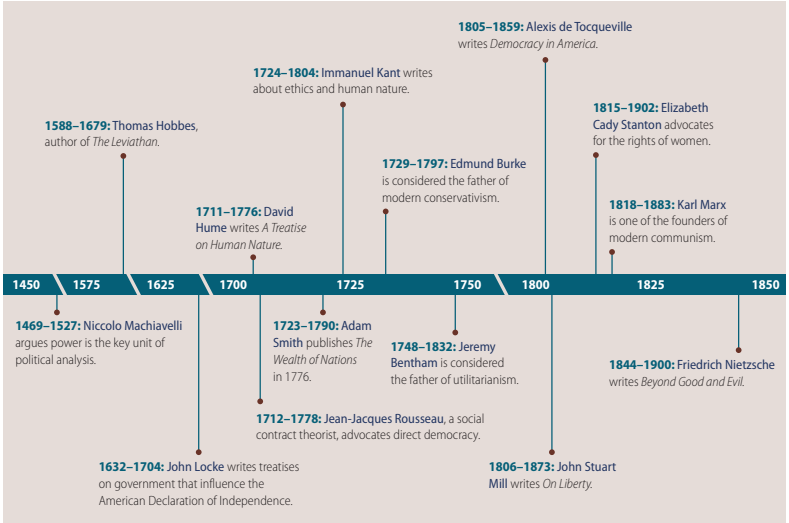
politics, the student debt crisis in the United States, the erosion of democratic norms in some democratic countries, and reviews the Russia-Ukraine conflict from the three levels of analysis perspective. This new edition also emphasizes the role of women in politics and the impact of the gender gap on the 2022 midterm congressional election and the 2024 presidential election in the United States.

This book has also been updated throughout to include changes in world leadership, the state of the world economy, the rise of China as a world leader, developments in the Middle East and North Korea, and updated statistics and new figures, tables, maps, and photographs.

Features that Teach

▼ **Why Politics Matters** brings the subject to life and encourages student interaction through engaging, conversational prose; a bold, full-color design with photographs, maps, figures, and **visual timelines**; and **critical thinking questions** in every boxed feature and throughout the narrative.

Figure 3.1 Timeline of Important Modern Political Thinkers and Social Activists



"both visually and intellectually interesting"

—Keeley Mahanes,
Student at Northern Arizona University

"The first thing I enjoyed was the enthusiasm and passion the authors have towards their subject matter....[they] do a good job in making a host of complex topics user friendly for college students."

—Cyrus Hayat,
Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis

▶ Questions to Consider

1. How have you been socialized by your family, friends, and peers? Have your political beliefs been challenged since you entered college?

   Most of us are politically socialized by family and friends. You might or might not find that your political views change during your time in college or during your career after college.

◀ **Questions to Consider Before Reading This Chapter** open every chapter, serving as learning objectives to guide students' reading.

▶ **A marginal glossary** defines key terms as students read, and lists of **Key Terms** and **Key People** at the end of every chapter help students review the material.

Theory and Practice

Theory and Practice

Do Women Justices View Legal Issues Differently Than Male Justices?

In 2022, the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* was decided by the United States Supreme Court. The case involved the constitutionality of Mississippi's Gestational Age Act—a state law that banned most abortions after fifteen weeks of pregnancy. The majority of Supreme Court justices upheld the Mississippi law and in doing so overturned the landmark cases of *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) that provided federal protection for abortion rights. This decision gave the states the right to determine their own abortion laws, essentially arguing that the issue of reproductive rights is one for elected officials and not members of the judiciary.

The dissenting justices—Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan, and Sonia Sotomayor—argued that this decision was a political overreach and one that dismantled decades of women's rights. While public polling reveals women are only marginally more supportive of reproductive rights than men, some studies have examined whether the gender of the justice impacts how legal issues are framed and decided. Although Justice Amy Coney Barrett sided with the majority overturning *Roe*, two of the three dissenting judges are women. So, do female justices view abortion differently than their male counterparts? Do female justices view other issues differently as well? Furthermore, why have there been so many more male justices?

The aforementioned justice, Elena Kagan, was confirmed with little fanfare to the Supreme Court in August 2010. Out of the 114 justices who have served on the Court throughout our history, only six of them have been women. Why is that? Do women justices interpret

◀ **Theory and Practice** features demonstrate how political thought directly influences modern-day situations, institutions, and policies, in turn teaching students how to apply overarching political ideas to the current events and political practice around them and analyze both.

"**I think it is vital to show how these theories work in practice**.... I really like how this textbook is organized and written. It highlights the different sub-fields of political science giving equal time and energy to each, while providing excellent resources and tools within the textbook for the instructor to use. The book reflects my own philosophy of teaching an Intro to Politics course."

—Ryan Fitzharris,
Pima Community College

"It does a great job relating the ideas to current issues, which makes it seem relevant and therefore engaging."

—Kaitlyn Andrey,
Student at Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania

Why Politics Matters to You!

Why Politics Matters to You!

Rare Earth Minerals and the Future of Global Leadership: Is Africa China's Second Continent?

China overtook the United States as the continent of Africa's largest trading partner in 2008. It has also been active in constructing and funding massive infrastructure projects, such as the new 470-mile electrified railway project connecting Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, to the neighboring country of Djibouti.[15] In 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping met with African leaders and pledged $60 billion in funding over a three-year period to help in the economic development of African countries.[16] This new economic relationship has, not surprisingly, evolved into a strategic partnership, as evidenced by China's new military base in Djibouti, which is located just eight miles away from an American military base. Howard W. French more fully explains the sprouting relationship in his 2015 book titled *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building a New Empire in Africa.*

But at this point, you are still probably wondering what China's relationship with Africa has to do with you. Well, 80 percent of China's imports from Africa are mineral products. Rare earth minerals are important because they are needed to build most modern appliances, such as your family's refrigerator and your cell phone. There are seventeen different types of rare earth metals, and cell phones use all of them except promethium, which is radioactive.[17] Tantalum, for instance, is a powdery mineral that has allowed the size of cell phones to shrink from the oversized ones of the 1980s to those that fit inside your shirt pocket today. It has allowed scientists to create "passive capacitators . . . [which] regulate voltage at high temperatures."[18] In short, it has provided cell phone developers the ability to control the high temperatures caused by cellular technology in a device that can fit in the palm of your hand without the risk of shock or fire. In scientific terms, tantalum has been a major breakthrough. In economic terms, however, its use in cell phones has caused its value to skyrocket,

◀ **Why Politics Matters to You!** features show students how they can get involved and how politics and government are influential in their lives.

"It's clear that this approach works… by **showing students how politics relates to their lives and actually matters….** I really liked the material. I think the students liked it as well because the exam I gave them over the material gave me the highest average for a quiz/exam for the semester."

—John Shively,
Longview Community College

"An engaging text with easy readability, leaving you with not only answers but the **desire to learn more, know more, and do more.**"

—Jaqueline P. Hess,
Student at San Diego Mesa College

Resources for Students and Instructors

Student Resources

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1 Why Politics Matters

Image 1.1 Pro-choice advocates assembled in Washington Square Park in New York City on June 24, 2022, to protest the Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022). The *Dobbs* case overturned a woman's constitutional right to an abortion that was established in the *Roe v. Wade* (1973) case almost 50 years prior to *Dobbs*. Many states have since banned abortions altogether, while other states have placed stricter regulations on abortions, and still other states have extended the right to abortions that existed prior to *Dobbs*. Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images

Chapter Outline

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Political Science as the Study of Power 5
Political Science as an Academic Discipline 13

▶ Questions to Consider

1. How have you been socialized by your family, friends, and peers? Have your political beliefs been challenged since you entered college?
2. What are political ideologies? What are the differences between left-wing and right-wing ideologies?
3. What is the difference between "hard power" and "soft power" in the realm of international politics?
4. What do you think it takes to win a policy debate? How can the skills you learn in debate help you influence policy issues?
5. What are the different areas that political scientist's study?

Introduction: What is Political Science?

There is an adage that states one should never discuss religion or politics when attending dinner parties with casual acquaintances. Many of us have been taught that arguments focused on our cultural differences, health care law, or partisan viewpoints frequently grow tense and might prevent friends from enjoying each other's company or, more importantly, dessert. Those who adhere to the social etiquette of proper dinner conversation are probably smart to do so. A clashing of political views can bring about a stressful social environment and cause awkward moments for unsuspecting dinner guests.

Lucky for you, however, you are in a political science class, which happens to be the most appropriate and exciting place to discuss such things. Here, you are encouraged and even rewarded for respectfully engaging in a wide variety of political observations and cultural perspectives. Learning how to discuss politics in a civil manner requires practice and a thick skin. Although we are certainly not required to agree with any particular outlook, we all have a responsibility to at least try to understand the viewpoints of others. We want to see that you can articulate and understand some of the challenges that face us in the coming century and to succeed in making this world a better and more secure place.

The challenges ahead are great. But so were the challenges that faced George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Susan B. Anthony, Alice Paul, Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Nelson Mandela. All these men and women demonstrated a commitment to change, but most of all, they recognized that politics matters. In fact, it is probably one of the most defining features of the human experience. We are above all else, as the great Greek philosopher Aristotle noted, "political animals." Unlike other members of the animal kingdom, humans possess the ability to reason and then, through language, to carry that reason into action in the form of legally constructed communities. So, although you may never have thought of yourself or your friends as being *political*—you are. You have the ability to reason, the ability to articulate your ideas, and the ability to carry those thoughts into action.

At times, politics and debates about politics can become a passionate endeavor, one that can cause disagreements over what is considered right and wrong. Has there ever been a time when a fellow student said something you completely disagreed with? Or have you ever been offended by another's comments? If so, that is because each of us has been socialized by the many groups to which we belong. Political scientist Thomas M. Magstadt has defined **political socialization** as the process by which citizens develop the values, attitudes, beliefs, and opinions that enable them to support the political system.[1] In other words, the various groups that define our lives contribute to the way we view the world.

Political Socialization: The process by which one's attitudes and values are shaped.

Other students will likely process discussions that take place in this class differently from you because of the influences of their gender, race, religion, friends, sexual orientation, family, level of education, and socioeconomic status. These differences should be celebrated both in and beyond this class because learning from the experiences of others helps to inform our own beliefs. Perhaps Thomas Jefferson put it best when he said that he "never considered differences of opinion in politics, in religion, in philosophy, as cause for withdrawing from a friend."

Some political scientists examine how our differences influence whether and how we participate in the political process. Tables 1.1 to 1.3 highlight how race, gender, and education have impacted voter turnout rates in recent presidential elections. These tables reveal that some groups of Americans are more likely to vote than others. On closer inspection, Table 1.1 shows that in 2012, Black voters (for the first time) voted in higher percentages than White voters and other ethnic groups. But then voter turnout rates of Black voters dipped seven percentage points (i.e., 67 percent to 60 percent) in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The 2020 presidential election, however, saw an increase in Black voter turnout to 63 percent. What might explain such fluctuations? Political scientists notice these types of behavioral trends and seek to explain through empirical research why they are happening. In Chapter 4, for example, we discuss whether the *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013)

Table 1.1 Voting Turnout in Recent U.S. Presidential Elections by Race and Ethnicity, 2008–2020[2]

	Non-Hispanic White Voting (%)	Black Voting (%)	Hispanic Voting (%)	Asian Voting (%)
2008	66	65	50	47
2012	64	67	48	47
2016	65	60	48	49
2020	71	63	54	59

Source: Jacob Fabina, Despite Pandemic Challenges, 2020 Election had largest increase in voting between presidential elections on record. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/04/record-high-turnout-in-2020-general-election.html#:~:text=The%202020%20election%20also%20featured,compared%20to%2060%25%20in%202016.

Question: Why do you believe some racial or ethnic groups vote at higher rates than others?

Table 1.2 Voting Turnout in Recent Presidential Elections by Gender, 1996–2020[3]

	Women (%)	Men (%)
1996	59.6	57.1
2000	60.7	58
2004	65.4	62.1
2008	65.6	61.5
2012	63.7	59.8
2016	63.3	59.3
2020	68.4	65.0

Source: Center for American Women and Politics, 2022. "Gender Differences in Voter Turnout. "Eagleton Institute of Politics, Rutgers University, found at https://cawp.rutgers.edu/facts/voters/gender-differences-voter-turnout#GGN

Why do you believe that women vote at a higher rate than men?

Table 1.3 Voting Turnout in Recent Presidential Elections by Education, 1996–2016[4]

	Some College or College Bachelor's Degree (%)	Did Not Complete High School (%)	Difference in Voting Turnout (%)
1996	67	39	28
2000	69	39	30
2004	73	40	33
2008	71	40	31
2012	70	38	32
2016	68	33	35
2020	78	38	40

Source: United States Election Project. "Voter Turnout Demographics," found at http://www.electionproject.org/home/voter-turnout/demographics

Why might those with more education be more likely to vote than those with less education?

Supreme Court case, where the Court struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, might have played a role in the seven-point drop-in Black voter turnout rates in 2016. Approximately 60 percent of eligible Black voters voted in the 2016 presidential election, compared with 65 percent of White voters and 48 percent of Hispanic voters. In 2020, the incumbent President Donald Trump's race against the challenger Joe Biden witnessed the highest voter turnout amongst all groups.

Table 1.2 also indicates that women were more likely to vote than men in the 2020 American presidential election, with 68 percent of women and 64 percent of men casting a ballot for either Donald Trump, Joe Biden, or a third-party candidate. However, the most dramatic predictor of whether a person is likely to vote is educational attainment. Table 1.3 highlights that people with at least some experience in college were much more likely to vote (78 percent voter turnout) in the 2020 presidential election than those without a high school diploma (38 percent voter turnout).

Although you may never have considered the influence that all or some of these groups have had on your life, certain political scientists have. For example, there are a number of political scientists who conduct and then analyze the results of public opinion polls. **Public opinion polls** allow individuals to see how certain *demographics* view specific political issues or problems. **Demographics**, which refer to some of the ways people are categorized (e.g., women, people of color, small business owners, union members, 18- to 24-year-olds with college degrees, Catholics, etc.), allow political scientists to determine if relationships exist between group identities and political views. Public opinion polls may ask you your age, race/ethnicity, religion, and level of education and what you think about health care reform, gun control, homeland security, or your political leaders. By answering these questions, political scientists can determine if there are relationships between one's demographic and one's opinions about the political world.

Bloomberg/Getty Images

Image 1.2 An election monitor collecting votes in Germantown, Maryland in October 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic caused many voters to vote by mail.

So, in this abstract way, you are already political. What this text attempts to do is to help you see that politics matters in a much deeper sense than the material covered on an exam or expressed in a research paper (although these also matter for obvious reasons).

Public Opinion Polls: Surveys that seek to determine how different groups of people perceive political issues.

Demographics: Classifications of different groups of people that usually refer to one's race, class, ethnicity, gender, level of wealth, age, place of residence, employment status, level of education, and so on.

Political Science as the Study of Power

In his 1936 book, political scientist Harold Lasswell said that "politics is who gets what, when, and how." This simple expression sums up the essence of this book and the field of political science at large. Political science is in many respects concerned with the study of *power*. In this book, you will learn how important ancient and modern political theorists viewed power and how political leaders exercise it in the current era. Political power can broadly be defined as the ability to get others to do what they would not do on their own. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, and other ancient philosophers believed political power should only be applied as a means to the end of social justice. These thinkers laid the theoretical foundation of Western civilization by maintaining that political power should be brandished by the wisest and most ethical members of society because leaders, above all else, have a responsibility to promote social harmony and the public good. They believed that only those educated on the virtues of justice should wield power because they will more likely place the public's interest over their own.

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527), in his book *The Prince*, wandered away from this classical view by asserting that power, not justice, is the most important unit of analysis in politics. He claimed that to truly comprehend the nuances of politics, it is more important to understand how leaders can best acquire and maintain political control over the populace. Machiavelli's amoral approach to politics stressed that the primary purpose of government is to prevent civil unrest and to promote security at home and abroad.

Social Contract Theorists: Thinkers beginning in the seventeenth century who sought to explain human nature by looking at the terms by which governments are set up in the first place.

The discussion of how governmental power should be structured is later joined by some of the leading **social contract theorists** such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. These theorists focused mostly on the power relationship between government and the individual. In Chapter 3, we highlight how social contract theorists typically make observations on whether humans are more generally cooperative or competitive with one another, the types of problems that are likely to occur in the absence of government, and their preferred form of government for addressing these problems. Thomas Hobbes's (1588–1679) classic text *Leviathan* sets out to prove the correctness of Machiavelli's contention that power rather than justice is the most important variable in studying politics. In this book, Hobbes argued that the purpose of political power should not be used to primarily promote ethical governance but should instead be used to promote the more limited goal of preventing social turmoil and war. Hobbes's social contract advocated for an *authoritarian system of government,* where individuals surrender all political power to the government so government can more efficiently prevent civil unrest and violence. In Table 1.4, we include definitions of different types of political systems and the economic systems and political ideologies that influence them.

Table 1.4 Different Types of Political Systems, Economic Systems, and Political Ideologies[5]

Political Ideologies	
Anarchism	A doctrine that advocates the abolition of organized authority. Anarchists believe all government is corrupt and evil.
Conservatism	A political philosophy that tends to support the status quo and advocates change only in moderation. Conservatism upholds the value of tradition and seeks to preserve all that is good about the past.
Feminism	The theory of the political, economic, and social equality of the sexes.
Liberalism	A person who believes it is the duty of government to ameliorate social conditions and create a more equitable society.
Libertarianism	A political ideology that believes that the government should not interfere in the lives of citizens other than to provide police and military protection.
Meritocracy	A society in which power is wielded by those who deserve it, based on their talents, industry, and success in competition, rather than through membership in a certain class or possession of wealth.
Pacifism	The doctrine holding that war is never justified and that all disputes between nations should be settled peacefully.
Social Contract	The political theory that a state and its citizens have an unwritten agreement between them, a social contract into which they voluntarily enter.
Terrorism	The pursuit of a political aim by means of violence and intimidation.

(Continued)

Table 1.4 (Continued)

Utilitarianism	A political philosophy developed in England in the nineteenth century by thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, which says that the duty of government is to promote the greatest good for the greatest number.
Political Systems	
Authoritarian	A form of government in which a large amount of authority is invested in the state at the expense of individual rights.
Autocracy	A system of government in which almost all power rests with the ruler. The Soviet Union under Stalin and Iraq under Saddam Hussein are examples of autocracies.
Direct Democracy	Democracy in which the people make direct decisions, rather than have those decisions made for them by elected representatives.
Fascism	A nationalistic, authoritarian, anticommunist movement founded by Benito Mussolini in 1919. Fascism was a response to the economic hardship and social disorder that ensued after the end of World War I.
Feudalism	A medieval form of social, economic, and political organization. Feudalism had a pyramidal structure. At its head was the king; below the king was a hierarchal chain of nobles, down to the lords of individual manors—the manor being the basic social and economic unit.
Monarchy	Form of rulership whereby a queen or king, empress or emperor holds absolute or limited power, usually inherited.
Nation-State	Usually used to describe the modern state but strictly speaking applies only when the whole population of a state feels itself to belong to the same nation.
Oligarchy	A political system that is controlled by a small group of individuals who govern in their own interests.
Plutocracy	Government by the wealthy, or a group of wealthy people who control or influence a government.
Representative Democracy	A system of government in which the people elect agents to represent them in a legislature.
Republic	The form of government in which ultimate power resides in the people, who elect representatives to participate in decision-making on their behalf.
Economic Systems	
Capitalism	An economic system in which the means of production, such as land and factories, are privately owned and operated for profit.
Communism	The political ideology under which the economy, including capital, property, major industries, and public services, is controlled and directed by the state and in that sense is "communal."
Marxism	The theory developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, which became the official doctrine of communism. According to Marxism, the key to how society operated was economics; all other aspects of society, such as politics and religion, were conditioned by the economic system.
Socialism	A political system in which the means of production, distribution, and exchange are mostly owned by the state and used, at least in theory, on behalf of the people.
Theocracy	A state or government that is run by priests or clergy.
Totalitarianism	A system of government where the ruling authority extends its power over all aspects of society and regulates every aspect of life.

Source: United States Election Project. "Voter Turnout Demographics," found at http://www.electionproject.org/home/voter-turnout/demographics

Other social contract theorists such as John Locke (1632–1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78) believed that power should be more widely dispersed among the people in democratic systems of government to achieve social harmony. Locke advocated for a representative democracy, where government possesses limited powers and where the people select representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

The American Framers were particularly influenced by Locke's writings as they grappled with how best to form a new government in the late eighteenth century. Thomas Jefferson referenced Locke when he penned the U.S. Declaration of Independence in what has become one of the most widely cited sentences ever written: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." It was this line of thinking that also paved the way for the expansion of political rights for ethnic minorities and women (refer to the Theory and Practice box about women judges). Rousseau, on the other hand, criticized representative democracies, claiming they facilitate the exploitation of the masses by political elites. He instead called for universal political participation in a direct democracy form of government, where the people make decisions for themselves.

Leading experts in American politics discuss political power in the context of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. One major debate involves whether the American president has taken on "imperial" qualities and whether the executive branch has too much power over the other two branches of government. Famed presidential scholar Richard Neustadt, known by some as the American Machiavelli, argues that presidents must above all else have the political skills to "persuade" the Washington establishment and the American public to act on their agendas.

Theory and Practice

Do Women Justices View Legal Issues Differently Than Male Justices?

In 2022, the case of *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* was decided by the United States Supreme Court. The case involved the constitutionality of Mississippi's Gestational Age Act—a state law that banned most abortions after fifteen weeks of pregnancy. The majority of Supreme Court justices upheld the Mississippi law and in doing so overturned the landmark cases of *Roe v. Wade* (1973) and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) that provided federal protection for abortion rights. This decision gave the states the right to determine their own abortion laws, essentially arguing that the issue of reproductive rights is one for elected officials and not members of the judiciary.

The dissenting justices—Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan, and Sonia Sotomayor—argued that this decision was a political overreach and one that dismantled decades of women's rights. While public polling reveals women are only marginally more supportive of reproductive rights than men, some studies have examined whether the gender of the justice impacts how legal issues are framed and decided. Although Justice Amy Coney Barrett sided with the majority overturning *Roe*, two of the three dissenting judges are women. So, do female justices view abortion differently than their male counterparts? Do female justices view other issues differently as well? Furthermore, why have there been so many more male justices?

The aforementioned justice, Elena Kagan, was confirmed with little fanfare to the Supreme Court in August 2010. Out of the 114 justices who have served on the Court throughout our history, only six of them have been women. Why is that? Do women justices interpret

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

legal facts differently from their male counterparts? There is some research in political science suggesting that women justices might frame legal issues differently than male justices when hearing oral arguments and drafting legal opinions.

Former Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, for example, was most vocal on a case questioning whether school officials in Arizona could legally strip-search a 13-year-old female student while searching for drugs. While some of the other male justices downplayed the significance of the girl's embarrassment, Justice Ginsburg, as the lone female justice on the Supreme Court at the time, empathized with the girl's humiliation. In a subsequent interview, Justice Ginsberg stated, "they [the male judges] have never been a 13-year-old girl . . . it's a very sensitive age for a girl. I don't think my colleagues, some of them, quite understood."[6]

To place this within a historical perspective, the first woman to serve on the Supreme Court was Sandra Day O'Connor, who was nominated to the bench by President Ronald Reagan in 1981. In 2010, Justice Kagan joined two other women justices: Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg, appointed by President Bill Clinton in 1993, and Justice Sonia Sotomayor, nominated by President Barack Obama in 2009. Following the death of Justice Ginsberg, President Trump nominated Justice Amy Coney Barrett, a politically conservative jurist, to the bench. Coney Barrett's addition changed the ideological consistency of the liberal female justices' positions on a variety of social issues. In 2022, Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson was appointed to the bench by President Joe Biden, marking the first time a Black woman has served on the Supreme Court. Racial and gender differences between Supreme Court justices have already had and most likely will continue to have consequences on future court decisions. It has also challenged the way that political scientists attempt to determine the way justices arrive at their opinions. One's gender plays a role, but as we have seen with voter turnout, there are other indicators involved as well. Most current research in the area of judicial decision-making shows that the political ideology of a justice plays a stronger role than gender in predicting judicial rulings.[7]

A larger question might be related to the overall number of female judges across the country and why more have not been nominated and confirmed. Approximately 33 percent of all state and federal judges in the United States are women, which matches the percentage of women justices serving on the U.S. Supreme Court and is slightly higher than the 27 percent international average.[8] By now, one would think that there would be greater gender parity in judicial selection, but clearly there is not.

Think It Through

1. **Is the gender composition of the U.S. Supreme Court relevant to how it makes decisions?**
2. **Should a person's gender, race, and/or ethnicity be considered when selecting judges? Why or why not?**

Political Power in International Affairs

The struggle for power around the world continues to shape our political landscape today. Terrorism, civil unrest, and warfare create instability, which results in massive shifts in global power. Take, for instance, the ongoing war in Ukraine; a war that has its roots in the historical tensions between Russia and Ukraine. Russia's desire to recapture parts of the former Soviet Union to enhance its global position has led to a power shift in the region. The war that began in February 2022 is a product of Russian expansion into Ukraine's territory. Russian President Vladimir Putin has used nationalism as a way to drive a wedge within Ukraine. Recognizing that the eastern part of Ukraine is composed of many ethnic Russians, Putin has sought to destabilize the government in Kiev by fomenting dissent. Nevertheless, it was the specific events of 2014 that laid the groundwork for the current conflict.

Viacheslav Lopatin/Shutterstock.com

Image 1.3 The country of Ukraine is situated between Russia and the other states of Eastern Europe; many of whom had also been part of the former Soviet Union.

In March 2014, Russian forces seized the Crimean Peninsula, a high value port in the Black Sea, violating what many foreign policy experts considered Ukraine's **sovereignty** and **territorial integrity**. By 2014, Ukraine was in a weakened position, having seen its pro-Russian President Viktor Yanukovych flee the country after Ukrainians took to the streets to protest his unwillingness to sign an international agreement that would bring Ukraine closer to the European Union (EU). As a result of the protests and Yanukovych vacating the presidency, the Ukrainian parliament was forced to install a new government. Unfortunately, this instability gave Putin the opportunity to seize Crimea.

Sovereignty: The idea that the government within a state is recognized (domestically and internationally) as the ultimate source of authority to create, implement, and enforce laws.

Territorial Integrity: The boundaries of any state are to be protected against any acts of aggression and are to be maintained.

To further their gains and solidify a stronghold in Ukraine, pro-Russian separatists (funded by the Russian government) seized more territory in the east and destabilized the region. Continuous fighting and a failed international peace agreement kept the pressure on Ukraine to defend its territory from what it perceived as illegal acts of war. Then, on February 24, 2022, Russian military forces invaded Ukraine "from Belarus in the north, Russia in the east, and Crimea in the south."[9]

It was estimated in 2024 that approximately 315,000 Russian troops had been killed or wounded in the first two years after the Russian invasion of Ukraine.[10] These losses, coupled with the destruction of Ukraine's cities and infrastructure and the fleeing of its people, has changed the character of both countries. President Putin, who still insists that his invasion was justified to protect ethnic Russians in Ukraine, will have a lasting impact on the region and the future of European affairs.

Volodymyr Vorobiov/Shutterstock.com

Image 1.4 The devastation left by the invasion of Russia in February of 2022 has forced many to flee their homes in Kiev, the capital of Ukraine.

However, the war has also had an enormous impact on the future of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). NATO was founded after World War II to counter Soviet aggression in Europe and now has 32 member nations. The war in Ukraine

has made NATO stronger and has seen its members become more resolute in their commitment to protect its members from further Russian actions. For example, NATO added Finland as a member in 2023, and Sweden became a NATO member on March 7, 2024. In October 2023, Turkish President Erdogan, who initially opposed making Sweden a member, stated his approval of Swedish NATO membership, thus removing one of the final obstacles to Swedish NATO membership. By adding these two countries, NATO will now have all of Scandinavia's support as well as the addition of "800 miles of NATO border to Russia's frontier, including nearly all of the Baltic Sea."[11]

This means that this power realignment has created a system in which Russian support is being challenged and ultimately contained. Certain NATO allies, such as Finland, Sweden, and Turkey, who were hesitant to confront Russian aggression or to openly condemn Putin's actions, have now begun to do so. These changes demonstrate the nature of power in the international arena and how it changes over time. Changes in the global power structure will be one of the main issues that we discuss in our section on International Relations.

Power is thus a complex concept, but it is one that is critical to understanding global politics.

International relations scholar Joseph Nye Jr. has made a distinction between "**hard power**" and "**soft power**."[12] Nations exert hard power when they compel other nations to modify their behavior through military and/or economic force. However, nations can also influence the behavior of other nations by employing soft power, where leverage is gained through the sway of diplomatic and cultural persuasion.[13] The interplay between hard power and soft power is currently on display in the face of Russian aggression and the revitalization of NATO.

Hard Power: Using military and/or economic pressure in a way that allows one state to force another to do something it might not have wanted to do.

Soft Power: Using methods other than military or economic coercion to obtain desired outcomes.

Theory and Practice

How You Can Engage Politics Through Policy Debate

One of the primary purposes of the field of political science is to help you become more informed and active members of our society. In the broadest sense, this book hopes to inspire active citizenship and empower students with the skills necessary to engage our political system. Aristotle's *Politics* argued that political debate is the most highly valued political skill because it is through debate that we are able to carry reason into action. Participating in debates is also a great way to see the strengths and weaknesses of a policy issue from multiple perspectives, which develops strong critical thinking skills.[14] The debate activity is also great training if you are interested in becoming an attorney, a teacher, a social worker, and/or a leader in the business field. Debates also translate well into the classroom setting and can be formalized into the curriculum. The following represents a road map for structuring debates into the classroom setting.

The Affirmative Side

Although the affirmative team benefits from the element of surprise in that it initiates the central arguments of the debate, it also has the burden of having to win four basic arguments. These arguments are separately categorized as

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Harms, Inherency, Plan, and Solvency—HIPS for short. The affirmative team must first identify a problem (or Harm) that exists in the status quo. The affirmative team must then explain the significance (or impact) of that problem. Can the problem be quantified by the loss of life or tax dollars or is the problem mostly qualitative and difficult to measure (e.g., freedom, racism, dehumanization)? When addressing qualitative problems, it is important to explain why there is a moral imperative to solve them.

The affirmative team (typically two members) must then offer an actionable plan. For example, if the affirmative team is concerned about the trade imbalance between the United States and China, it could offer a plan that places a tariff of 25 percent on goods imported from China as a strategy for opening up China's market to U.S. goods and lowering the U.S. trade deficit with China. The affirmative plan is also advantaged with fiat powers, meaning debaters must pretend that the plan will be enacted into law if the debate judge votes in the affirmative, thus eliminating debate on political process and the likelihood of actual congressional or presidential approval and centering discourse on the merits of the proposal itself.

Harms and Significance

In observation one, the affirmative team must establish "Harms and Significance." Here, the affirmative team must demonstrate that a substantial problem exists in our society. For example, in the case of U.S.–China trade policy, the affirmative team can argue that the status quo is harmful to American businesses and the U.S. economy. The affirmative team should provide scholarly evidence of inequities inherent in U.S.–China trade policy that could be causing the existing trade deficit. What is the trade deficit? How many jobs in the United States have been negatively impacted by U.S. trade policy with China? How does a weakened U.S. economy impact American leadership around the world? By explaining the significance of the problem and by extending the negative impact of it to the worst-case scenario, the affirmative team will be better able to persuade the judges that swift legislative action is required.

Inherency

The affirmative team must also establish the inherency of the selected harms. The inherency argument establishes the need for policy action. The affirmative team must convince judges that nothing in the status quo adequately addresses the chosen harms. The affirmative team can lose the inherency argument, for instance, if the negative team uncovers pending legislation addressing the chosen harms is likely to be enacted in Congress in real life, suggesting that no further action is required.

Solvency

Last, in observation three, members of the affirmative team have the burden of establishing that their plan will significantly solve their harms. In this case, members of the affirmative team must demonstrate that a revised trade policy will solve all or most of their harms analysis. In this example, the affirmative team should provide evidence that placing tariffs on Chinese goods is likely to encourage China to make trade concessions to the United States.

The Negative Team's Response

The primary characteristic of every great debate is a clashing of ideas, where oratory sparks and fireworks fill the room. It is the central responsibility of the negative team to ignite these fireworks by challenging the veracity of the affirmative team's evidence. It is, therefore, the negative team's responsibility to ensure that arguments do not suffer from the *two ships passing in the night* syndrome, as that would suggest the affirmative team's case is sailing through unchallenged.

On-Case Negative Arguments

The negative team can win the debate round by either attacking the affirmative case directly (i.e., on-case arguments) or by making off-case arguments. Because the affirmative team is required to win the harms, inherency, and solvency arguments, the negative team can win the debate by simply *taking out* one of the stock issues in the affirmative case. The negative team can, therefore, win the debate round if it can establish that the current trade policy is succeeding or if it can demonstrate that the affirmative team's plan will not improve the status quo.

Off-Case Arguments: Disadvantages and Counterplans

It is sometimes difficult to attack the affirmative plan directly. There are glaring problems in society, and some affirmative plans are logically sound. This places the members of the negative team in a position where they are coerced into forwarding arguments that might defy common sense. In this event, the negative team might

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

strategically shift the debate toward off-case arguments. Off-case arguments represent a reversal of roles by allowing the negative team to go on the offensive. The negative team can place the affirmative team on the defensive by offering either a disadvantage or a counterplan.

A disadvantage contends that an undesirable and unstated consequence will occur if the plan is passed. Disadvantages prevent the affirmative team from offering its plan in a vacuum in that members of the negative team can remind the judge of the laws of unintended consequences in that a solution to a particular problem sometimes causes more glaring problems in other areas. In this case, the negative team might argue that tariffs will increase the costs of Chinese goods, which could negatively impact U.S. consumers and cause an economic recession. The negative team could also find evidence highlighting the risk of a U.S.–China trade war leading to military conflict, which would then cause a new "harm" that is of a greater magnitude than the harm the affirmative team is trying to solve. A counterplan offers the negative team another opportunity to win the debate without defending the status quo. Here, the negative team concedes the harms and inherent evidence of the affirmative plan and instead challenges the affirmative team with an alternative plan. Is there another way to lower the trade deficit with China that will not potentially cause economic or military conflict? The negative team's plan, however, must be mutually exclusive of the affirmative team's plan, meaning the affirmative plan and the negative plan cannot coexist for the negative team to win the debate.

Think It Through

Do you support placing high tariffs on some Chinese goods as a strategy for extracting concessions on U.S.–China trade policy? Why or why not?

Political Science as an Academic Discipline

Broadly speaking, **political science** (along with anthropology, criminal justice, economics, history, psychology, and sociology) is part of the academic tradition known as the **social sciences** because it examines and seeks to explain human behavior. In the same manner that psychologists through observation and research conduct experiments that seek to explain the human mind, political scientists seek to explain the relationship between human beings and their political institutions.

Since the beginning of philosophical inquiry, scholars have attempted to determine answers to questions about who should rule and which political institutions are best suited to bring peace and security to the people. In doing so, political scientists have developed a number of methods to help them conduct research. In the following section, we will briefly discuss some of these methods.

Political Science: The academic discipline that seeks to understand the relationship between individuals and political institutions.

Social Sciences: Any number of academic disciplines that seek to understand human behavior. Classically they have been understood to include anthropology, archaeology, economics, criminology, political science, and psychology.

Approaches to Political Science

Historically, the field of political science has been divided into three major methodological traditions or schools of thought: traditionalism, behavioralism, and post-behavioralism. **Traditionalism** relies largely on **normative** evaluations. In other words, traditionalists seek answers to questions that try to determine if individuals within government institutions (such as Congress) are acting how they "ought to

Traditionalism: The methodological tradition that seeks to understand if certain government or political institutions are behaving in accordance with how they "ought to behave."

Normative: A normative approach is any approach that seeks to determine how one "ought to live." You will see the normative approach more clearly in the discussion of Plato and Aristotle in Chapter 2.

Quantitative Analysis: An analysis that uses data to interpret political phenomena to better understand the political world. The data may come from survey research or established data sets.

Behavioralism: The school of thought that looks at the "actual" behavior of certain persons or institutions. It is largely data driven and without a strong commitment to values.

Variable: Features or attributes of social science research. For example, a variable might look at the relationship between race and voting, age and voting, or religious preference and voting.

Correlation: The relationship between two items or variables.

Postbehavioralism: The school of thought that seeks to combine elements of the traditional approach (especially the idea of values) with those of behavioralism.

be acting." For example, a traditionalist may examine the powers awarded to the U.S. Senate through a combination of history (how previous members voted) and philosophical inquiry (what the Constitution says about Congress, or the American Framers to determine if today's membership is representative of the original intention of the law. Traditionalists avoid numerical or **quantitative** determinations in their analyses because they seek value judgments in their outcomes, which are largely unquantifiable.

Adherents of **behavioralism**, on the other hand, look at the actual behavior of those in the political process and employ an *empirical* or data-driven approach. In the same manner that traditionalists attempt to determine how well one is living up to a constitutional or legal mandate, behavioralists try to determine why certain people behave the way they do. Behavioralists focus their research on quantitative analyses that attempt to use data to reinforce their arguments. In essence, behavioralists use mathematical or statistical models to explain different kinds of political and social behavior. They may seek to better understand the relationship between certain **variables** and attempt to find a **correlation** or relationship between them. For example, is there a correlation between one's gender and/or race and how one votes in the U.S. House of Representatives on bills related to an expansion of health care options? To answer this question, the behavioralist will examine the voting record of all of the members of Congress and then determine whether or not one's race and/or gender play a role in how one approaches the health care debate.

The last and most recent addition to the approaches political scientists use is known as **postbehavioralism**. The best way to understand the arguments of postbehavioralists is to see them as a hybrid of the previous two schools. Just as behavioralists critiqued traditionalists for being *too* "moral" or "value oriented" in their analyses, postbehavioralists have critiqued behavioralists for being *too* scientific and, in many ways, guilty of ignoring their ethical responsibilities to the field and to the citizenry at large. Postbehavioralists have tried to remind political scientists that in addition to conducting experiments or collecting data, they should try to answer some of the more important questions affecting the citizens, states and world around them.

Although this has been a brief introduction to some of the ways political scientists approach the field, it is essential that you understand these differences before we move ahead. It is also essential that you understand the layout of this text and some of its unique features. Think of the following section as a road map to this text. It will begin with some of the text's chapter features, and it will end with a brief description of each part.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Throughout this book, you will see boxes entitled "Why Politics Matters to You!" These features are designed to help you make connections to others in the political world. Because we live in extraordinary times of financial, political, social, and

technological interconnectedness, it is vital that you see a connection to your government and to the world beyond. Today, we have the unique opportunity to gain access to events around the world instantaneously. However, this power can often breed a great deal of apathy and confusion toward domestic and global processes because it is quite overwhelming. The "Why Politics Matters to You!" boxes are our method of deconstructing some of the ways that modern life might overwhelm you and allowing you to see that in these fantastic times, your understanding of and involvement in politics has never been more important.

To give you an example of how these boxes will read, we have included a brief story about cell phones and how you may not have realized the connection between your phone and the geopolitical importance of regulating the global supply of rare-earth metals needed for their construction. This box (and all of the others for that matter) is designed to show you how interconnected you really are with the world at large and, more important, why politics matters. Now, we are not about to give you the common lecture about how technology has provided you with a global passport. But we are going to ask you to read the "Why Politics Matters to You!" boxes and consider how the political world around you matters and how your role in it can help shape the future direction of our world.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Rare Earth Minerals and the Future of Global Leadership: Is Africa China's Second Continent?

China overtook the United States as the continent of Africa's largest trading partner in 2008. It has also been active in constructing and funding massive infrastructure projects, such as the new 470-mile electrified railway project connecting Ethiopia's capital, Addis Ababa, to the neighboring country of Djibouti.[15] In 2015, Chinese President Xi Jinping met with African leaders and pledged $60 billion in funding over a three-year period to help in the economic development of African countries.[16] This new economic relationship has, not surprisingly, evolved into a strategic partnership, as evidenced by China's new military base in Djibouti, which is located just eight miles away from an American military base. Howard W. French more fully explains the sprouting relationship in his 2015 book titled *China's Second Continent: How a Million Migrants Are Building a New Empire in Africa.*

But at this point, you are still probably wondering what China's relationship with Africa has to do with you. Well, 80 percent of China's imports from Africa are mineral products. Rare earth minerals are important because they are needed to build most modern appliances, such as your family's refrigerator and your cell phone. There are seventeen different types of rare earth metals, and cell phones use all of them except promethium, which is radioactive.[17] Tantalum, for instance, is a powdery mineral that has allowed the size of cell phones to shrink from the oversized ones of the 1980s to those that fit inside your shirt pocket today. It has allowed scientists to create "passive capacitators . . . [which] regulate voltage at high temperatures."[18] In short, it has provided cell phone developers the ability to control the high temperatures caused by cellular technology in a device that can fit in the palm of your hand without the risk of shock or fire. In scientific terms, tantalum has been a major breakthrough. In economic terms, however, its use in cell phones has caused its value to skyrocket,

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Begoña Esquibil/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 1.5 Children workers in a mine in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

which in turn has made it quite valuable to the producers of modern products.

Rare earth metals are also critically important for American national security since they are needed for weapon systems and to fight modern wars. China currently controls 90 percent of the world's rare earth metal production, and the United States now imports 80 percent of its rare earth metals from China.[19] In October 2023, China placed export restrictions on rare earth metals to the United States and other countries because of national security concerns.[20]

Think It Through

1. Do you believe the United States should make greater investments in Africa?
2. Do you believe Chinese investment in Africa will have a positive or negative effect on the future of Africa?

Theory and Practice

Although the field of political science uses different approaches (which we will examine later in this chapter), an understanding of politics is still grounded in **theory**. Theories emerge when individuals seek answers to questions. For example, a popular question in the field of political science is, do governments with more women in positions of power create and then implement (bring into action) policies that are friendlier to women? Although your inclination in answering this question might be to say that there is a correlation, this is still only a **hypothesis**, or an educated guess based on previously understood facts or logic. A theory emerges after one tests the hypothesis to see if a correlation exists. If it does, then one is said to make an argument in favor of the aforementioned theory.

Theory: An idea that has been tested that aims to demonstrate a correlation between political phenomena.

Hypothesis: An educated guess about a particular experiment.

Because theories are vital to good research, we have provided another type of learning box, the "Theory and Practice" feature. These learning boxes are designed to provide you with some of the theoretical underpinnings behind political issues and to provide you with a perspective that you might not have been aware of. They will shed light on what happens when theoretical concepts in political science are actually put into practice in our current political world and help you develop critical thinking skills by engaging policy issues from diverse perspectives.

Introducing You to the Field

Now that you have a basic understanding of some of the ways this book will incorporate theory into the practice of politics and the reasons why politics should matter to you, it is important to provide you with an overall layout of the book.

Introducing you to a field of study as broad as political science may seem quite demanding, so what we have done is to break it down into more manageable bites. If you think of political science as a large pizza or, even better, an extra-large pizza, it may seem sloppy and overwhelming. But if we divide the subject into pieces, or what we call **subfields of political science**, and provide you with an entire semester to digest it, it becomes more manageable. In many ways, this is exactly the manner in which this book is constructed. We have taken the entire field and divided it into four sections, with each part representing a major subfield within the overall discipline of political science. Thus, we have parts on political theory, American government, comparative politics, and international relations.

Subfields of Political Science: The different content approaches within the overall discipline of political science. Subfields include political theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations.

The parts follow a logical construction as well. Just as a foundation is the most important first step in the construction of a house, so too is political theory to the wider field of political science. Before we can embark on discussions concerning health care, foreign policy, or even the development of the Chinese and Indian economies, we need to first understand the classic philosophical arguments of ancient thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle and the modern arguments of the social contract thinkers such as Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. These ideas shaped the world of yesterday and will shape the world of tomorrow. Thus, it is vital that we begin with an understanding of the classics.

Because the political theory part of this book ends with an examination of those social contract thinkers who contributed to the development of modern democratic thought, we have included a chapter on the American government to help you make insightful comparisons with other forms of government around the world. In the American government chapter, we pay particular attention to the major structural and behavioral components of the United States, including the fundamental principles of the American system of government as embodied in the U.S. Constitution, the political attitudes and activities of individual citizens and groups, and the structural arrangement as found in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches.

Comparative Politics: The subfield of political science that examines different types of institutions and issues within different countries. Such examinations are usually regionally based. For example, one may do comparative research on the area of the world known as the Middle East.

International Relations: The field of political science that studies the way nations interact with one another and the influence of global trends on nation-states.

Part 3, which examines **comparative politics**, uses the information from the previous part and evaluates the policies, processes, and institutions of other states in relation to those of the United States. Definitions concerning types of government will include an analysis of the characteristics of authoritarian states and their democratic counterparts. In doing so, we will highlight certain states that are considered to be authoritarian or democratic. This will allow you the opportunity to see how other states choose and make policies, articulate and define issues pertaining to personal freedoms, and maintain and transfer power from one government to the next.

The last part, **international relations**, will build on the regional approach to comparative politics established in the preceding chapters. With special emphasis placed on concepts related to international relations theory, the development of the international system, international organizations, and globalization, this final part allows you to balance an understanding of domestic and global governance. This final part also allows you the opportunity to reflect on all of the issues covered in the text and to see the world through the intellectual prism of the entire field of political science.

1 Summary

Michael M. Santiago/Getty Images

Overall, this book is designed to give you a greater understanding of both the theory and practice of politics. We intend to take away the intimidation of studying such thinkers as Plato and Aristotle, to make them more accessible and, we hope, more useful to future leaders. We'll also point out connections between your life and the world at large.

Today's world is highly interconnected and highly competitive. It is therefore important that you realize the roles you and your classmates play in it. Competition for jobs in the future will depend on some of the issues we address in this book. So, enough said. Let's get started. Are you ready? Here we go . . .

▶ Questions to Consider

1. How have you been socialized by your family, friends, and peers? Have your political beliefs been challenged since you entered college?

   Most of us are politically socialized by family and friends. You might or might not find that your political views change during your time in college or during your career after college.

2. What are political ideologies? What are the differences between left-wing and right-wing ideologies?

A key feature defining liberals and conservatives is the role government should play in our lives. Liberals typically want government to play an active role in economic affairs (e.g., minimum wage, and environmental protection) but to play a smaller role on some social issues (e.g., oppose laws against abortion rights, and same-sex marriage), and conservatives typically want government to play a role on some social issues but less of a role in the economy.

3. What is the difference between "hard power" and "soft power" in the realm of international politics?

Hard power is when a nation uses the threat of military or economic coercion to persuade nations to behave in certain ways. Soft power is when a nation uses its cultural influence to persuade nations to behave in desired ways.

4. What do you think it takes to win a policy debate? How can the skills you learn in debate help you influence policy issues?

Engaging in policy debate helps hone critical thinking skills by enabling debaters to see issues from diverse perspectives. When debating a topic, it is important to identify a problem that exists in the status quo and offer a plan of action that solves the identified problem.

5. What are the different areas that political scientist's study?

Political science is best described as the study of power. It includes the subfields of political theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations.

Key Terms

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Autocracy	p. 7	**International Relations**	p. 18
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Part I Political Theory

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3 **Modern Political Theory** 51

"Man is by nature a political animal"—Aristotle

"Life is the state of nature is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short"—Thomas Hobbes

In the first section of the book, you will read about the beginning of ancient and modern political theory. Studying some of the great ancient Greek theorists such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle is important because it is through them that the philosophical foundation for many modern governments are formed. Chapter 2 highlights how ancient Greek philosophers viewed politics through the lens of justice by asking some of the important questions that are still widely debated today such as: What is the purpose of life? How can we find happiness? What is the ideal form of government? Chapter 3 focuses on how political theory evolved from a study of justice to the study of power in the formation of modern political theory.

In The Prince, Niccolo Machiavelli (1469–1527) strays from the Greek tradition by claiming that power, and not justice, should be the key unit of analysis when studying politics. The chapter then emphasizes theories associated with Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), John Locke (1632–1704), and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78). These social contract theorists mostly disagreed on their views on human nature (i.e., cooperative or selfish); the precontract state (i.e., peaceful or violent); and the social contract itself (i.e., democratic vs. authoritarian). This chapter closes by examining how social contract theory helped expand political rights for women and other marginalized groups in modern political life.

2 Ancient Political Theory

Image 2.1 This statue of Plato can be seen in front of the Academy of Athens, which is located in Athens, Greece. Wirestock Creators/Shutterstock.com

Chapter Outline

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Introduction: How Ancient Political Thought Impacts Us Today

Ancient Greece is considered the cradle of Western civilization because it is here, more than 2,500 years ago, that enormous strides were made in the areas of mathematics, science, architecture, politics, and philosophy that continue to shape our lives today. It is because of advancements made in ancient Greece that the American White House carries a loose resemblance to the Greek Parthenon, why modern doctors pledge to do no harm when they take the Hippocratic Oath, why students all over the world study geometry, why billions across the globe tune in to watch the Olympics, and why almost all of Western society now functions in some form of democratic government.

Ancient Greece was not a unified nation but rather a collection of smaller city-states, each encircled by farmland and typically only a few blocks long. Each of these city-states was referred to as a "polis," and inhabitants of each polis typically shared common cultural, political, economic, and religious customs. The word *politics* itself derives from the term *polis,* and the name is still used today to describe modern city life (e.g., *metropolis* and *cosmopolitan*). It was the defined political structure of the polis that also helped contextualize the works of three ancient Greek philosophers: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. It is fitting to emphasize these three philosophers because their observations laid the theoretical foundation from which all other Western political thought launches. A general understanding of the major theories associated with these early Greek thinkers can assist us in effectively critiquing and engaging our political world today.

Many of the questions raised by these early Greek thinkers are still hotly debated today: *What is the purpose of life? How can we find happiness? Which skills should our political leaders possess? What is the ideal form of government? Why is it important to be ethical?* These are the central questions raised by Socrates, and they appear throughout

▶ Questions to Consider

1. Why did Socrates accept his death sentence rather than flee his jail cell?
2. How did Plato make a connection between the Republic and the human soul?
3. Why did Plato believe democracies were inferior political systems?
4. Why does Aristotle believe that we are by nature political animals?
5. How did Plato and Aristotle influence the American system of government?

Plato's *The Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*. These classic works are important because they not only offer a glimpse into ancient political life, but they also provoke us to think more broadly about the purpose of politics today. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle started the theoretical discussion on politics and emphasized the need to select honest and competent leaders. For that reason, it is helpful to have a general understanding of their viewpoints to more effectively evaluate our modern political system.

The Ionians

Ionians: The earliest Greek philosophers who believed in using rationality rather than mythology to understand the universe.

Ancient political thought and political science itself sprang from an ancient philosophical debate about *whether our universe behaves in a purposeful and systematic manner or whether our universe instead is in a state of perpetual random change, devoid of any purpose or meaning.* The earliest Greek philosophers were the **Ionians**, who in the sixth century BCE rejected the cultural view reflected in Homer's mythological explanation that our universe was controlled by Zeus, Hera, Apollo, and other Greek gods and goddesses. The Ionians instead advocated employing greater rationality to reason through the important questions of the day.

These early Greek philosophers concentrated on the material world, debating the form and substance of our universe. Thales of Miletus believed our universe was made of water, Anaximenes held that the universe was composed of air, and Heraclitus theorized that the universe was made of fire.[1] In the fifth century BCE, Democritus solved the conundrum with his discovery that all living things are instead composed of atoms. These early theorists asked deeper questions about our surroundings, such as *What is the nature of our universe? Does the material world exist in a perpetual state of random change, or is there an enduring life force guiding our universe?*

In this era, there were two rival and competing movements that organized around this question. The Greeks identified these philosophical camps as the *theory of becoming* and the *theory of being*.[2] The roots of all Western political thought are located in these two distinct philosophical schools.

Theory of Becoming

Those aligned with the *theory of becoming* argued that the universe was in a constant state of random and arbitrary change (or becoming) and could be understood in material terms. Democritus, for instance, conceived that all things in the universe are made up of atoms that move and combine in perfectly random and accidental ways. The theory-of-becoming camp did not believe that a preexisting plan or sacred objective guides the material world. They speculated that our universe is, rather, simply what it *becomes* as a result of random configurations established when matter in our universe collides into other forms of mass, setting that material form into motion against another. They conjectured that our universe is simply the by-product of a long series of perfectly random and accidental collisions. This camp

Theory and Practice

How Did the Greeks Influence the American Framers?

The teachings of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle had a tremendous impact on the American Framers and the American system of government. American college entrance exams in the eighteenth century required students to be able to read and translate from the original Greek texts. Universities in this era offered very few elective courses and instead required students to study classical works. It was not unusual for Thomas Jefferson to study for fifteen hours a day, and he was known to routinely carry with him several Greek grammar books. Furthermore, thirty of the fifty-five delegates who attended the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787 were college graduates. Most of the American Founding Fathers were, therefore, well trained in the major theories associated with Plato's *The Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*.

Carl J. Richard's text *Greeks & Romans Bearing Gifts: How the Ancients Inspired the Founding Fathers* highlights how early American political thought was shaped by the lessons learned from ancient Greece. The ill treatment of citizens in ancient Sparta inspired the Founding Fathers' belief in individual rights. In *Federalist Paper* No. 6, Alexander Hamilton referred to ancient Sparta as "a little better than a well regulated camp," and John Adams referred to Spartan rules against private ownership as "stark mad."[3] The examples of Greek and Persian political structures led to the conviction that **republic** forms of government were superior to monarchies. They also learned of the potential for democracies to degenerate into mob rule from the example of ancient Athens. It is because of this that the term **democracy** is not included in the U.S. Constitution. James Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 10 was chiefly concerned with whether our system of government could maintain both majority rule and minority rights. Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, James Madison, and Thomas Jefferson learned from the classic texts that many Greek and Roman tyrants began their political careers as democratic reformers and feared that America might be vulnerable to a similar fate.

The American Framers were influenced by the Greeks when they created a representative democracy in which representatives are selected to make decisions on behalf of the people.

Think It Through

Do you support a representative democracy where elected officials enact laws on behalf of citizens or a direct democracy system where citizens vote directly on which laws should be enacted?

also claimed that reality is best understood by examining things we can measure in our universe rather than in attaching religious, mystical, and/or metaphysical explanations to our material world. The theory-of-becoming school of thought prescribed the view that we can best understand our universe and our role in it by gaining a deeper scientific understanding of our physical world.

Theory of Being

In contrast, those associated with the *theory-of-being* school of thought believed that a preexisting and permanent design underlies our ever-changing material world. Pythagoras, for example, posited that a permanent, invisible, and unchanging structure underpins our world of appearances.[5] Pythagoras argued that the key that unlocked

Republic: A system of government in which power is exercised indirectly through representatives who are voted into office by citizens of the state.

Democracy: A system of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free elections.[4]

all of the mysteries of the universe could be found in mathematical formulas that represent a deeper reality than the reality ascertained through our physical senses.

The question of whether the universe is in a constant state of random change (i.e., state of becoming) or whether a permanent deeper reality exists beyond our world of appearances (i.e., state of being) eventually gets incorporated into political theory. Pythagoras, for example, incorporated the theory of being into political theory by conjecturing that we instill within the human soul the same principles that exist in our physical world by intellectualizing mathematical principles.[6] By linking mathematical concepts found in our universe to human consciousness, we transform our conception of ourselves and the way we ought to interact with each other. The important point is that these discussions reflect the emergence of Greek rationality, or the preference for using human reasoning powers to discover objective truths rather than relying on conventional mythologies to explain important questions of the day.[7] Plato adopts Greek rationality in his classic text *The Republic* through the style of the dialogue approach, where the weaknesses of commonly held misconceptions are exposed through public discourse.

Do you believe our universe is in a perpetual state of random change, or do you believe a guiding life force underpins our universe?

The Sophists

Athens became the world's primary cultural gathering place after the Greek military victory over the Persians in 448 BCE. It was during this period that Greek culture became strongly influenced by a group of political thinkers called the *sophists*. The sophists were primarily responsible for shifting the focus of Greek philosophy from the universe to the individual. They were skeptical (hence the name **skeptics**) about whether we can ever truly come to understand our ultimate reality or acquaint ourselves with the mysteries of our universe.[8]

Skeptics: Philosophers who generally agree that nothing can be known with absolute certainty.

They were instead primarily concerned with questions surrounding human behavior. The sophists shared a common worldview called *sophia,* which viewed the study of man, as opposed to the study of the universe, as the most important unit of analysis.[9] Protagoras reflected this view when he said, "*Man is the measure of all things, of the reality of those which are, and the reality of those which are not.*"[10] The sophists were primarily concerned with how Greek citizens ought to conduct their lives.

One of the primary subjects taught by the sophists was rhetoric and the art of public debate. Their emphasis on teaching debate (or sophistry) opened them up to criticism that they were more interested in teaching the power of persuasion than in establishing a strong intellectual framework. The sophists broadly assumed that human beings are naturally power seeking and predisposed to the pursuit of self-interest. In addition, they did not believe in the existence of a universal truth and viewed such concepts as "justice" or "truth" as social conventions rather than natural constructs.[11] Many of the teachings of Socrates and Plato directly challenged the sophist view of human nature.

Socrates

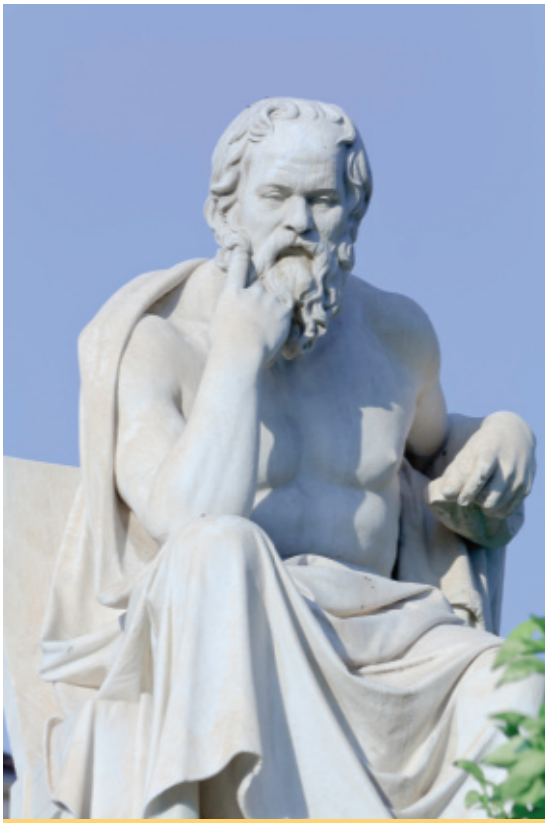
Socrates was born in 470 BCE and was sentenced to death by the democratic Greek Senate for "corrupting the youth" and "religious impiety" in 399 BCE. Socrates's life and influence over ancient Western political thought is in many respects analogous to the life and influence of Jesus in Christianity. Both men were excellent teachers, both threatened the political status quo, both were put on trial for their teachings, and both were unjustifiably put to death for their beliefs.[12] Another similarity is that neither Socrates nor Jesus ever transcribed their teachings to the written words. We came to learn what we know about Socrates through the writings of his greatest student, Plato, who was approximately fifty years his junior, just as we came to know Jesus through the writings of his devotees.

Socrates was an unimpressive physical specimen in an era when attractive appearances were held in high regard, much like today. He had bulging eyes, a potbelly, and long hair; was unclean; and typically carried a stick as he walked without footwear.[13]

Normative Theory: Any theory that examines the way something "should" or "ought" to be rather than focusing on the way something actually "is."

One of Socrates's greatest contributions to Western civilization was his introduction of the inductive method in the teaching profession. The Socratic teaching method (Refer to "Why Politics Matters to You!" on page 29), in fact, is still the primary teaching technique used in American law schools today. Socrates agreed with the sophists on a number of points, including the notion that more can be learned by the study of human behavior than by the study of the universe. He also employed the **normative theory** approach to philosophy, in that he was most interested in uncovering the purpose of our human existence and how the "good life" can be achieved if humans interact with each other in a just and ethical manner.

He emphasized that we must first agree on the definitions of words before we can adopt universal principles. He was a controversial teacher because he asked his students to question the intellectual rationale behind society's guiding principles. For instance, students were asked to define such terms as *justice* or *courage*, and when their definitions fell short, it highlighted the shortcomings of their conventional views. His incessant questioning of students shook their confidence and caused them to question everything they held as true, including societal norms and the motivations of the Greek ruling class. Socrates never claimed to possess the truth and held that we can only come to knowledge by first recognizing our own ignorance. Yet he came to believe that he was wiser than the political leaders of Greek society because he was at least aware



PNIK/Shutterstock.com

Image 2.2 The Greek philosopher Socrates

of his ignorance, whereas most Greek political figures held convictions that were simply untrue as well as self-serving.[14]

Socrates and the sophists were also in agreement that the purpose of life is to find happiness. However, Socrates and the sophists profoundly disagreed on how humans ought to conduct their lives in order to obtain it. The measure for human happiness offered by both the sophists and Socrates was inextricably linked with the concept of virtue, which in today's parlance can be used somewhat interchangeably with the concept of excellence.

The sophists lectured that people find happiness by pursuing virtue or excellence in their human activities. A shoemaker, for example, can find happiness through the virtue of making excellent shoes, just as a painter can find happiness through the virtue of painting first-rate pictures, and a carpenter can find happiness through the virtue of building a secure and attractive house. The sophists link happiness to a person's capacity to excel at a particular skill and/or occupation.

Additionally, the sophists taught their mostly privileged and affluent students that human happiness is also established through the virtue of acquiring objects that give most people pleasure, such as "wealth, honor, and status."[15] They considered material success and the acquisition of power to be the path to attaining human happiness, which was consistent with their overarching belief that humans are primarily self-interested creatures. The sophists lectured on moral relativism and those laws formulated by the polis (or state) were merely conventional prescriptions drafted for the purpose of protecting the weak from the strong.[16] They taught that this was an unusual arrangement, absent from the laws of nature, where the powerful customarily dominate over the feeble. This was a popular critique with the privileged students in that it encouraged them to leverage their advanced standing into greater material and political gains and served as a prevailing justification for exploiting the downtrodden. The sophists taught that the laws of the state were unnatural in that they inhibited great leaders, thereby stunting their human development and their probability of attaining happiness.

It was this widely accepted view of "might makes right" that Socrates, and later Plato and Aristotle, sought to debunk. Socrates was a unique and important thinker because he was one of the first to associate the concept of virtue or excellence with ethical human behavior. For Socrates, there was an important distinction between exhibiting brilliance in a particular activity or occupation and demonstrating excellence in ethical conduct. The great tragedy for Socrates was that the vast majority of Greeks were destined to lead discontented lives because they were exceedingly unaware of and disinterested in the highest form of human happiness: *the cultivation of the human soul*.[17] True happiness for Socrates meant pursuing the "good life," which is attained when humans conduct their lives in accordance with ethical principles derived from

Why Politics Matters to You!

Law School Today and The Socratic Teaching Method

Have you ever considered going to law school and becoming an attorney? Each year, approximately 38,000 students begin their journey into a legal career by enrolling in an American law school. American law schools have become much more diverse, with women law students now making up 55 percent of the incoming class and 37 percent of first-year law students identifying as people of color.[18] American law schools have also used the Socratic teaching method for over 100 years. The Socratic teaching method fosters critical thinking in students by probing their minds with questions rather than by providing them with answers. Responses from students frequently generate additional questions that foster a deeper analytic discussion. The purpose of the Socratic method is to help students process course material and to engage "students in dialogue and discussion that is collaborative and open-minded as opposed to debate, which is often competitive and individualized."[19] The professor guides students to a deeper understanding of the material and to respect the viewpoints of others. The Socratic method of questioning does not always bring the students to a definitive answer, but more frequently, it reveals weaknesses in hypotheses.

The Socratic teaching method was brought to prominence in *The Paper Chase*, a film and later a television show appearing from 1978 to 1979 about a Harvard law school class. The strictness of the Socratic method in law school was captured in one scene when Professor Charles W. Kingsfield Jr., portrayed by John Houseman, summoned an unprepared student to the front of the class, handed him a dime, and then told him to call his mother for a ride home because he would never make it through law school. The Socratic method intimidates some law students because professors randomly call on them regardless of whether they are prepared to answer. Performing poorly in this setting is embarrassing because it causes classmates to think less of one's legal abilities. The questions posed typically assume the student has read and is familiar with the legal nuances of the case. The professor will sometimes juxtapose the facts of a case to test the critical thinking skills of students.

Think It Through

1. **Do any of your professors use the Socratic teaching method and/or stimulate critical thinking at your college or university?**
2. **Do you believe the Socratic teaching method should be used more widely in undergraduate classes? Why or why not?**

reason. Life in and of itself is not important for Socrates; it is only the "good life" that matters:

> I say that it is the greatest good for a man to discuss virtue every day and those other things about which you hear me conversing and testing myself and others, for the unexamined life is not worth living for man.[20]

Socrates transformed the concept of happiness by emphasizing the significance of nurturing the human soul. Although he does not necessarily renounce worldly possessions, he does consider materialism an inferior form of happiness.[21] Because Socrates believed the soul is connected to our intellectual senses, he reasoned that it is the responsibility of all humans to examine their lives by pursuing knowledge and truth, particularly on issues involving individual ethics. This view

represented a fundamental theoretical shift away from materialism and toward ethical reflection. For Socrates, the essential variable in promoting harmony within the soul, and in realizing the highest form of happiness, occurs when we pursue justice at all levels and at all times. His views are colorfully described in Plato's classic text *The Republic*.

Socrates believed that individual behavior must, above all else, be guided by reasoned ethical standards, even if that behavior violates state laws. He also believed that one should accept willingly the negative consequences for violating public laws. In his own life, Socrates refused to cease teaching his philosophy to the youth, even after it became apparent that he would be arrested (and ultimately sentenced to death) for "corrupting" them. He engaged in an early form of **civil disobedience** by defying a court order to stop teaching

Civil Disobedience: The refusal to obey governmental demands or commands, especially as a nonviolent and usually collective means of forcing concessions from the government.

Theory and Practice

Civil Disobedience After Socrates: Thoreau (1817–62), Gandhi (1869–1948), and King (1929–68)

Socrates's refusal to stop teaching Athenian youth represented one of the earliest accounts of civil disobedience. The virtues of civil disobedience were later championed by Henry David Thoreau (1817–62), whose essay *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience* in 1849 argued that citizens should not allow government policy to take precedence over individual core beliefs. Thoreau engaged in civil disobedience by refusing to pay taxes over his objection to slavery and the Mexican-American War. He paid a highway tax because he viewed it as beneficial to neighbors but refused to pay any tax that went to the government itself. Thoreau said he felt freer in jail than he did outside of prison walls when he was briefly incarcerated for his beliefs.

Mohandas Gandhi (1869–1948) once claimed that Thoreau was one of the greatest men America ever produced. Gandhi employed an active form of nonviolent civil disobedience in successfully gaining Indian independence from Great Britain in 1947. Some of Gandhi's principles of civil disobedience included nonviolence (ahimsa), truth (satya), and boycotts (swadeshi policy), and his leadership style inspired civil rights movements across the globe.

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929–68) borrowed Gandhi's rules on civil disobedience when leading the civil rights movement in the United States. He counseled civil rights protesters to actively resist segregationist policies without expressing anger and that protesters should never submit, yet never retaliate. King's leadership played a key role in the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and in the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965 (see Chapter 4 for fuller discussion).

Socrates, Gandhi, and King were each executed for their convictions. Socrates was forced to drink poisonous hemlock by his government; Mohandas Gandhi was assassinated while taking his nightly walk on January 30, 1948, in Delhi, India; and Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated outside a Memphis hotel by segregationist James Earl Ray on April 4, 1968.

Think It Through

Can you think of other historical figures who engaged in a form of civil disobedience? Do you believe engaging in civil disobedience is an effective strategy for bringing about positive change in society? Why or why not?

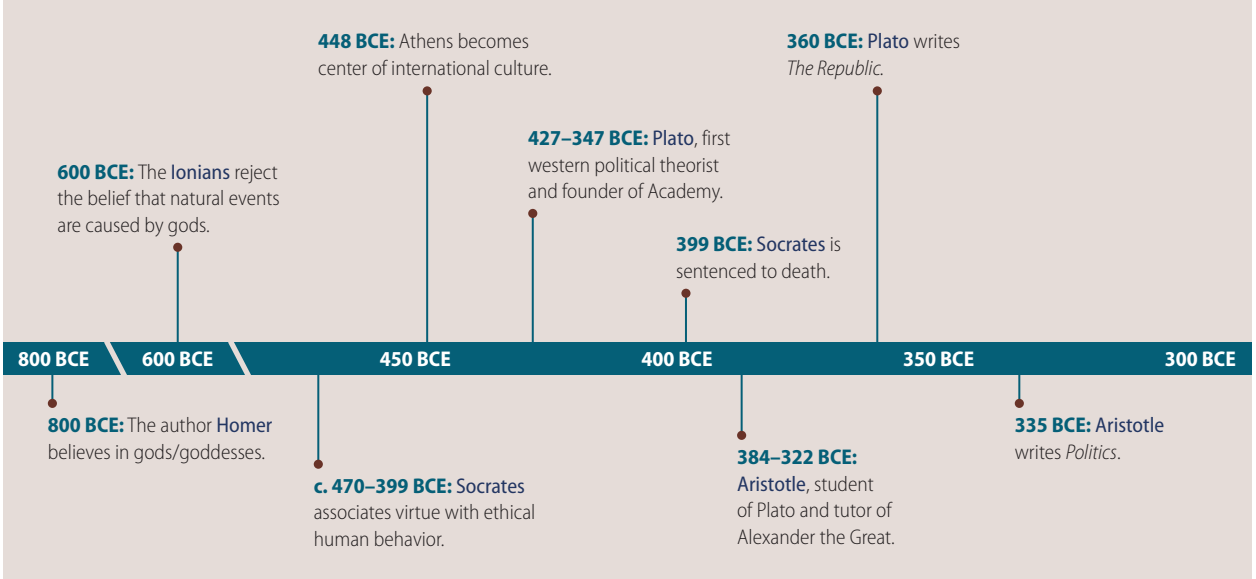
because he believed his teaching was just and ethical.[22] To Socrates, one's personal ethical code represents a higher value than the customs and laws of the state.

His conformist view of citizenship, however, is characterized in Plato's Crito dialogue. During his incarceration, a friend of Socrates named Crito visited him in jail and revealed a plan for his escape. Socrates explained to Crito that escaping from his jail cell would be unjust because he had an obligation as a citizen to accept his punishment, even if the punishment was excessive.[23] Socrates accepted his death sentence and ultimately drank the poisonous hemlock rather than take flight from his unjust sentence. His decision is instructive because it highlighted Socrates's view that *it is better to be the recipient of a major injustice (i.e., death sentence) than to commit even a minor injustice yourself.* Or, put another way, it underscores Socrates's observation that death is preferable to an unjust existence.

Socrates held that individuals can only find true happiness by remaining removed and distant from the affairs of the state. He taught that one could not pursue the good life and politics simultaneously because he believed a successful political career required one to surrender core ethical principles. This is why Socrates is considered a moral philosopher and not a political philosopher. He counseled his students to avoid the corrupting influences associated with politics, to shun the glare and false praise of public life, and to instead quietly follow a just ethical code. The first Western political philosopher was actually Plato, a student of Socrates.

In Figure 2.1, we provide a timeline highlighting ancient political theorists.

Figure 2.1 Meet the Ancients: Greek Philosophers and Schools of Thought



Plato

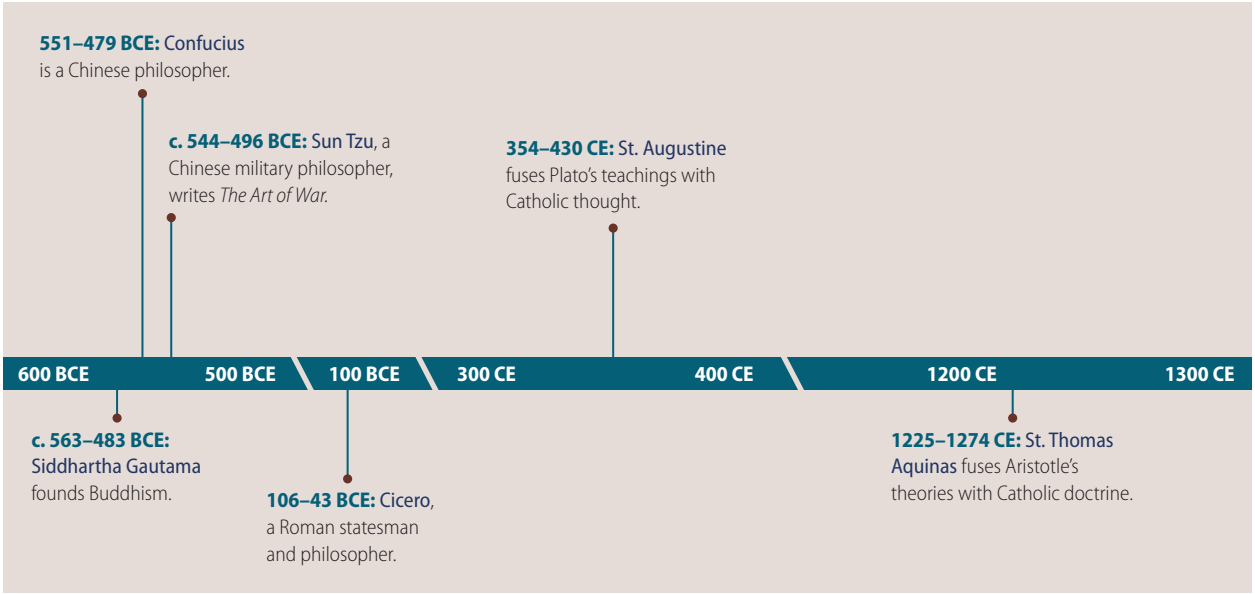
The first written work considered political science is Plato's classic text *The Republic.* In *The Republic,* Plato introduces the teachings of Socrates through the method of the dialogue. As a result, it is sometimes difficult to discern where the views of Socrates end and where the observations of Plato begin. Plato was born in Athens in 427 BCE and died in 347 BCE at the age of 81. Although little is known of his personal history, most scholars suspect that he was never married, that he traveled extensively, including trips to Sicily and Egypt, and that he was greatly influenced by his teacher and mentor Socrates.[24] Plato's veneration for Socrates was no doubt enhanced by the tragic circumstances surrounding Socrates's life, particularly his willingness to die for his philosophy.

Plato was born into a prominent political family. Members of Plato's family, in fact, seized power in Athens and established control in 404 BCE, only to be overthrown a year later by the democrats. It was this democratic government that ultimately sentenced and executed Socrates a few years later. Plato also grew up during the **Peloponnesian War**, a decisive war between the Greek city-states of Athens and Sparta, which was launched because of Spartan insecurities over a growing Athenian maritime threat and ended in a humiliating Athenian defeat in 404 BCE.

Peloponnesian War: The war between Athens and Sparta from 431 to 404 BCE. Sparta, with the assistance of Persia (now Iran), built a massive fleet that destroyed the Athenian navy at Aegospotami in 405 BCE. The war destroyed Athens.

Plato was left jaded and dejected by these two experiences. He grew disillusioned over the willingness of Athenian leaders to place self-interest over the public interest, and he blamed the irrational impulses emanating from the democratic

Figure 2.2 Beyond the Greeks: Eastern, Roman, and Christian Theorists



government for both the execution of Socrates and the haunting Athenian defeat by Sparta in the Peloponnesian War.

These two experiences left Plato distrustful of democracy and popular government. They also explain Plato's detour from a life in politics, an expected path for someone of his stature, and why he was inspired to explore the perceived higher vocation he found in philosophy. Plato was enthused and passionate about revising and expanding on the teachings of his martyred teacher Socrates.

In this pursuit, Plato founded the first Western university, called The Academy, which was built to carry on Socrates's legacy of teaching moral philosophy to young intellectuals. But Plato's initial foray into philosophical teaching was met with misfortune and humiliation. The most degrading moment occurred when Plato traveled to Sicily to counsel the despot Dionysius I. The autocrat eventually grew tired of Plato's moral counseling and sold Plato into slavery rather than heed his advice to reform the political system.[25] Unlike his mentor Socrates, however, Plato accepted the support of friends and escaped a life of slavery.

The Republic

In *The Republic*, Plato recounts Socrates's conversation about justice that took place in the home of the sophist Polymarchus, which included Polymarchus, his father Cephalus, the famous sophist Thrasymachus, and other prominent thinkers of the day. The discussion revolved around the proper definition of *justice*. Cephalus, a man of great wealth, stated that a just person is one who repays his debts and always tells the truth.[26] Socrates was unsatisfied with this definition and asked whether it would be just to return a borrowed weapon to a companion who had grown unstable and violent. Cephalus agreed that it would not be just to return the weapon if you believed the companion would use it for an unjust purpose. This exchange pointed out that although it is important to repay debts, there are scenarios where individuals might have a larger social responsibility not to repay them. Thrasymachus, a leading sophist, argued that justice is simply what is in the best interest of the stronger party.[27] Through his inquisitive questioning of Thrasymachus, Socrates gets him to acknowledge that some leaders make mistakes in their decisions. That is an important concession because Socrates is then able to establish through his relentless questioning that knowledge is a higher value than power and that might does not always make right.[28]

The purpose of Plato's *The Republic* is to highlight Socrates's contention that knowledge goes well beyond simply understanding individual self-interest and is needed to understand a larger objective truth: *that the highest form of happiness is attained when we nurture the human soul by pursuing justice rather than self-interest.*

Ultimately, Plato attempts to establish that just behavior is innately superior to unjust behavior, and the only way he can substantiate this theory is to convince prominent thinkers that *a just person perceived to be unjust is happier than an unjust person perceived to be just*.[29] *The Republic* is Plato's attempt to establish the correctness of Socrates's theory that the purpose of our existence is to realize happiness by leading a just life. The next section explains Plato's suppositions on why a just existence facilitates a higher level of human happiness than an unjust existence.

Happiness in the Republic and the Human Soul

Plato theorized that the polis (or state) is a natural configuration emanating from the human inability to function efficiently in a solitary existence. He taught that humans are social creatures requiring assistance from others to survive and that the state represents a natural extension of human activity. To illustrate that a just person perceived to be unjust is happier than an unjust person perceived to be just, Plato incorporated the model of the state. Plato considered the ideal polis and the ideal human soul to be one and the same. Because the small size of the human soul makes it difficult to scrutinize justice, Plato opted to distinguish it on the larger tableau of the state. The rationale is that one can discover justice in the human soul by first discerning it on the larger canvass of the republic.[30]

Plato believed the ideal republic and the human soul comprise three critical parts respectively as follows:

- craftspeople/appetites
- auxiliaries/spirit
- guardians/rational

Table 2.1 provides a brief summary of how Plato linked the ideal republic to the human soul.

The Republic divides the citizenry into three functioning groups, partitioned by a division of labor that accentuates the skill sets of the community, thus producing social harmony. These three communities are the *craftspeople,* the *auxiliaries,* and the *guardians*.[31] Plato then associates these three social groupings to three parts of

Table 2.1 The Three Parts of the Republic and the Human Soul

The Republic	The Human Soul
Craftspeople–Citizens who engage in economic activity (businesspeople, farmers, merchants); taught restraint	Appetites–Behavior guided by impulses stemming from our desires and urges without regard for consequences
Auxiliaries–Citizens who defend the republic (military); taught courage and restraint	Spirit–Behavior guided by impulses stemming from feelings of pity, compassion, and/or remorse
Guardians–Rulers of the republic (political leaders); taught wisdom, courage, and restraint	Rational–Behavior guided by knowledge and our intellect

the human soul, which he argued consists of the *appetite,* the *spirit,* and the *rational.* He further theorized that the ideal forms of both the state and the human soul function harmoniously when the guardians (i.e., rational part of soul) rule over the craftspeople (i.e., appetite part of soul).

Craftspeople and Appetite

The craftspeople represent society's working class and include farmers, shopkeepers, and merchants. Their function is to produce economic activity and to ensure social sustenance. Plato understood that basic human needs, such as food and shelter, must be secured before humans can follow higher needs, such as philosophy and the good life. The requisite skills required to succeed in economic life, specifically the pursuit of self-interest and profit, do not translate well to traits essential to the furtherance of the public good. That is why Plato associated the craftspeople with the appetite portion of the human soul. Our appetites urge us to satisfy base desires without any regard for the consequences of our actions. Plato believed our appetites, as well as the craftspeople, need to be checked by higher impulses. The craftspeople, therefore, should be taught temperance or restraint so they do not attempt to rise from the economic life into the political life.

Auxiliaries and the Spirit

The auxiliaries' primary function is to enforce the laws of the state and defend the state from foreign invasion (i.e., serve as the military). The auxiliaries are taught both courage and temperance. They require a more sophisticated training because

Theory and Practice

Wealth of U.S. Members of Congress (2023–24)

In *The Republic*, Plato argues that those who excel in the business world should not rule the polis because the skills needed to secure profits do not necessarily translate well to the skills required to lead the Republic. Yet while the average American salary is $57,200, the average net worth of a member of Congress in 2024 is over $1 million. Below find the ten wealthiest members of Congress in the 118th Congress (2023–24).[32]

1. Sen. Rick Scott (R-FL) $200.3 million
2. Sen. Rick Braun. (R-IN) $136.8 million
3. Rep. Michael McCaul (R-TX) $125.8 million
4. Rep. Vern Buchanan (R-FL) $113.3million
5. Rep. David Trone (D-MD) $100 million
6. Sen. Diane Feinstein (D-CA) $96.5 million
7. Sen. Mark Warner (D-VA)$93.5 million
8. Sen. Mitt Romney (R-UT) $85.3 million
9. Sen. Richard Blumenthal (D-CT) $85.2 million
10. Rep. Don Bayer (D-VA) $85.2 million

Think It Through

Do you believe the personal wealth of members of Congress impacts their legislative behavior in Congress? Why or why not?

they need to be taught courage in order to ensure the polis (or state) is bravely defended, yet they also need to be taught restraint so they do not attempt to rule the state. Plato argued that just as a watchdog requires both the courage to attack intruders and the temperance not to bite the master, so too does the military need to possess the courage to fiercely defend the homeland and the temperance not to turn their weapons on the domestic population.[33] Plato links the auxiliaries with the *spirit* portion of the human soul. The spirit for Plato is a positive energy force in the soul that checks the negative energy emanating from our urges and appetites. Feelings of remorse, compassion, or empathy, for example, originate from the spirit and serve to check our base desires.

Guardians and the Rational

The guardians represent the ruling class and require intensive training to ensure the pursuance of the public good and justice. The guardians must possess "wisdom, courage, and temperance." Guardians require the most sophisticated educational training. Only those who demonstrate excellence in mathematics, dialectic argument, military matters, and philosophy are permitted to rule the republic.[34] It is important to remember that Plato believed that an objective permanent truth (i.e., theory of being) undergirds our physical world. He further believed that only those possessing perfect knowledge should rule the republic because perfect knowledge is required to fully understand all dimensions of justice. Plato's three-part divisions of society is perhaps analogous to the caste system in ancient India in which society was divided into four hierarchal social groupings: (1) Brahmins (priests and scholars), (2) Kshatriyas (ruling nobility and soldiers), (3) Vaishyas (merchants), and (4) Shudras (laborers and servants).

Theory and Practice

Civil Disobedience in Modern Times: Tiananmen Square, The Arab Spring, and Black Lives Matter

Socrates believed that the meaning of life was to give our life purpose by remaining true to our personal values and ethics, even if these beliefs conflict with the laws of the states. In his own life, he accepted the penalty of death by drinking hemlock rather than comply with the laws of Athens. Civil disobedience thus has a long history and is still used to make powerful political waves here in the modern era.

On June 5, 1989, the unidentified "tankman" courageously stood in front of a procession of Chinese army tanks in Tiananmen Square in an attempt to thwart a violent government crackdown that resulted in the deaths of hundreds of Chinese protestors.[35] The iconic footage of "tankman" was viewed in real time by people all over the world and remains as the most widely recognized image of political defiance in the modern era. Nearly one

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

million protestors gathered in Tiananmen Square in that student-led demonstration calling for greater free speech and free press rights in China. Thirty years later, in June of 2019, 1 million Hong Kong protestors, many of whom brandished the image of "tankman" on T-shirts and signs, gathered to oppose a controversial bill allowing for the extradition of Hong Kong residents to mainland China.[36]

In 2010, a 26-year-old Tunisian fruit vendor named Mohammed Bouazizi set off to the local market eager to sell his fresh supply of apples, oranges, and dates. However, his day took a turn for the worse when two Tunisian police officers blocked his path and proceeded to take his fruit without paying. This type of public corruption was common at his local fruit market. When he attempted to block the police officers from taking a second batch of fruit, he was knocked to the ground. He was further humiliated when a woman officer slapped him in the face in front of approximately fifty onlookers. He cried out, "why are you doing this to me? I'm a simple person and I just want to work."[37] He was so humiliated from the experience that he decided to set himself on fire to call attention to the public corruption in Tunisia. This act of self-immolation ignited the ongoing Arab Spring, which led to political revolutions in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, and Syria.

BlackLivesMatter was founded by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullons, and Opal Tometi after the senseless murder of 17-year-old Trayvon Martin, a Black teenager who was shot for no reason by a self-proclaimed neighborhood watch volunteer in 2013. It became a global movement after George Floyd was murdered by a Minneapolis police officer on May 25, 2020. After Floyd's murder, between 15 million and 26 million Americans in hundreds of locations participated in political protests against police brutality toward Black Americans (Buchanan et al.). These protests in the United States inspired marginalized groups to lead anti-police demonstrations across the globe. A Pew Research Poll in 2023 found that 70 percent of American teenagers support the Black Lives Matter movement.[38]

Think It Through

Is there a cause you feel strongly about that might cause you to engage in an act of civil disobedience?

Plato's Theory of Forms

For Plato, only those with a perfect understanding of justice should lead the republic because only they will truly appreciate the need to pursue the public good. His rationale for this is best explained in his frequently misunderstood and somewhat mystical view outlined in his theory of forms. Plato's theory of forms reveals his dualistic vision of the universe that distinguishes between:

- the *world of appearances* (i.e., things we can see) and
- the *intelligible world* (i.e., things beyond our physical senses).

For Plato, the world of appearances is nonpermanent and ever changing (i.e., state of becoming), and the intelligible world includes a more permanent design that transcends our material world (i.e., state of being). Plato's theory of forms is difficult to grasp because of its mystical and transcendental components. He speculated that there is an ideal form of everything in the world of appearances and the intelligible world, a way things "ought to be." Only those (women included) who have reached "the good," defined by Plato as possessing perfect knowledge of everything in the world of appearances and the intelligible world, are qualified to rule because only they can be counted on to place the public interest of society over individual self-interest.

As we learned in the previous section, Plato associated the guardians with the rational part of the human soul. Acquiring perfect knowledge helps to inform the spirit, which, once empowered by knowledge, will dominate over our base appetites, producing happiness and harmony in both the republic and the human soul.

For Plato, the things most of us see in the world of appearances are actually imperfect representations of their ideal form.[39] When we view a chair in a room, we are actually viewing an imperfect representation of an ideal form of "chairness." There is such a thing as a perfect chair for Plato, just as there is a perfect form of every item in our world of appearances. There is also an ideal form of everything in the intelligible world for Plato, such as the concept of justice or "justiceness." But when we experience a variant of justice in our physical world, we are actually experiencing an imperfect representation of justiceness, or the ideal form of justice. The important point is that Plato employs the theory of forms to demonstrate a larger belief that there is such a thing as an ultimate objective truth, or a way we ought to be. And only those who have reached "the good" should rule our society because only these select few possess a comprehensive understanding of the ideal form of justice. Plato's theory of forms is later challenged and amended by his most famous student, Aristotle.

Allegory of the Cave

This point is further developed in his renowned *Allegory of the Cave*. The allegory underscores the need for philosophical rule by revealing how some forms of judgment (or opinions) are more valuable than others. Through a dialogue between Socrates and Glaucon in Book VII of *The Republic*, we are asked to imagine "human beings living in an underground cave" from childhood who have their "legs and necks chained so that they cannot move," and they spend their entire lives staring endlessly at the back of the cave wall. He then asks us to imagine there is a fire behind them, with men "carrying all sorts of vessels, and statues and figures of animals made of wood and stone," but because they are chained, they are only able to view the objects indirectly as shadows reflecting against the cave wall. If they spent their entire lives in this condition, they would ultimately come to view the shadow of a wooden cat, for example, as their reality of an actual cat. Plato refers to this level of recognition as "*imagining*" and argued that it constitutes the lowest form of human comprehension. Suppose now they were freed from their chains and able to turn around and view the objects directly. This represents a higher form of comprehension that Plato referred to as a "*belief*." Imagine now they were pulled from the cave and out into the blazing sun. They would now possess the advanced form of understanding that Plato referred to as "*knowledge*." The cave, for Plato, represents the world of appearances, and the sun represents "the good," or the perfect understanding of everything in the world of appearances and the intelligible world.[40] This allegory is instrumental in highlighting why Plato believed only those with the highest forms of knowledge should rule the Republic. The vast majority

Theory and Practice

The Republic and American Democracy

Plato viewed democracy as a substandard political system because it is a system premised on the fact that all opinions are equally legitimate. He believed a political system based on majority rule made little sense because those possessing mediocre levels of knowledge will vastly outnumber enlightened members of society. Democracies are destined to fail, he argued, because the masses lack the intellectual training required to promote justice in society. They will confuse "shadows" for truth and inevitably pursue their own self-interest rather than the public good. Democracies will then eventually degenerate into mob rule and crumble under the weight of competing self-interested groups.

Critics sometimes dismissively refer to this as Plato's "the masses are asses" theory of politics. It is because of these concerns, however, that James Madison did not incorporate the word *democracy* into the U.S. Constitution, opting instead for the term *republic*, not coincidentally the title of Plato's classic text. In the earliest days of the American republic, only 5 percent of the population (i.e., 150,000 out of 3 million people) were eligible to vote in U.S. elections. Moreover, it is in part because of the influence of Plato that the only federal officials who were originally elected into office by citizens were members of the U.S. House of Representatives. In later chapters, we will discuss at length how U.S. senators were originally appointed by state legislatures (until the Seventeenth Amendment in 1913) and how the original electoral college system did not allow citizens any voice in the selection of the American president. So, in short, it is in part because of Plato that popular elections were not very popular with our Founding Fathers.

Think It Through

Staying in the theoretical realm, would you support a political system that gave "enlightened citizens" two votes and "unenlightened citizens" only one vote if there was an objective way to accurately distinguish between the two? Why or why not?

of citizens are unqualified to rule because most never leave the cave. Most citizens confuse shadows for reality or come to mistakenly accept their opinions as truth. Opinion is the opposite of truth for Plato, representing a mere starting point on the long and arduous road to knowledge.

Achieving "the good" makes it virtually impossible for a guardian to commit an unjust act. For Plato, people do not engage in unjust behavior because they are inherently unjust but rather because they simply do not have a full understanding as to why their behavior is unjust in the first place. Nearly everyone in society, after all, resides in the cave, confusing shadows for truth. But guardians would be incapable of participating in selfish or unjust behavior because they possess a perfect understanding of justice. For example, if a person had perfect knowledge of the injustice associated with committing the violent crime of rape, it would be out of the question for that person ever to commit this crime. Those possessing this knowledge would sooner surrender their own lives than commit such an egregious act. This principle is intensified with guardians because they would sooner surrender their lives than engage in any form of injustice.

Gradations of Happiness in the Republic and the Human Soul

So how does Plato establish that a just person perceived to be unjust is happier than an unjust person perceived to be just? The definitive argument is provided at the end of *The Republic* in the section linking the gradations of happiness in the state with the human soul.

Aristocracy: A government in which power is vested in a minority, consisting of those believed to be best qualified.

Plato writes that the ideal philosophical **aristocracy** depicted in *The Republic* will eventually decline, as all things in the world of appearances are in a perpetual state of change and transformation. The decline of the just Republic will begin in the leadership selection process, where future leaders stray from the pursuit of justice and instead begin to favor the lower values of courage and honor. The state will initially devolve from a philosophical *aristocracy* to a republic ruled by warriors, referred to as a **timocracy**, where society values courage and honor over the higher value of justice. The children of the ruling warrior class will then establish an **oligarchy** as they grow to prefer economic prosperity and private property over the value of courage and honor. The republic will then further disintegrate when the spoiled children of the oligarchs continue to value possessions and paltry pleasures but lack the discipline and work ethic to accumulate them. This group will demand independence and the freedom to pursue trivial delights.[41] They will form a democracy that values liberty and freedom over economic prosperity and work ethic. As the political order descends, there will be a progressive relaxation of discipline.

Timocracy: A government in which the love of honor is the ruling principle.

Oligarchy: A government in which a small group exercises control over the masses.

Plato distinguishes between types of desires by highlighting differences between necessary desires and unnecessary desires. Moderate consumption of food and drink, for example, represents a necessary desire because the nourishment they provide makes it possible to live. Unnecessary desires, such as the desire to consume junk food, on the other hand, can be eliminated if we resist surrendering to base urges. Democracy ranks second to last in Plato's gradations of happiness in the state because it encourages the pursuit of all desires, both necessary and unnecessary. It is founded on the erroneous premise that all opinions are equally valid. He viewed it as an inferior system because it is ruled by the masses, who, for Plato, reside in the cave and habitually confuse their opinions (or shadows) with reality (or truth). It is a system that invites the ignorant majority to rule over the enlightened minority.

Table 2.2 features Plato's rankings of political systems from his preferred form of government to his least favorite form of government.

Finally, this democratic system of government will eventually collapse into a tyrannical system of government, the lowest form of political order for Plato. The impoverished democratic majority will blame the affluent for their plight and will select a leader to oppress the wealthy. This leader will come to tyrannize over the poor as well as the rich and will consolidate all political power in the regime. The

Table 2.2 Gradations of Happiness in the Republic and the Human Soul

Type of Political System	The Valued Concept
Philosophical Monarch/Aristocracy	Justice and knowledge
Timocracy	Courage
Oligarchy	Work ethic and wealth
Democracy	Freedom to pursue necessary and unnecessary desires
Tyrant or Despot	Freedom to pursue lawful and unlawful unnecessary desires

entire republic will become enslaved to the tyrant's whims and desires. The **tyrant** represents the lowest form of justice because tyrants pursue both *lawful unnecessary desires* and *unlawful unnecessary desires*. The tyrant will be immune to the appeals of reason and will carry through on desires that occur only in nightmares, such as committing heinous murders or having sexual relations with a parent. The appetite part of the despot's soul will dominate over the spirit and intellect, which in the end will drive the tyrant to depression and madness. Although the tyrannical despot and Plato's guardians both impose their judgment on the body politic, they differ in that guardians are guided by a perfect knowledge of justice, and the tyrant is guided by base desires, urges, and appetites. It is here that Plato establishes the correctness of Socrates's theory that a just person perceived to be unjust is happier than an unjust person perceived to be just. Plato asserts that the tyrant's immoral behavior stems from the desire to fill a void in the soul by seeking the love of followers. But Plato contends that the tyrant's pursuit of love will not lead to happiness because love offers only finite pleasures rather than the infinite pleasures attained through knowledge and the pursuit of justice. The tyrant's frustration will ultimately culminate in the destruction of everything in the tyrant's path that brings displeasure, all in a pathetic attempt to fill the emptiness in the soul created by an unjust existence.[42] The tyrant's self-centered existence coupled with unbridled power to satisfy all urges and appetites leads the tyrant down a path to insanity. The psychosis will intensify as the masses applaud the tyrant's increased callousness. Plato's description of the tyrant as a lonely, discontented figure brings to mind public images of Adolf Hitler, Joseph Stalin, Saddam Hussein, and other infamous despots. This portrayal of the tyrant is offered as evidence that a just person perceived to be unjust (i.e., Socrates) is happier than the unjust person perceived to be just (i.e., tyrant).

Tyrant: An absolute ruler unrestrained by law or constitution.

The Republic is not only the first political science book ever written, but it is also quite possibly Western civilization's most noteworthy and influential text. Plato was the first to initiate the premise that the government and its leaders have a special responsibility to promote an ethical and just society. That, of course, does not mean that *The Republic* is flawless. The most widely criticized section involves Plato's idea to partition the republic according to craftspeople, auxiliaries, and guardians. Why

would craftspeople ever agree to harmoniously contribute when they are not permitted to assume leadership positions? Plato answers this question with his controversial *myth of the metals* explanation.[43] The population will be told that they were created by god with dissimilar amounts of metals in their souls. Those meant to rule will have gold mixed in their souls, those meant to be auxiliaries will have silver, and those meant to be craftspeople will have bronze. People will also be told that the metal distribution is not hereditary, thereby holding out the possibility that those born with bronze in their souls (i.e., craftspeople) could produce guardian children, born with gold in their souls. Craftspeople and auxiliaries will therefore likely accept their station in life rather than risk offending the gods, fearing their unbefitting behavior might destroy any chance of god granting them a guardian child or grandchild. *The Republic* is in the end, then, fastened together by a *noble lie*, which is naturally difficult to reconcile with the text's primary emphasis on the virtues of truth and justice. Ironically, some of the most incisive challenges to Plato's theories came from his most famous student, Aristotle, regarded by many as the greatest thinker in the history of Western civilization.

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Image 2.3 In this painting, Plato (left) counsels Aristotle, his most prominent student. Plato's hand pointing to the sky represents his transcendental view of politics, whereas Aristotle's hand gesture symbolizes his more pragmatic and empirical approach to politics. It is titled *School of Athens* and is regarded by many as Italian artist Raphael's greatest work. Raphael painted *School of Athens* in the Vatican around 1510 as Michelangelo worked on the Sistine Chapel.

Aristotle

Aristotle, Plato's most gifted student, lived from 384 to 322 BCE. Aristotle became Plato's student at the age of 17 and remained under his tutelage until Plato's death approximately twenty years later. He then traveled extensively over the next twelve years and even served a stint tutoring Alexander the Great, the son of then King Philip II of Macedonia.

Aristotle returned to Athens and founded the Lyceum, his own academy designed to include a full range of academic departments. He strayed from some of the major theories associated with Plato and went on to develop original perspectives on human nature, the attainment of human happiness, personal and public ethics, ideal leadership traits, and the relative strengths of a variety of political systems.

Unlike Plato, whose idealistic theories sometimes necessitated transcendence into the metaphysical sphere, Aristotle pursued a much more pragmatic, empirical, and scientific approach to the major questions of the day. This is probably because of the influence of his father, Nicomachus, who served as the chief physician to

Macedonian King Amyntas III. Aristotle relied heavily on scientific knowledge and inherited an aptitude for the natural sciences from his father, excelling in biology, medicine, and physics.[44]

Aristotle also borrowed heavily from the political philosophy associated with Plato, particularly in the principle of an objective truth and the need to fuse politics and ethics. While Plato divided the human soul into three parts (rational, spirit, and appetite), Aristotle similarly separates the soul into a higher rational section guided by reason and a lower irrational part dominated by our appetites and urges. Aristotle also agreed with Plato that happiness is attained in both the republic and the human soul when rationality governs our appetites and urges. Where Aristotle and Plato drastically differ is in their approach to studying politics. Aristotle adopted a more practical, systematic approach.

The Natural State

Aristotle's most important contribution to political science is his volume *Politics*, which can be read alongside his other classic text *Nicomachean Ethics*, believed to be named after either his father or son, both named Nicomachus. The meticulousness of the rationality established in these texts prompted the Roman statesman Cicero to refer to them as "a river of gold" centuries later. Aristotle also agreed with Plato that the polis (or state) is a natural outgrowth of human development, reasoning that man is, above all else, a "political animal."[45] He theorized that there are three distinct forms of human communities that naturally evolve into more complex political arrangements as follows:

- The family unit
- The village
- The polis (state)

Theory and Practice

The Greeks, the Roman Empire, and the Incorporation of Law into the State

The power of Aristotle's works prompted the Roman statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BCE) to refer to them as "a river of gold" centuries later. Cicero was a Roman statesman and philosopher who was an important link in the Greco-Roman tradition because it was in part through Cicero that Greek philosophy came to play a role in the governing structure of the Roman Empire. In the *Republic* and *Laws*, Cicero advocated for a mixed constitution in the Roman Republic, consisting of (1) the consuls as the regional power, (2) the senate as the aristocratic power, and (3) the popular assembly.[46] Cicero's call for an aristocratic republic also influenced many of the American Framers.

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

Whereas Plato argued that justice in the republic should be maintained through the leadership of the philosopher-king, Cicero instead argued that law, not philosophy, should guide the behavior of government. Cicero argued that leaders of society should be, above all else, knowledgeable in the realms of **natural law** and **positive law**. He called for a unity between law and politics so the political leader "is a speaking law, and the law a silent magistrate."[47] It is in part because of Cicero's emphasis on incorporating law into the State that many of the American Framers advocated creating a nation based on natural law.

Think It Through

Can you think of any existing law that places the well-being of special-interest groups over the public good? If so, how would you change this law, and how would this change improve society?

Natural Law: A body of law or a special principle held to be derived from nature and binding upon human society.

Positive Law: A body of law established or recognized by a governmental authority.

To Aristotle, the most divine-like power humans possess is the ability for two people to come together to create another person. The natural desire to procreate and to form a family corresponds to the first type of community: *the family unit*. But because the family unit is not self-sufficient, it requires families to organize into more complex communities called *villages*. Villages provide greater efficiency because families with distinct skill sets can specialize in particular occupations for the betterment of all families. Greater efficiency is generated when families concentrate on specific occupations such as farming or carpentry and establish a trading community where families can exchange goods and services. However, the village on its own is not self-sufficient either. Because individual villages are vulnerable to foreign attacks, they naturally join together and establish a more complex community called the *polis*. The polis brings greater efficiency to the economic system and provides the requisite organizational infrastructure to more skillfully deter and repel foreign invasions. Self-sufficiency is consequently achieved in the polis because basic human needs are met, which helps to facilitate the pursuit of the "good life."[48]

Aristotle then compares this evolution of the three communities with the development of human beings. The family household represents the lowest form of community and is compared with the embryonic stage of human development. The village is a higher form of community and is compared to the childhood stage of human development. The polis is the highest form of community and is put side by side with the adulthood stage of human maturity.

Table 2.3 highlights how Aristotle made the linkage between human and political development.

Table 2.3 Aristotle's Human Communities and Stages of Development

Family Unit	Village	Polis (State)
↓	↓	↓
Embryonic Stage	Childhood	Adulthood

Aristotle's Theory of Forms and Happiness

In his theory of forms, Plato offered a dualistic approach to the universe. He speculated that the highest form of human happiness is achieved when an individual attains perfect knowledge (i.e., the good) about everything in the world of appearances and the intelligible world. Aristotle's *Politics* challenged Plato's assertion that happiness can be found in the pursuit of knowledge alone. He drifts from Plato's mystical approach and offers a more practical formula for happiness. Unlike Plato, Aristotle does not bring his theory of forms into the transcendental but rather incorporates a naturalistic perspective by positing that all living forms have an ideal fate or preexisting purpose within them. Rather than viewing forms in a supernatural manner, he instead concentrated on the progression of forms as they biologically transition from potentiality to actualization.[49] His theory of forms theorizes that all living things have a preexisting design or ideal form of the way they are supposed to be. Happiness, for Aristotle, is achieved when we actualize our potential by achieving our preexisting purpose. Just as a tiny acorn has the potential to become a great oak tree, humans too have an ideal form or preexisting purpose. Where Plato looked for ethics and justice in the transcendental world, Aristotle searched for it in the human condition. He began his investigation of our "purpose" by reexamining Plato's concept of "the good." He similarly concluded that "the good," or that toward which all good things aim, is human happiness.

But, then, what makes for human happiness? The key to happiness for Aristotle, like Plato, is found in the one attribute that separates humans from other animals: *the ability to reason*. The power to reason is unique to humans because, unlike other animals, humans are capable of moving beyond a biological or instinctive existence through our reasoning powers. Although other social creatures exist in nature, such as bees and ants, only humans possess the power to think in the philosophical abstract. This prompts Aristotle to conclude that the key to our purpose is found when we pursue virtue (or excellence) in our reasoning powers.[50] This, of course, is quite similar to the conclusion reached by Plato, that happiness is attained when our intellect dominates over our appetites, leading us to a just existence. The critical difference is that Aristotle's *Politics* challenged Plato's assertion that happiness can be found in the pursuit of knowledge alone.

To Aristotle, the acquisition of knowledge only takes us so far. To attain the highest form of happiness, those possessing knowledge must take the next step by carrying reason into action through politics.[51] The immersion into politics represents the highest form of happiness because the community of the polis offers the highest plane of reasoning. The community of the family, on the other hand, represents the lowest form of community because life within the family embodies a largely biological and instinctive existence, free from abstract philosophical thinking. In the community of family, we engage in procreation, seek

nourishment and other provisions, and exist in a manner quite similar to other creatures found in nature. The highest form of happiness therefore occurs when we fully immerse ourselves in politics because it is here in the community of the polis that our thinking is elevated to the peak form of reasoning, where discussions are most abstract, and where decisions have the greatest consequence. Moral virtue is therefore not identical to knowledge as Plato contended but instead requires the coupling of knowledge with political action. This is significant because it underscores the distinction behind the favored leadership selection process for each theorist.

Distinct from Plato's philosopher-king, who reluctantly assumes leadership after acquiring perfect knowledge, Aristotle believed leaders need to possess the requisite political skills to govern. The ability to reason about politics must be matched with vital political skills in order to affect positive change in society. And Aristotle's *Politics* informs us that the ability to debate is the highest-valued political skill because it is through debate that we are able to carry reason into action. Reason and debate represent two sides of the same political coin. Debate is the public vehicle by which we come to know the *truth (refer to Chapter 1 for a fuller discussion on policy debate)*.

Aristotle believed that the existence of virtue is located in the means between the extremes and that the nature of debate exposes extreme positions, enabling us to find happiness in the virtue of the middle ground. The virtue of the concept of courage, for instance, is found between the extremes of cowardly behavior on the one hand and foolhardy behavior on the other.[52] Courage requires the ability to associate appropriate levels of apprehension with dissimilar types of risks. The important point is that Aristotle believed that leaders should possess both the wisdom to know what is right and the political skills to be able to carry that wisdom into action in the polis in order to promote justice for all. Asking who should lead the polis for Aristotle is thus akin to asking who should sing soprano in a prominent chorus—naturally, the person who would function best in the role.

Theory of Mixed Constitutions

Another major difference between Plato and Aristotle can be found in Aristotle's theory of mixed constitutions, which greatly influenced many of the American Framers.

Aristotle's theory of mixed constitutions is at variance with Plato in that Aristotle does not advocate as vigorously for any one particular political system over another. He asserts instead that all political systems can be either excellent or dreadful depending on the ultimate value pursued by those managing the political system. He categorized all political systems according to the number of leaders ruling over the state and the ultimate value pursued by those leaders (Table 2.4).

Table 2.4 Aristotle's Theory of Mixed Constitutions

Type of Government	Just Constitutions–Leaders Pursue Justice	Perverted Constitutions–Leaders Pursue Self-Interest
Government by One	Monarchy	Tyranny
Government by Few	Aristocracy	Oligarchy
Government by Many	Polity	Democracy

He identifies six types of political systems (or constitutions) and weighs the value of each according to the "purpose" of their leaders:

- A *monarchy*, where the political system is led by a single individual, is a good constitution if that particular monarch pursues justice.
- This same political structure could be perverted if the monarch becomes a *tyrant* and pursues self-interest rather than justice.
- Similarly, an *aristocracy*, where the political system is managed by a small number of leaders, could be a good constitution if these leaders pursue justice.
- However, this same system could also degenerate into a perverted constitution if it devolves into an *oligarchy*, where a few wealthy leaders follow economic self-interest over the public good.
- Similarly, a *polity,* where many leaders administer the political system, could be first-rate if leaders pursue justice.
- But it can also deteriorate into a *democracy*, where the majority pursue their self-interest and behave unjustly to minority factions.

Theory and Practice

Does Democracy Require a Strong Middle Class?

Aristotle was the first political theorist to assert that a state's economic system serves as the foundation for a state's political system. Aristotle argued that a democracy requires a strong middle class to help balance the interests of the wealthy and the poor. The field of international relations has since incorporated this view, and modern society is now replete with examples of how a nation's economic downturn can lead to political instability, which sometimes leads to war. The implosion of the German middle class during the interwar period, for instance, created an environment that led to Adolf Hitler's rise to power. It is also partially for this reason that most modern conflict occurs in the developing world. Some of the world's poorest countries (i.e., the Sudan and Afghanistan) have recently suffered from large-scale civil and/or transnational violence.

Think It Through

How can Aristotle's theory that a strong middle class is required for a democracy to flourish help to inform American foreign policy decision makers on U.S. policy in China and Russia?

Aristotle was also one of the first theorists to examine the extent to which economics undergirds politics. Aristotle's primary concern with democracies is the potential for an impoverished majority to seek revenge against a wealthy minority. It is because of this that Aristotle hypothesized that democracy requires a strong middle class to balance the extreme interests of the wealthy and the poor.[53] We should remember that virtue is found in the means between the extremes for Aristotle. This is a remarkably advanced concept that continues to inform discussions on twenty-first-century statecraft. Aristotle's theories are just as relevant today as they were in his day.

2 Summary

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While Plato seeks the ideal form of government in the republic, Aristotle searches for the best possible government given the situation as it exists on the ground. The major contribution of Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle is their imperturbable call for the fusion of politics and ethics. Plato believed that the ideal republic should be structured to align with the three parts of the human soul to ensure a just society. Aristotle believed that humans are by nature political animals who share some social traits with other life forms found in nature. The ancient Greeks also influenced the structure of the U.S. government and transformed Western civilization by revising the purpose of politics. Politics for Plato and Aristotle is a higher calling, where leaders have a special responsibility to serve the public by promoting the public good over self-interest. In Chapter 4, we will examine how this view of politics was shared by many of the delegates at the American Constitutional Convention as they constructed the three branches of government.

Although the American Framers were directly influenced by their experiences with the British, key points associated with Aristotle's theory of mixed constitutions were also incorporated into the American Constitution. The Framers learned from Aristotle not to fixate on any particular political system but to combine the strengths of dissimilar forms of governments into one. The American system of government, after all, includes a president (government of one), a Supreme Court (government of a few), and a Congress (government of many). It is also not a coincidence that the Framers did not insert the term *democracy* into the American Constitution, instead describing our system of government as a "republic" in deference to Plato's and Aristotle's conviction that only those enlightened on the virtues of justice should lead society. The American Framers created a representative democracy that consisted of a president who was initially appointed directly by an electoral college (see Chapter 7), a judiciary appointed by the president and confirmed by the Senate (see Chapter 8), and a Senate originally appointed by its members' respective state legislatures (see Chapter 6). Members of the House of Representatives were the only federal officials popularly elected by citizens in part because of Greek concerns

that democracies are likely to degenerate into mob rule because most citizens are not trained to place the public good over their own petty self-interests. The Framers were quite intentional in their efforts to structure the American government to ensure that those perceived to be wise would check the self-interested impulses of the majority. This tyranny-of-the-majority concern is addressed directly in Chapter 4's examination of James Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 10, widely regarded as America's greatest contribution to political theory. In Chapter 6, we highlight how this Greek view of government also influenced the design and purpose of European parliamentary systems of government by comparing the U.S. political system to European democracy and other forms of government across the globe. But first, in the next chapter, we will explore how Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes advocate for nondemocratic forms of government in their assertion that "power" rather than "justice" is the key unit of analysis in politics.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. Why did Socrates accept his death sentence rather than flee his jail cell?

   Socrates was one of the first historical figures to engage in civil disobedience. He believed he was unjustly sentenced to death on the charges of corrupting the youth and religious impiety. However, he also believed that as a citizen, he had an obligation to accept his punishment even if he believed it was an unjust or excessive penalty.

2. How did Plato make a connection between the republic and the human soul?

   Plato structured the republic (i.e., craftspeople, auxiliaries, and guardians) to correspond with what he believed to be the three parts of the human soul (i.e., appetites, spirit, and rational). The craftspeople represent the appetite part of our soul and should primarily engage in economic activity. The auxiliaries link to the spirit portion of our soul and should primarily serve as defenders of the state. Plato believed the guardians represent the rational part of our soul and should lead the state because their intense leadership training ensures they will place the public good over their individual self-interest.

3. Why did Plato believe democracies were inferior political systems?

   Plato was not a strong advocate for democracy because he believed only the most enlightened members of society should rule. Democracies typically rely on majority rule systems, which Plato criticized because he believed most people are guided by self-interest rather than the public good.

4. Why does Aristotle believe that we are by nature political animals?

   Aristotle believed that we could learn about human nature by observing other nonhuman life forms in nature. For example, by studying the social organization of bees (and other animals), he concluded that humas, like bees, are social creatures. Accordingly, he viewed humans as political animals and believed the state to be a natural extension of the human proclivity to form family units.

5. How did Plato and Aristotle influence the American system of government?

Plato and Aristotle influenced the American Framers in designing the U.S. Constitution in a number of ways. The term democracy is not included in the Constitution in part because of Plato's criticism of democracy. The Framers used the term republic when referring to the American system of government, which is also the name of Plato's classic text. The Framers were also partially influenced by Aristotle's theory of mixed constitution when designing the U.S. separation of powers system.

Key Terms

Aristocracy	p. 40	**Peloponnesian War**	p. 32
Civil Disobedience	p. 30	**Positive Law**	p. 44
Democracy	p. 25	**Republican**	p. 25
Ionians	p. 24	**Skeptics**	p. 26
Natural Law	p. 44	**Timocracy**	p. 40
Normative Theory	p. 27	**Tyrant**	p. 41
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Key People

Alexander the Great	p. 42	**Homer**	p. 31
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Gautama, Siddhartha	p. 32	**Thoreau, Henry David**	p. 30

3 Modern Political Theory

Image 3.1 The Women's March of 2017 inspired a "pink wave" in the 2018 midterm congressional election. Women voters made up 53 percent of the electorate, and voter turnout was record setting. A record number of women were also elected to Congress in the 2018 election. Steven Ferdman/Shutterstock.com

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▶ Questions to Consider

1. Is it more important to understand the way politics "ought" to be or to understand the way it is actually practiced?
2. Is it more important for a leader to be feared or loved?
3. Are you by nature more competitive or cooperative?
4. What is social contract theory?
5. What role did the Declaration of Independence play in the expansion of political rights for women?

Introduction: The Origins of Modern Political Thought

The previous chapter reviewed early political thought by highlighting some of the most important theories associated with leading ancient political theorists. These ancient thinkers pursued a normative approach to political theory in that they were primarily interested in the study of individual ethics and ideal forms of government. Normative theorists speculate about what is right or wrong in society and typically investigate how we "ought" to behave to reach an ideal standard of public conduct. In the previous chapter, we learned from Plato's *The Republic* that leaders should acquire perfect knowledge before assuming power because those possessing wisdom are most likely to advocate for justice and the public good. But you may be asking yourself whether it is realistic to expect or even possible for leaders to acquire perfect knowledge. How do these ideals factor into today's political reality? And isn't it important to understand how leaders and governments actually operate if we are going to assess their effectiveness and try to improve them? These are some of the same questions many modern political theorists considered as they confronted the challenges of their times, marking a shift away from the normative approach and toward an empirical approach to studying politics. Those advocating a more empirical method were less interested in the way politics "ought" to be and more interested in the way it is actually practiced.

In this chapter, we examine how the modern empirical approach strays from the ancient Greek normative tradition by asserting that an understanding of power is more important than an understanding of justice in helping to explain politics. Normative political theory focuses on the ideal form of government and how it *ought* to function, while empirical theory concentrates on how governments actually behave in the real world. This chapter places special emphasis on Niccolò Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*, John Locke's *The Two Treatises of Government*, and other classic works associated with modern political thought.

Machiavelli called for a powerful monarch but warned that using executive power unwisely could lead to political instability and civil insurrections. He is one of the first to wander from the Greek tradition by asserting that power rather than justice is the most important variable in understanding politics. Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau are three of the leading *social contract theorists* whose collective work serves as the philosophical underpinning for both authoritarian and democratic forms of government in the twenty-first century.

Thomas Hobbes employed a scientific method in his attempt to bear out Machiavelli's contention that power is the key unit of analysis in politics. John Locke, known as the father of liberalism, challenged Hobbes's social contract by calling for individual liberties and a limited form of government. Rousseau's social contract advocates for a more direct form of democracy. It was their writings that ultimately inspired subsequent ideologies such as classical liberalism, **traditional conservatism**, **modern liberalism**, Marxism, feminism, and **environmentalism**.

Traditional Conservatism: The belief that government should not attempt to change society but that government should instead merely reflect changes that have already taken place in society. Conservatism believes that government should play a role in upholding traditional and religious values and that social changes should occur incrementally. Edmund Burke is generally regarded as the father of conservatism.

Modern Liberalism: Modern liberalism points out potential problems associated with systems of "majority rule" and "equality" by emphasizing the tendency of democracies to degenerate into a tyranny of the majority. Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–59) and John Stuart Mill (1806–73) are two leading modern liberal thinkers.

Environmentalism: A social and political movement that seeks to prevent the further deterioration of our natural resources. Environmentalists primarily believe that all living things, including nonhuman living things, warrant serious consideration when enacting public policy. The movement played a large role in the passage of the Clean Air Act (1970), the Clean Water Act (1972), the Endangered Species Act (1973), and a host of other major policies in the United States.

Niccolò Machiavelli

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) was born in Florence, Italy. Little is known about Machiavelli's early years beyond the speculation that he attended the University of Florence.[1] The public record of his life begins when he was appointed the Second Chancellor of Florence in 1498. Machiavelli thrived in the Florentine democratic government installed after the French King Charles VIII toppled the ruling Medici family in 1494. His fortunes, however, took a turn for the worse when the Medici family regained power in Florence in 1512.[2] Machiavelli was tortured and temporarily imprisoned under the suspicion that he plotted with the French against the family.

Wjarek/Shutterstock.com

Image 3.2 A statue of Niccoló Machiavelli overlooks Florence, Italy, at the Uffizi Colonnade.

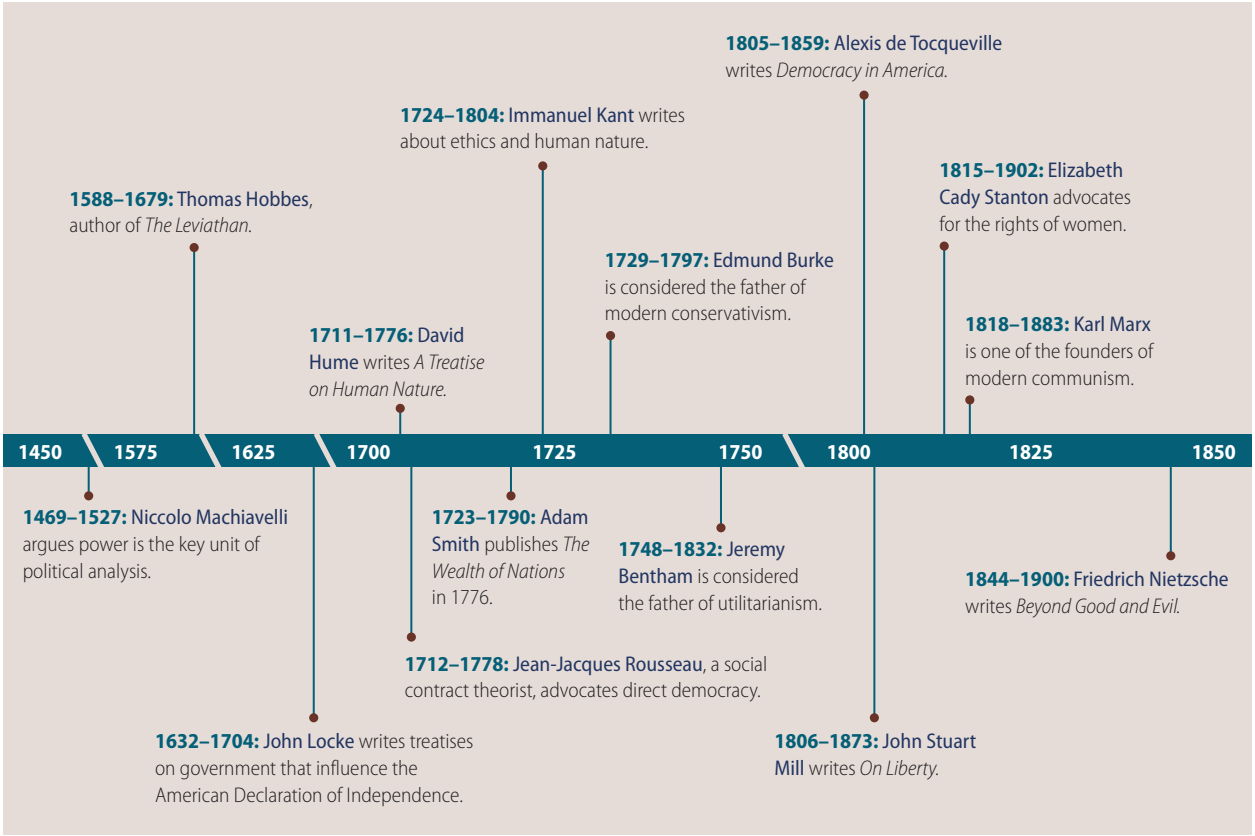
In what turned out to be a failed attempt at recapturing a prominent place in Florentine government, Machiavelli sought to curry favor with the Medici family by dedicating his most famous literary work, *The Prince*, to Lorenzo de' Medici (also called Lorenzo the Magnificent). We are perhaps

fortunate the family never trusted Machiavelli to serve in their authoritarian government because it afforded him the time to write his most sophisticated text, *The Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius* (1521). While *The Discourses* provided wider and deeper analysis on the nuances of republican government, *The Prince's* straightforward, forceful, and uncompromising theories on executive leadership made it one of the most controversial yet widely read texts in the history of Western civilization. We can safely assume that most leaders and political advisers in the twenty-first century have both read and been influenced by the political advice offered by Machiavelli 500 years ago. Beginning with Machiavelli, Figure 3.1 provides a timeline of important modern theorists and/or social activists.

Feudal System: System of economic, political, and social organization that flourished in Europe during the Middle Ages. It was based on the relationship of lord to vassal and the holding of land in feud.

Machiavelli lived during the European Renaissance, an era that sparked a cultural rebirth in Europe that stretched from the late fourteenth century into the seventeenth century. It was also a period that bridged the Middle Ages with our modern world. The Renaissance brought with it a new intellectual vision that transformed the culture, economy, and political life of Europe. It was during this era that the political order in Europe transitioned from the **feudal system** to the

Figure 3.1 Timeline of Important Modern Political Thinkers and Social Activists



nation-state system. The form of feudalism that existed in Europe was a complicated arrangement that included a host of towns and principalities kept largely in check by the authority of the Catholic Church. The Protestant Reformation led by Martin Luther in 1517 weakened both the authority of the Catholic Church and the feudal system in Europe. Feudalism was eventually replaced by the nation-state system with the signing of the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, which ended the Thirty Years' War in Europe. The nation-state system is defined as a collection of sovereign territories that gives its allegiance to a recognized government, as is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 10. There are now 193 nation-states recognized by the United Nations in the modern international system.

Nation-State System: A sovereign state inhabited by people who share political and cultural traditions.

It is important to understand the political context that served as the backdrop to Machiavelli's writing of *The Prince*. The transition from the feudal to the nation-state system was not a peaceful one. What is now the nation-state of Italy was in the fifteenth century divided into five separate states, including Florence, Naples, Venice, Milan, and the Vatican. These five states were involved in a series of conflicts that thwarted Italian unification. Machiavelli believed the merger of the five states was necessary for Italy to compete against Spain, Britain, France, and other major European powers.[3] Machiavelli was a political **realist** who was one of the first theorists to divorce the study of politics from religious and ethical viewpoints. This is in part because Machiavelli believed the Catholic Church was too weak to bring about Italian unification. The primary purpose of *The Prince* was to offer the ruling Medici family necessary instruction on how to gain and maintain political power. Consolidating the five Italian city-states would require a strong and skillful leader capable of navigating through the diplomatic landmines associated with the emerging nation-state system.

Realist: A school of thought in international relations that emphasizes the furtherance of national interests and military security. Realists primarily believe nations exist within an anarchic international political system and, because of a tendency to distrust international organizations, believe nations must be prepared to militarily defend themselves at all times.

Early on in *The Prince*, Machiavelli explained his reasoning behind employing an empirical approach to studying politics. In a not-so-veiled attack on Plato's depiction of the ideal state in *The Republic*, Machiavelli asserted that it is:

> more proper to go to the real truth of the matter than to its imagination; and many have imagined republics and principalities which have never been seen or known to exist in reality; for how we live is so far removed from how we ought to live, that he who abandons what is done for what ought to be done, will rather learn to bring about his own ruin than his preservation.[4]

His thinking evolved somewhat in *The Discourses*, where he advocated for a republican form of government.

Machiavelli is regarded as a modern political thinker because he is one of the first to assert that **power**, and not justice, is the key unit of analysis in politics.[5] He instructed the prince to think about politics in new ways and to reject notions of morality and ethics that blind leaders to the truth about effective leadership. Leaders must be logical and single-mindedly employ tactics that will enhance their power. *The Prince* is a straightforward text that provides practical yet amoral advice

Power: The ability to persuade others to do what they would not do on their own. Machiavelli asserts that power can be exercised through the use of force, by making threats, and/or by enticing desired behavior by providing gifts.

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Image 3.3 Painting titled *Cesare Borgia and Niccoló Machiavelli in Conversation.* Some speculate that Machiavelli used Borgia as a model of leadership when writing *The Prince*. Borgia (1475–1507) was the son of Pope Alexander VI and was widely regarded as a skillful yet ruthless military general.

on how to attain and maintain political power. Machiavelli makes use of "instrument rationality," which emphasizes how to find the most efficient means for achieving a particular political goal.[6]

The Prince as Lion and Fox

What makes Machiavelli truly unique is that he applies his theory of human nature to the rough-and-tumble world of politics. Unlike the ancient Catholic philosopher St. Augustine, Machiavelli does not view self-interested and power-seeking behavior as sinful or wicked; it is simply human nature. In his view, it is no more sinful for people to seek power and pursue self-interest than it is sinful for the earth to orbit the sun.[7] The new empirically-minded prince must understand that people will only follow if they perceive it to be in their best interest to do so. The prince must consequently have a firm grasp on power to prevent insurrections as well as a clear understanding of the power ramifications of every decision he makes. He can best do this by adopting some of the finest traits associated with members of the animal kingdom. Machiavelli advised that a successful prince should be as strong as a *lion* and as cunning as a *fox* when leading the state. As the following excerpt reveals, he should possess the attributes of both animals because the lion alone cannot defend against snares, just as the fox alone cannot defend against wolves. However, the prince who possesses the strength of a lion and the slyness of the fox will be able to control the governed through the use of (1) force, (2) threats, and/or (3) gifts. The prince must

exercise power with an innate sense about when it is best to use force, make threats, and/or give gifts in order to enhance his political power:

> You must know there are two methods of fighting, the one by the law, the other by force; the first method is of men, the second of beasts; but because the first is frequently not sufficient, one must have recourse to the second. Therefore it is necessary for a prince to understand how to use the methods of the beast and the man. . . . A prince . . . ought to choose the fox and the lion; because the lion cannot defend himself against traps and the fox cannot defend himself against wolves. Therefore, it is necessary to be a fox to discover the traps and a lion to terrify the wolves. Those who rely simply on the lion do not understand this.[8]

The Prince as the Lion

By defining power as the ability to control the masses, Machiavelli implies the prince has at his disposal a range of options for managing the public mood. Perhaps Machiavelli's greatest contribution in *The Prince* is that he offers specific guidelines as to the types of activities that have historically attracted the prince's praise or blame. For Machiavelli, being a prince is no job for the squeamish, as he must be prepared to use overwhelming force if necessary to repel invasions and/or suppress domestic insurrections. Because the prince should view the military and personal advisers as both a source of as well as a threat to political power, he must know when to *caress* and when to *annihilate* them to maintain control.[9] To ensure loyalty, he should manipulate impressionable subjects and, in extreme cases, kill political challengers who prove difficult to manage.

For Machiavelli, violence is simply another instrument for the prince to use to enhance political power. Machiavelli is not *immoral* in that he does not advocate bad behavior for its own sake; rather, he is *amoral* in that he instead advocates removing morality from political equations altogether. It is largely because of this that Machiavelli's writings were banned by the Catholic Church for promoting anti-Christian beliefs and why the Prussian leader Frederick the Great in 1739 referred to him as a "criminal, a monster, and an enemy of humanity."[10] This is also why the term *Machiavellian* is today used as a pejorative to describe someone who is untrustworthy and prone to bending rules and breaking promises to achieve personal goals.

Do you agree with Machiavelli that the ends justify the means in politics? Why or why not?

Machiavelli urged the prince to be empirical and to use the power of reason to assess whether the use of violence will enhance political power over the long haul. In what has been referred to as his *economy of violence* theory, he counseled that force should only be used when necessary because violence wrongfully implemented can diminish the prince's power.[11] Violence used judiciously, on the other hand, can prevent larger insurrections that could result in more deaths. Here, he cited the example

Theory and Practice

Theory and Practice: Current Leaders Who Use Violence Against Their Own People: North Korea's Kim Jong Un and Syria's Bashar Hafez al-Assad

Machiavelli advises leaders to use force against political opponents when necessary to maintain political power. Some modern leaders have been merciless against domestic populations perceived as political threats. For instance, North Korean leader Kim Jong Un currently has approximately 120,000 political prisoners detained in North Korean gulags. In 2023, the nongovernmental organization (NGO) Freedom House ranked North Korea as one of the most brutal governments in the world because of its propensity to use camps for "political prisoners where torture, forced labor, starvation, and other atrocities take place."[12] One recent report by the War Crimes Committee of the International Bar Association concluded that the level of barbarism in North Korea has "no parallel in the contemporary world." Another report stated that prisoners in the gulag are forced to work twelve- to fifteen-hour days until they generally die of malnutrition. Detainees in the gulag mostly eat a diet of corn and salt, lose their teeth, have their gums turn black, "their bones weaken and, as they age, they hunch over at the waist."[13] It is estimated that hundreds of thousands of North Korean detainees have already perished in these camps since they were created by the current North Korean leader's grandfather Kim Il-sung in 1958.

Some scholars have also drawn parallels between Machiavelli's economy of violence theory and the conduct of Syrian President Bashar Hafez al-Assad. While some hoped the Syrian leader might help modernize Syria after the death of his father and former Syrian president Hafez al-Assad in 2000, those hopes were dashed when the country plunged into one of the most horrific civil wars in the modern era. The Syrian civil war links to the democratic uprisings in the Middle East, known as the Arab Spring, that began in Tunisia when a local fruit vendor set himself on fire in order to call attention to police corruption at the local market. Rather than follow the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt in allowing large-scale political protests, Assad instead ignited a Syrian civil war after killing hundreds of peaceful protesters, which caused some in the Syrian military to defect and help form an opposition force. In April 2018, the United States, Britain, and France launched coordinated missile strikes on Syria after reports surfaced that the Syrian leader committed war crimes by using sarin nerve gas against his own people in Douma.[14] The 2023 World Report from the Human Rights Watch estimates that 306,000 Syrians civilians have been killed in the civil war so far, and another 111,000 civilians remain "disappeared" at the hands of the government.[15] In addition, roughly half of the country's population are now either living as refugees in other countries (5.4 million Syrians) or displaced from their homes (6.8 million Syrians) within Syria.

Think It Through

Are leaders ever justified in using violence against domestic populations?

of Cesar Borgia, whose ruthless military campaign effectively put down a revolt and brought political stability to the Italian region of Romagna in 1502:

> A Prince, therefore, must not mind incurring the charge of cruelty for the purpose of keeping his subjects united and faithful; for, with a very few examples, he will be more merciful than those who, for excess of tenderness, allow disorder to arise, from whence spring bloodshed and rapine, for these as a rule injure the whole community, while the executions carried out by the prince injure only individuals.[16]

He also cited the example of the Carthaginian General Hannibal, who in 200 BCE successfully maintained a large multinational army over a long period of time because of his reputation for cruelty.

The prince, like the lion, should be constantly preparing and ready to engage in warfare because when "princes think more of luxury than of arms, they lose their state."[17] He should never let his mind wander from warfare and should instead voraciously read history and study how "eminent men" acted in warfare and "examine the causes of their victories and defeats in order to imitate the former and avoid the latter."[18] Aside from keeping the troops well disciplined, the prince should also "engage continually in hunting, and thus accustom his body to hardships; and meanwhile learn the nature of the land."[19]

Is It Better for the Prince to Be Loved or Feared?

In Machiavelli's ideal world, it is best for the prince to be both loved and feared. However, he maintained that if this is not possible, it is preferable for a prince to be feared rather than loved, which is the opposite view of the ancient Roman statesman Cicero, who asserted it is better to be loved. Machiavelli contended it is better to be feared because the prince is better able to control those who fear him than those who love him, as "men love at their own free will, but fear at the will of the prince . . . a wise prince must rely on what is in his power and not on what is in the powers of others."[20] Fear, for Machiavelli, is a strong and long-lasting emotion, whereas the love emotion is occasionally fickle—here today and at times gone tomorrow. But it is here where the prince must walk a fine line of being feared without being hated by the public. The prince should avoid being hated because it is harder to manipulate those in this irrational state. Remember that Machiavelli's theory of human nature holds that people at their core are motivated by self-interest. The prince should avoid being hated because people in this emotional state exhibit unpredictable behavior.

Some of Machiavelli's tips on how best to maintain political power:

- The prince should be as strong as the lion and as cunning as the fox.
- It is best for the prince to be feared and loved, but it is better to be feared than loved.
- The prince should avoid being hated because it is harder to control those in this emotional state.
- The prince should inflict all necessary injury early and at once but give benefits slowly.
- The prince should be decisive and strong.
- The prince should build religion into the state but not actually be religious.
- The prince should appear to be trustworthy but be willing to break commitments when necessary.

They are harder to control because their natural reasoning powers are substituted with vengeful emotions that cause them to behave in ways that run counter to their self-interest. When people are blinded with hatred, they are more likely to engage in thoughtless and/or violent behavior they later come to regret. People in a state of hatred are sometimes even willing to risk their lives in an attempt to overthrow rulers. The prince "need trouble little about conspiracies when the people are well disposed, but when they are hostile and hold him in hatred, then he must fear everything and everybody." The bulleted list provides a summary of Machiavelli's advice on how to acquire and maintain political power.[21]

Do you believe it is more important for a leader to be loved or feared?

The Prince as the Fox: How to Avoid Being Hated

How can a prince engender fear without it evolving into hatred? Machiavelli directs the prince to only "take the life" of someone when there is "proper justification and manifest reason for it," and when using violence to do so swiftly and brutally because people "will revenge themselves for small injuries, but cannot do so for great ones." He further warns the prince against "taking the property of others, for men forget more easily the death of their father."[22]

A wise prince should furthermore impose all necessary pain early in his tenure and in one fell swoop rather than spread small doses of pain over a long period of time. Just as slowly removing a Band-Aid from a wound is more excruciating than hastily peeling it from the skin, inflicting necessary injury on subjects is better applied with swift and overpowering force. If unpleasant acts are implemented properly, injured parties will come to respect and fear the prince, and those free from the imposition of harm will show gratitude for being spared. People will grow tired and come to hate the prince, on the other hand, if he inflicts injury in a slow and tedious fashion over an extended time period. Conversely, the prince should spread benefits to the population in measured and deliberate ways to better control the public mood. He specifically directs that "injuries should be committed all at once, that the last being the less . . . but benefits should be distilled in drops."[23]

Leaders Must Be Decisive

What was most interesting to Machiavelli was why some leaders were successful whereas other leaders who pursued similar policies failed. For Machiavelli, what separates successful leaders from ineffective leaders is their leadership style. And one of the most important traits a prince must possess is self-assuredness. He cautioned that leaders who appear "frivolous" or "indecisive" will become despised by citizens. Princes should instead show signs of "seriousness, strength, and decisiveness" when leading the state.[24] Machiavelli also advised the prince not to delegate important powers to subordinates and to choose good ministers rather than be surrounded by flatterers.

Theory and Practice

China's Treatment of Muslim Minority Group: The Uyghurs

Machiavelli argued that leaders must possess the traits of both the fox and the lion to prevent political insurrections against their government. In his economy of violence theory, he warned that the prince should only use force when required because when force is wrongfully applied, it tends to cause a backlash against the leader. One current controversy involves the Chinese government's treatment of the Uyghurs, a religious minority group residing in the northwest region of the Xinjiang province in China.

In 2023, many countries, including the United States, Canada, France, and the United Kingdom labeled China's actions against Uyghurs as genocide.[25]Approximately 1.5 million Uyghurs are now being detained in Chinese "reeducation camps" for practicing their Sunni Islamic religion.[26] Uyghurs are a Turkish-speaking religious minority who have been rounded up by the Chinese government for such trivial reasons as "attending services at Mosques and sending texts containing Quranic verses."[27] The overwhelming majority of the detained Uyghurs have not been accused of violating any laws and have no due process rights for challenging their confinement. China passed a law banning face veils and beards and prohibited other "Uyghur wedding and funeral customs and halal food practices."[28] Former captives claim the detained Uyghurs are required to pledge loyalty to the Chinese government and communism and are forced to renounce their religion.

The Chinese government initially denied the existence of the Uyghur detention camps until March 2019, when it referred to them as "vocational training centers."[29] Restrictions against the practice of Islam are viewed by the Chinese government as an important part of its global war against terrorism. It has also adopted a new national law referred to as "Sinicization," which requires religions to conform to Chinese culture, language, and societal customs.[30] Human rights groups and governments around the world have publicly condemned China for its treatment of the Uyghurs. The U.S. State Department issued a statement saying the Uyghurs are being treated in a way the world has not seen since the 1930s.[31] However, perhaps because of China's economic clout, no concrete action has been taken against China for its treatment of the Uyghurs.

Think It Through

Should the international community play a larger role in advocating for the Uyghur population in China? If so, what steps do you recommend?

Leaders Must Appear to Be Religious, but Not Actually Be Religious

Because Machiavelli was generally critical of the Vatican, some are initially surprised by his call to incorporate religion into the state. For Machiavelli, the benefits of religion are not found in the spiritual realm but rather in our political world. He believed adherence to religion was an essential contrivance to help the prince enforce state-codified laws. It is here where Machiavelli distinguished between the concepts of "power" and "authority" in government.

We discussed earlier that Machiavelli defined power as the ability to control the governed. A prince who is loved and/or feared will be better able to exercise power because people fear the repercussions of challenging him. Obedience to religion is different in that religious devotees obey what they perceive to be the authority of God out of a conviction that it is morally correct to do so.[32] He explained that "no institution is firm or lasting if it rests on man's strength alone. History and reason combine to show that the roots of all great institutions are to be found outside this world . . . sovereignties, in particular, possess strength, unity, stability only to the degree to which they are sanctified by religion." The authority inherent in a state religion should consequently serve to undergird the power of the prince. People are more likely to obey the laws of the state if an omnipresent God is watching and judging their behavior. Political power is likewise greatly fortified when the power of the prince and the authority of a state religion become so entwined that citizens can no longer decipher between the two. The prince will be better able to manipulate civilians if noncompliance with state laws becomes comparable to disobeying the rules set forth by God. The authority provided by a state religion will moreover diminish the prince's need to use force to coerce public obedience and diminish the likelihood of domestic insurrections.

The Prince Must Keep Up Appearances

To maintain political power, it is essential for the prince to uphold certain customs and traditions. It is, in fact, in some cases more important for the prince to appear to possess certain qualities than to actually possess them. Machiavelli's view that public perception quickly cements into political reality was well ahead of its time and is actually quite similar to the type of advice candidates today receive from media consultants. Because the prince's power is buttressed by the authority of religion, it is important for the public to believe the prince worships at the same altar. This became an issue during the 2008 U.S. presidential campaign when political opponents challenged Barack Obama's Christian faith by either portraying the minister of his Chicago church as an extremist or by pointing to his father's Muslim heritage. The Obama campaign eventually overcame these politically unhelpful perceptions by stressing Obama's adherence to mainstream Christian values. Mitt Romney, the 2012 Republican nominee (and practicing Mormon), also emphasized his belief in Christian values when some of the teachings of his church were called into question in the 2012 presidential campaign. His campaign's approach, in fact, paralleled Machiavelli's admonition for the prince to always appear to be "faithful, humane, sincere," and "religious" and to never allow himself to be depicted in any other way.

Theory and Practice

Tensions Between the United States and Iran Over Nuclear Weapons

Machiavelli advised the prince to strengthen his political power by convincing the population that his powers are linked to the authority of God. This way, people would come to believe that disobeying the leader is the moral equivalent of disobeying the word of God. History is replete with examples of political figures cloaking themselves in a state religion to maintain political power. The Islamic Republic of Iran, known as Persia until 1935, established a theocratic government after a religious group led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini toppled Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi in 1979. Relations between Iran and the United States were further damaged when Iranian students stormed the U.S. embassy in Ayatollah Khomeini's name and held fifty-two American citizens hostage for 444 days from November 4, 1979, to January 20, 1981.[33] Iran still has a theocratic form of government today in that it has an Islamic-based constitution that calls on a religious Assembly of Experts (AOE) to select its "Supreme Leader."

Tensions between Iran and the United States temporarily calmed in 2015 when the two countries joined a multinational nuclear agreement that some thought could lead to improved relations. After the signing of the agreement, thousands of Iranian millennials celebrated in the streets, which caused some to speculate that a democratic movement in Iran might be able to topple Iran's Supreme Leader. Some believe there is a political generation gap in Iran, where young Iranians are more inclined to favor a government that promotes individual liberties over an Islamic government. Young Iranians once openly challenged the authority of Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei more than ten years ago after they suspected political corruption in the 2009 Iranian presidential election. Some of those protestors were killed and hundreds detained for continuing to protest after being warned by the Ayatollah against challenging the results. Optimism for improved U.S.–Iranian relations after the 2015 nuclear treaty were short lived, however, after the United States pulled out of the nuclear treaty in 2018 and reinstated economic, trade, and military sanctions against Iran.[34] President Donald Trump pulled out of the nuclear deal because he believed Iran was violating the terms of the agreement and was allowed to "continue enriching uranium and over time reach the brink of a nuclear blackout."[35] In June 2019, tensions worsened after Iran shot down an American spy drone valued at more than $100 million.[36] Relations improved in August 2023 when Iran agreed to release five detained Americans in exchange for the Biden administration granting access to $6 billion in Iranian oil reserve assets.[37] It is unlikely that another nuclear deal will be struck in the near future. Some speculate that Ayatollah Khamenei's political power is strengthened when tensions with the United States run high because rival factions tend to unify against perceived external threats.

Think It Through

Do you believe it was wise for the United States to withdraw from the nuclear deal with Iran? Can you think of another example of political leaders using religion to further political goals?

Although it is important to foster the perception that the prince is religious, it is perhaps even more important that the prince not actually be religious. The prince must instead always be logical and empirical and not allow his decision making to be influenced by religious mythologies. Besides appearing to be religious, the prince should also appear to be trustworthy. But once again, Machiavelli contends that the appearance of being trustworthy is more important than actually being trustworthy. Princes must be prepared to break their word when it is in their political interest

to do so. He directs that "a prudent ruler ought not to keep faith when by so doing it would work against his interest, and the reasons which made him bind himself no longer exist."[38] Finally, Machiavelli warned that although it is desirable to create the appearance of generosity, leaders are better served to engage in miserly behavior when expending state funds. Leaders who are preoccupied with appearing to be generous will soon become hated by the public, as the prince will be required to "tax the people very heavily" and raise money "by all possible means." It is therefore preferable in the long run for the prince to "worry little" about a miserly reputation.

Which attributes of leadership do you most admire and why?

Machiavelli's *The Prince* is viewed as a depraved and unprincipled examination of politics by some because of its amoral focus on power rather than the public good. Whereas Plato and Aristotle stressed the need for leaders to be both ethical and competent to promote harmony in the state, Machiavelli instead instructs leaders to do whatever is necessary to enhance individual power. Some critics of Machiavelli go further by asserting that the advice offered in *The Prince* more closely resembles the work of a political consultant than a political theorist in that it offers specific advice on how aspiring leaders can acquire and maintain political power. His defenders, however, argue that *The Prince* must be viewed in the context of the chaotic times in which it was written and serve as a reminder that tyrannical power is sometimes required to preserve republics.[39] Abraham Lincoln made a similar case when he asserted that the U.S. Constitution was not meant to be viewed as a suicide pact when defending his decision to suspend *habeas corpus* during the U.S. Civil War. *The Prince* is currently just as controversial and provocative as it was when it was written five hundred years ago.

Thomas Hobbes

One hundred years later, Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) delved much more deeply into the scientific approach to politics than Machiavelli. In his seminal text *Leviathan*, Hobbes set out to empirically test Machiavelli's assertion that power rather than justice is the most important variable in politics. He attempted to do this by offering what was at that time Western civilization's most scientific analysis of human nature and politics. This section explores how Hobbes adopted the scientific method in his denial of objective truth, his negative view of human nature, and his **social contract theory**.

Social Contract Theory: A wide range of theories linked most closely with Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau on the most appropriate relationship between the state and the individual. Social contract theorists typically provide an observation on human nature, an observation on problems that arise in the absence of government (i.e., precontract state), and a recommendation on a form of government best able to solve these problems.

Hobbes once remarked that "fear and I were born twins" after his mother prematurely gave birth to him upon learning the Spanish Armada was within sight of the English coastline.[40] It was in the year of his birth in 1588 that Britain's Queen Elizabeth routed the fleet of more than 100 naval ships deployed by Spain's King Phillip II. Hobbes also supported the Royalists during the English Civil War against the more radical Puritans, who favored a parliamentary system of government. But Hobbes was more greatly influenced by the scientific revolution that was raging through Europe at the time.[41] The Puritans were ultimately victorious in establishing

the supremacy of the British parliament over the British monarch in the Glorious Revolution of 1688.

Hobbes agreed with the English philosopher Francis Bacon (1561–1626), who argued that only through the scientific method can we liberate our minds from the widely accepted mythologies found in all societies. Bacon argued that we should leave behind old ways of thinking and adopt a new scientific approach to understanding our universe. Hobbes opposed Plato's normative approach and instead held a high regard for Galileo and the scientific method of inquiry. The term *political science* itself originated from the belief that we can, in fact, study politics scientifically.

Galileo (1564–1642) was one of the first scientists to argue that we can understand our physical world by applying mathematical principles, just as we can understand modern machinery by studying the functioning of its parts.[42] Hobbes drew similar comparisons between the inner workings of a watch and our ability to understand human nature and politics. Through empirical research, Galileo established the correctness of Copernicus's controversial theory that the sun, rather than the earth, was at the center of our galaxy. Galileo was later charged with heresy during the Inquisition and spent the latter part of his life under house arrest for undermining the teachings of the Church, which at the time incorrectly held that the earth was at the center of our solar system. The Church argued against the scientific method because it believed the supreme powers of God were beyond human comprehension. Hobbes, nonetheless, set out to prove the correctness of Machiavelli's theory on power by using the scientific approach, just as Galileo used science to prove Copernicus's theory accurate years before.[43]

Hobbes versus the Greeks: Is There an Objective Truth?

The ancient Greeks believed that the primary purpose of government is to promote social harmony. Political power for the Greeks was merely a means to promote the ends of justice. For Hobbes, political power was not viewed as a means to promote social justice, but rather a means toward the more limited aim of preventing chaos and warfare. Hobbes, like Machiavelli, broke from the Greek tradition by denying the existence of a universal objective truth. Hobbes was instead a nominalist, a concept that originated in the twelfth century with French philosopher Peter Abelard. He did not believe that a permanent objective truth lies beneath our world of appearances but rather held that humans instead construct a perception of "truth" through the filter of self-interest and the syllogisms of language. Nominalists believe language is necessary in part to help us make sense of the world, as the complexities of the universe far surpass the limits of our reasoning powers. Hobbes believed we can only come to know the truth indirectly through the boundaries of self-interest and language. From a nominalist's perspective, people are neither

Abu Castor/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 3.4 The book cover of Hobbes's *Leviathan*, which was published in 1651. In *Leviathan*, Hobbes argues for the necessity of a strong sovereign to prevent society from degenerating into civil war and death. This book serves as the theoretical rationale for monarchs.

physically attractive nor unsightly; they simply appear as they do. There is no universal objective standard for beauty, as good looks are instead determined by cultural constructs that evolve over time. Similarly, human behavior for Hobbes is not objectively good or bad, it is simply human behavior. What makes us interpret some behavior as good and some as bad is the extent to which the behavior facilitates our self-interest. We tend to label behavior that promotes our self-interest as good and brand behavior that works against our self-interest as bad. Or as Hobbes puts it: *"whatsoever is the object of any man's appetites or desire, that is which he for his part calleth good; and the object of hate, evil."*[44] There is, then, for Hobbes no such thing as a real objective truth toward justice, but only the truth we make up through our self-interest and through the limits of language.

Hobbes's View of Human Nature

Hobbes also challenged Plato's major assumptions about human nature and the purpose of government. In the previous chapter, we examined Plato's contention that just behavior is innately superior to unjust behavior. *The Republic* was his attempt to establish the correctness of Socrates's view that a just person perceived to be unjust is happier than an unjust person perceived to be just. He did this at the end of the *Republic* in his theory on the gradations of happiness in the republic and the human soul. Here Plato argued that the highest form of happiness occurs when the guardian reaches "the good" (or perfect knowledge) because it is in this state that our intellect dominates over our appetites and urges and steers us toward justice. The worst form of government for Plato was a tyrannical system of government because tyrants instead follow their appetites and urges rather than pursuing the public good.

The theories of Plato and Hobbes conform in the sense that both agree human nature is divided between the rational part of our intellect and the self-interested impulses of our appetites. Where they differ is in Plato's assertion that human happiness is best achieved when our intellect is trained to dominate over our desires. For Hobbes, it is not possible for our intellect to dominate over our natural urges. He instead examined human nature in the same manner that physicists study our natural world. Scientists established that most things in the universe can be best explained by exploring the concepts of matter and motion. Modern science observes our physical world by studying how matter, when set into motion, collides with other forms of matter, which then unleashes a long chain

of random events. Hobbes incorporated this view from science to explain human behavior. He counseled that within the matter of the human body exists the "vital motion" of the circulation of blood and breathing patterns. Human behavior similarly is best explained by studying the "voluntary motion" (i.e., psychology) that controls physical movement and the way we speak.[45] For Hobbes, the study of politics first requires an in-depth understanding of human psychology. Human behavior is best understood by examining how the sensations associated with sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell interact with the mind.[46] Hobbes argued that humans have natural "appetites" (e.g., hunger and thirst) and natural "aversions" that explain the way we behave. He differs from Plato in that he believed all human behavior is principally driven by our natural pursuit of pleasures and our natural aversion to pain.

He reasoned that our intellect plays a secondary role to our natural urges and merely serves to determine what we perceive to be pleasurable or painful. And it is in this finding that Hobbes declared he is able to substantiate Machiavelli's contention that power is the most important variable in the study of politics.

Human Nature and Our Lust for Power

So what if all human behavior is driven by our pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of pain? How does this help us make generalizations about human nature and/or the study of politics? What is pleasurable for one person, after all, might be painful to another and vice versa. It is from Hobbes's explanation of human behavior that he is able to assert that all human beings possess a natural lust for power. Although it is true that what is pleasurable for one might be painful to another, he argued, we all must possess a natural inclination toward power because it is through the possession of power that we are able to pursue whatever it is we perceive to be pleasurable. This does not mean that we all secretly wish to be president of the United States. Remember, it is our intellect that determines our perceptions of pleasure and pain. But even those who prefer to pursue life's simpler pleasures, such as gardening or spending time with family, still require a certain amount of power to pursue these pleasures.

The chief problem for Hobbes is that satisfying one's desire in the state of nature provides only temporary pleasure and results in a continued struggle to ensure that pleasure is maintained into the future. He stated that "the object of man's desire is not to enjoy once only and for one instant of time, but to assure forever the way of his future desire. And therefore the voluntary actions and inclinations of all men tend not only to the procuring but also to the assuring of a contented life."[47] For Hobbes, it is because of this natural lust for power that people will inevitably come into conflict with one another in the state of nature. Because resources in nature are in limited supply, quarrels will occur when "two men desire the same thing, which

nevertheless they cannot both enjoy, they become enemies."[48] He extended on this point by asserting that in nature "we find three principal causes of quarrels": competition, diffidence, and glory. In the first case, people will violently compete against each other for possessions; in the second, conflict will ensue out of a sense of fear and insecurity; and in the third, fighting will be caused by our desire to enhance personal reputations.

People in the state of nature live in a persistent state of warfare and fear as "every human being is capable of killing any other." Hobbes's view of the state of nature is consequently in direct odds with John Locke's assertion that society is guided and structured by an imperceptible natural law. Because Hobbes instead views the world through the scientific lens of matter and motion, concepts such as natural law, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next section, serve as an imaginary solution to a genuine human predicament. Hobbes concludes that our existence in the unstructured and unmanaged environment of the precontract state (i.e., life before government) is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Society will inevitably degenerate into total war "of every man against every man" where "notions of right and wrong, justice and injustice have no place."[49]

Hobbes's Social Contract Theory

This does not mean to suggest that Hobbes believed we are by nature wicked and depraved. His view on human nature does not mirror the Christian doctrine of original sin that asserts people are born sinful as a result of Adam and Eve eating the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden. He additionally does not subscribe to the view that people take joy in the suffering of others: "For, that any man should take pleasure in other men's great harms without other end of his own, I do not conceive it possible."[50] Instead, he argued, people behave quite rationally in the precontract state considering the absence of government. In some respects, his views parallel the *tragedy of the commons* effect depicted by Garrett Hardin (1968), who argued that resources will become depleted whenever high demand meets a limited resource in an unregulated environment. Because of the intense competition for resources, people are unlikely to trust others out of a fear that placing one's trust in an untrustworthy person could have devastating effects.[51] Here, Hobbes was perhaps influenced by Machiavelli's advice to the prince on the necessity of breaking promises when it is in the best interest of the prince to do so: "If men were all good, this precept would not be a good one; but as they Are Bad, and not observe the faith with you, so you are not bound to keep faith with them."[52] So although Hobbes believed we are primarily motivated by self-interest, he also recognized that we are in fact vulnerable creatures who must rely on faulty logic and are susceptible to the self-interested behavior of others.

Theory and Practice

Realism and Liberalism in International Relations

This discussion on whether conflict and violence are inherent in human nature is carried on today in the field of international relations. In Chapter 10, we examine and contrast theories associated with realism and liberalism. Realists argue that the international system is in a state of chaos and that states should maximize their own power to deter foreign aggression. Thucydides (400 BCE), Machiavelli (1469–1527), and Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) are regarded as renowned realist theorists. Former president Ronald Reagan is generally considered a modern realist because he relied heavily on American military power to expand America's sphere of influence.

Liberalism, on the other hand, is more optimistic about our ability to bring structure and order to the international system. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and John Locke (1632–1704) are liberal theorists who believed humans can exist in nonviolent and cooperative political structures. Former American president Woodrow Wilson's attempt to build a collective security system by way of the League of Nations is consistent with the liberal approach to problem solving. The liberal approach relies more heavily on involving international organizations such as the United Nations to solve problems in the international system.

Think It Through

Do you believe the United Nations is effective in solving global problems?

Hobbes is regarded as the first social contract theorist because he recommended a specific form of government that is best suited to address the problems associated with his vision of the precontract state. Social contract theorists accordingly analyze three distinct components of political theory: an observation of human nature, an observation of the problems that arise in the absence of government, and a recommendation on a form of government best able to solve the problem.[53]

Because conditions in the precontract state are so abhorrent, people will voluntarily leave it in favor of the more secure environment provided by government, or commonwealth as Hobbes refers to it. For Hobbes, a commonwealth is created when all associated with it are willing to surrender all freedoms to a governing authority that consists of either one person or one assembly of people. In so doing, all members of the commonwealth make the following pledge: "I Authorize and give my Right of Governing myself, to this man, or to this Assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give thy Right to him, and Authorize all his Actions in like manner."[54] For Hobbes, members of the commonwealth must surrender almost all of their rights to either a ruler or a ruling assembly in exchange for personal security. Later in *Leviathan*, Hobbes stated his preference for an individual monarch out of a belief that governing assemblies are more likely to be filled with those more interested in pursuing personal wealth than the public's business. As opposed to the American system of federalism, which

When looking at Hobbes and all the political thinkers you'll encounter in this book, think about how their historical surroundings and circumstances influenced their theories. How were their thoughts shaped by the cultural, political, religious, and scientific beliefs of their time? How might their theories differ if they lived in the twenty-first century?

Do you agree with Hobbes that people should surrender basic rights to government in order to maintain security in society? Do you believe Americans have too few or too many rights in the twenty-first century?

Why Politics Matters to You!

Prisoner's Dilemma: Are You More Competitive than Cooperative?

Hobbes argued that civil society will inevitably degenerate into civil war and death because people in the precontract state will not cooperate with each other out of a fear that placing trust in an untrustworthy person could have disastrous impacts. It is based on this finding that Hobbes argued we are by nature more competitive than cooperative. In 1950, Merrill Flood and Melvin Dresher from the Rand Corporation developed the prisoner's dilemma game theory to illustrate that people sometimes will not cooperate with each other even when it is in their best interest to do so. The prisoner's dilemma has been widely applied in the field of international relations and is highlighted again in Chapter 9.

Are you by nature a competitive or cooperative person? Pretend you and a classmate joined forces in robbing a bank. The two of you are later apprehended and brought to the police station for questioning. Because the police officers only have circumstantial evidence against you, they need to solicit a confession to ensure a conviction. One police officer takes you into an interrogation room while another police officer takes your classmate into an adjoining room. You are then each informed that it is in your best interest to cooperate with the investigation by admitting that you and your classmate were involved in the robbery. You then learn that if both you and your classmate remain quiet you will each serve one year in prison. If you and your classmate both confess, you will each serve five years in prison. If one confesses and the other remains quiet, the one who confesses will go free while the one who remains quiet will serve ten years in prison.

		Student A	
		Talk	**Quiet**
Student B	Talk	5 years each	A = 10 years B = 0 years
	Quiet	A = 0 years B = 10 years	1 year each

Think It Through

What would you choose to do?

is discussed in great detail in the next chapter, Hobbes instead advocated for a unitary form of government where the sovereign is responsible for making, executing, and interpreting the law. The most controversial aspect associated with Hobbes's commonwealth is that the sovereign stands above the law and is answerable to no one. Hobbes asserted that people will willingly surrender almost all rights to the sovereign because the alternative is life in the precontract state, which inevitably leads to civil war and death. The purpose of government, for Hobbes, is consequently not to promote justice as the ancient Greeks asserted but rather to provide security. The political theory espoused by Hobbes has served as the theoretical rationale for monarchs and authoritarian governments. In Table 3.2, we provide a brief comparison of Thomas Hobbes's social contract theory against the social contract theories of John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau.

Table 3.1 Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau: The Major Social Contract Theorists[55]

View of Nature and Government	Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)	John Locke (1632–1704)	Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–78)
Human Nature	Humans have an inherent lust for power.	Humans are by nature cooperative and defensive.	Humans are naturally good, driven primarily by a natural aversion to suffering. Men are noble savages.
State of Nature	Life in the state of nature is solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short. The state of nature is in a constant state of war, where everyone is capable of killing everyone else.	The state of nature is largely cooperative and guided by natural laws.	The state of nature is naturally a peaceful place where people live uncomplicated lives until they are corrupted by the introduction of private property.
Social Contract Theory	People should surrender all rights to the sovereign in order to avoid civil war and death.	Favors limited representative democracy and believes government should merely do what is not provided for in the state of nature to promote the right to life, liberty, and the protection of private property.	Favors a system of direct democracy.

John Locke

Hobbes's view of human nature as self-interested and his call for an authoritarian government to prevent society from degenerating into chaos and civil war was directly challenged by John Locke in his classic work titled *Two Treatises of Government* in 1690. Locke was a British political philosopher who both influenced and was influenced by England's Glorious Revolution of 1688. Although considered a "bloodless" revolution, the insurrection was successful in driving England's King James II into exile in France, thereby officially ending the dominance of the English monarch. King James II was a polarizing figure who, through the use of force, undermined the laws of Parliament and sought to convert England to Catholicism. The British Parliament in 1689 offered the vacant throne to Prince William and his wife Mary. But this authority was conferred under conditions set forth in a new British Bill of Rights that stripped considerable fiscal and military powers from the throne. The British monarch was no longer empowered to appropriate funds or to raise armies during peaceful times without the consent of the British Parliament. A new English era of Parliamentary government (see Chapter 6) had begun.

It was in this context that Locke founded a new trend of thinking under the banner of **classical liberalism**, which viewed human beings as innately principled, mentally gifted, and capable of self-rule. It was this political doctrine more than any other that influenced the American uprising against the British in the American Revolution. Classical liberalism stresses individual liberty, the importance of natural rights, personal privacy, and the need for limited democratic government.

Classical Liberalism: Classical liberalism advocates for a limited government and for greater individual liberties at the political, social, and economic levels of society. John Locke (1632–1704) and Adam Smith (1732–90) are generally regarded as two leading classical liberals. This movement inspired the American and French Revolutions and the economic system of capitalism.

Theory and Practice

John Locke and the U.S. Declaration of Independence

Thomas Jefferson and other Framers were strongly influenced by Locke's notion of natural rights and natural law. In what is likely the most celebrated sentence ever written in American history, Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." Jefferson's assertion that we have a natural right to life was borrowed from Locke's notion that we are the owners of our own bodies. If we have a natural right to life, then a government is required to enforce the corresponding natural law against taking the life of another. As for the natural right of liberty, Locke explained because we are the owners of our bodies, then we are also in possession of our limbs, and our mouths, and by extension the words that come out of our mouths. We therefore have a natural right of free expression. Jefferson interestingly detours somewhat from Locke on the third natural right listed in the Declaration of Independence. Rather than give emphasis to the natural right to pursue private property as Locke counseled, Jefferson instead cited a natural right to pursue happiness. On this point, Jefferson was more influenced by the writings of Plato and Aristotle, whom you might recall from the previous chapter defined happiness as the right to pursue knowledge and justice.

Think It Through

1. **Do you believe people have unalienable (or natural) rights? Why or why not?**
2. **How would Hobbes argue against Locke's view of natural rights?**

Locke depicted the precontract state as a primitive society where human beings are free, autonomous, and rational creatures who are first and foremost motivated to acquire private property.[56] Thomas Jefferson borrowed liberally from Locke when drafting the Declaration of Independence, and Locke's instruction that it is better to rise up in arms against oppressive governments than to live under their tyranny gave courage to American patriots during the Revolutionary War. The power of Locke's theory is long lasting and far reaching, as today approximately 64 percent (i.e., 123 nations) of the world's governments operate under some form of a democratic system.[57] This section compares John Locke's view of human nature, life in the precontract state, and his social contract theory against the positions held by Thomas Hobbes.

Locke and Human Nature

The difference between Hobbes's view of human nature and Locke's view of human nature is sometimes simplified to suggest that Hobbes considered humans to be naturally evil, whereas Locke considered human nature to be innately good. But just as the previous section pointed out that Hobbes did not believe humans were naturally wicked, neither did Locke believe we were naturally virtuous. Although Locke

believed in God, and Hobbes most likely did not, he did not view humans as divine beings born into the world with preexisting notions of right and wrong. In his work titled *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he instead supported the principle of *tabula rasa* (which translates to "blank slate"), which stated that we come into the world without any preconceived notions about anything. Here, he rejects René Descartes' "doctrine of innate principles" that avowed we are born with knowledge of the existence of God. For Locke, our sense of right and wrong is rather developed through the knowledge we gain from our five senses and our powers of reflection. We cannot hold any principles, according to Locke, until we are either first taught them or are able to acquire them by converting our experiences into knowledge.

Locke, like Hobbes, was an empiricist and subscribed to the scientific approach to the study of human nature and politics. Hobbes and Locke also agreed that human nature is divided between the rational part of our intellect and the self-interested impulses of our desires. But where Locke and Hobbes disagreed on human nature is on the emphasis each placed on the importance of our intellect, or the rational side of our nature. In the previous section, we examined Hobbes's assertion that all humans have a natural lust for power because power is required to pursue pleasure and avoid pain. Hobbes also asserted that human behavior is largely driven by our natural appetites and that the rational side of our nature merely serves to determine our perception of pleasure and pain. Although Locke never mentioned Hobbes by name, he challenged his contention that human nature is principally driven by our urges and desires. He instead argued that the rational side of our nature can dominate over our appetites. Our reasoning abilities, Locke counseled, are gained from "external experiences" where information received from our five senses is converted into knowledge. You might recall that Hobbes also believed that our behavior is influenced by how we interpret information that flows to the brain from our five senses. But Locke differs from Hobbes in that he also highlights a second type of knowledge that comes from our "internal experiences," which emphasizes how our reasoning abilities are enhanced through the power of reflection. This power of reflection is unique to humans and enables us to process complicated and abstract thoughts about the potential repercussions of future behavior. Locke believed that our human nature is largely peaceful and cooperative because our natural reasoning powers point us in

The History Emporium / Alamy Stock Photo

Image 3.5 A portrait of John Locke (1632–1704) painted by Sir Godfrey Kneller in 1697. Locke's theories helped inspire the writing of the U.S. Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution. At the time of this portrait, Locke was largely removed from public life, opting instead to spend his remaining years in the quiet company of close friends.

this direction. It is through our power of reason that we will come to learn "that no one ought to harm another in his life, liberty, or possessions."[58] So whereas Hobbes believed our behavior is driven by our desires, Locke believed that our behavior is largely controlled by our reasoning powers.

Why Politics Matters to You!

The Expansion of Women's Rights, the #MeToo Movement and Abortion Rights

John Locke's belief in individual rights helped pave the theoretical path for the expansion of women's rights. While Locke was not a feminist in the modern sense, he did advocate for property rights for women, and his influence on the writing of the American Declaration of Independence forever changed the course of history. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–97), regarded by some as the founder of feminism, expanded on some of Locke's writings in her critique of the treatment of women in the eighteenth century titled *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792). Wollstonecraft criticized the role played by women in eighteenth-century marriages and argued for equal education and equal rights for women. Elizabeth Cady Stanton later used the Declaration of Independence as a template when drafting the Declaration of Sentiments for the historic Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848. The Declaration of Sentiments read, "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." Stanton went on to list eighteen "injuries and usurpations" committed against women by men, which is the equal number of grievances Thomas Jefferson filed against King George III.[59] Stanton went on to work with Susan B. Anthony in the struggle for women's suffrage. Charlotte Woodward, a young worker in a glove factory, was the only signer of the Declaration of Sentiments that was still alive when all women received the right to vote more than seventy years later in the Constitution's Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.[60] According to the U.S. Census, women now make up 50.4 percent of the U.S. population. Women also have had higher voter turnout rates than their male counterparts in every U.S. presidential election since 1964.[61] In the 2018 midterm congressional election, 53 percent of voters were women, and only 47 percent of the electorate were men.[62] The 2018 election was referred to as the year of the woman because of the #MeToo movement and resulted in a "pink wave" of women voters and a record number of women members of Congress. Women also flexed their political muscles in the 2022 midterm election after the *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022) Supreme Court decision that overturned *Roe v. Wade* and allowed states to ban or strictly limit abortion procedures. The #MeToo movement and the issue of abortion rights has inspired more women to run for public office. In 2022, a record 124 women won seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, up from 85 women members of Congress in 2016. The 2018 "pink wave" was in some respects galvanized by the grassroots "Me Too" movement that was sparked after actress Alyssa Milano asked women to tweet #MeToo on their Twitter (now named X) account if they had ever been sexually assaulted. Approximately 500,000 women then tweeted #MeToo over the next twenty-four.[63] The #MeToo movement continues to raise awareness about sexual assault and remains a potent force in American politics. In the *Dobbs* decision, the Supreme Court overturned the precedent established in *Roe v. Wade* (1973) by ruling that the right to terminate a pregnancy is not constitutionally protected. Because of the *Dobbs* (2022) ruling, abortion laws are now left up to the states. States have taken a number of actions since the ruling, including banning all abortion procedures or enacting gestational age limits. Other states have passed laws expanding or guaranteeing abortion access, and a number of lawsuits are pending or expected on both.

Property Rights in the State of Nature

The chief principle associated with John Locke is that of a "fundamental respect for the integrity of the autonomous individual."[64] In the *Second Treatise*, Locke portrayed the state of nature and the social contract in an opposing light from the views depicted by Hobbes. Locke believed that we are born free and exist naturally in a "state of liberty."[65] In this state of perfect freedom, we will naturally come to possess private property. For Locke, owning private property is considered one of the most important natural rights bestowed upon man by God. He argued that because "man has property in his own person . . . the labor of his body and the work of his hands, we may say are properly his." It is a matter of simple fairness, then, for Locke that only those who are "industrious and rational" should benefit from the fruits of their labor.[66] He also contended that those who are not industrious yet attempt to

Marxism: Based on the theories associated with Karl Marx (1818–83), the ideology of Marxism believes almost all conflict in society occurs because of class conflict. Karl Marx pointed to the level of exploitation and social deterioration that occurred during the Industrial Revolution in the mid-nineteenth century as proof that capitalism primarily fuels human suffering and social alienation. Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848.

Theory and Practice

Karl Marx and Communism

Adam Smith incorporated some of John Locke's views on private property in his theories on capitalism in his classic text *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). Karl Marx (1818–83) challenged the tradition of modern political theory by arguing that private property should no longer serve as the foundation of Western civil society, as John Locke and Adam Smith argued. Marx emerged as a leading force against the economic system of capitalism. He argued that the capitalist system was inherently flawed because the capitalist producers' (i.e., bourgeoisie) single-minded pursuit of "profit" causes the bourgeoisie to exploit the working class (i.e., proletariat). Society under a capitalistic economic system is thus transformed into two hostile camps, the bourgeoisie versus the proletariat. He also railed against organized religion by referring to it as "the opium of the people." Marx counseled that social misery and human alienation are the byproduct of the bourgeoisie's exploitation of the proletariat, and he urged the proletariat to revolt against capitalism. Marx's critique of capitalism was bolstered by the deplorable working conditions that existed during the Industrial Revolution.

Marx called for a workers' revolution against capitalism and advocated that capitalism be replaced by universal socialism. He coauthored his most famous work, *The Communist Manifesto,* with Friedrich Engels in 1848. Marx borrowed from Georg Hegel's theory on the dialectic that espoused that truth evolves out of a long series of opposing forces, referred to as the thesis, the antithesis, and the synthesis. He amends Hegel's "dialectic" in his analysis on "historical materialism" by arguing that humankind evolves "through successive modes of production": from feudalism to capitalism and eventually to communism.[67] Marx speculated that socialism will naturally evolve from the system of capitalism. **Marxism** inspired the Russian Revolution of 1917 and the founding of the Soviet Union. There are also many modern nations, such as Cuba, the People's Republic of China, and Vietnam, that are guided at least in part by socialistic principles. Marxism is discussed in greater detail in the discussion in Chapter 10 on dependency theory.

Think It Through

Do you believe developing nations are more likely to follow the Chinese model of economic development or the American model of economic development?

benefit from the labor of others violate the natural rights of productive members of society. The leading capitalist thinker Adam Smith incorporated this view into his theory of the invisible hand, which stressed that economies run more efficiently when guided by the invisible hand of supply and demand rather than by regulations set forth by government. Locke's view of property is also based on his belief that individual liberty brings with it the right of individuals to "make choices about the direction of one's life."[68] While Hobbes argued that the competition for property will inevitably lead to chaos and violence, Locke insisted that the laws of nature as expressed through human reasoning will provide the necessary structure to ensure a peaceful existence.

This does not mean to suggest that Locke believed our reasoning powers make certain that everyone in the precontract state will at all times behave in a defensive and cooperative manner. There will be some who stray from the norm and engage in uncivilized behavior. But Locke believed that because we are by nature social creatures with advanced reasoning powers, we will naturally develop rules to punish those who violate them. We will realize that freedom must be coupled with responsible behavior to ensure one's freedom of action does not bring harm to another. The state of nature, for Locke, benefits from a thriving and fully functioning civil society. He further counseled that although we have a right to private property, we do not necessarily have a right to amass so much of it that we could not "make use to any advantage of life before it spoils." Our natural condition in the state of nature is thus not a state of war of every man against every man as Hobbes suggested but is rather described by Locke as "a state of peace, good-will, mutual assistance, and preservation."

Locke's Social Contract

So the obvious question is, if life in the state of nature is as serene as Locke will have us believe, why would we want to leave it for a new life under government? Why depart from this wonderful existence in nature? He answers this by stating that although people enjoy the benefits of freedom in the state of nature, this liberty is vulnerable to the "invasions of others." Through our power of reason, we will come to realize that the gifts associated with the state of nature are best protected by forming a government to make certain of their preservation. And the primary reason for establishing a commonwealth is to ensure the preservation of private property. The purpose of government is to uphold our natural rights and to do for us what is not provided for in the state of nature. Locke believed that every natural right had a corresponding natural law that needed to be enforced by government. If we have a natural right to property, then there must be a corresponding natural law that tells us it is wrong to seize the property of others. Locke's social contract theory called for a limited representative government with the purpose of protecting private property and upholding natural law.

Hobbes argued that an all-powerful sovereign was required to prevent civil war and death in his social contract theory. People must surrender almost all freedoms to the sovereign in exchange for a peaceful existence because individual liberty would simply be used to gain more power. Locke shifted Hobbes's argument here by asserting that living under a tyrannical government will cause, rather than prevent, violence because people will inevitably revolt against the unnatural environment of oppression. Locke's social contract instead called for a limited government to perform two basic functions. The first role of government is to pass laws that protect the preservation of citizens and are aligned with the laws of nature. The second purpose of government is to punish

Theory and Practice

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: The Last Great Social Contract Theorist

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–78) is regarded as the father of the French Revolution and by some as the last great social contract theorist. Rousseau caused a stir when he stated that "Man is born free, and yet we see him everywhere in chains" in his most famous work, *The Social Contract*. This statement was at odds with other major works during the Enlightenment in that most theorists of the day argued the "light of reason" was for the first time guiding public behavior.[69] Rousseau believed people are born in liberty with a natural aversion to seeing others suffer in the precontract state. He counseled that we behave as "noble savages" until the introduction of private property. Private property transforms the state of nature by creating social classes that are based on the inequalities stemming from property rights. And it is this competition for property that ultimately destroys our inherent goodness. The inequality associated with property rights later corrupts "reason" itself. Rousseau attacked Locke and other theorists during the Enlightenment by arguing that their theories do more to advance the interests of the "enlightened" than to empower people. He is critical of Locke's call for a representative democracy because he believed that political power in republics is simply used to exploit the uneducated and advance the interests of political elites. Rousseau instead advocated for a more direct form of democracy.

Rousseau differs from Locke in that his social contract calls for greater equality under law. Rather than have a select few make decisions on behalf of the population, Rousseau instead believes each individual should play a role in government. He argues that we ourselves are transformed from primitive beings into civilized beings when we enter the social contract. The highest form of civil society is established when our natural "feelings" of pity and compassion are linked with ethical reasoned "thought" so the public interest and the private interests of individuals become one and the same.[70] Rousseau proposed a new social contract whereby individuals surrender all rights to a general will in exchange for having an equal voice in what that general will should be. In Rousseau's social contract, all members of the contract are required to abide by the general will, and those who object to societal rules will be forced to comply. In Rousseau's social contract, individuals both serve under the authority of the general will while serving as equal members of the general will.

Think It Through

Do you agree with Rousseau that direct-democracy political systems are preferable to representative democracies? Why did the American Framers warn against direct democracies?

those who violate these laws. It is for these reasons that Locke's first order of business is to establish a legislative branch of government to enact just laws. An executive should also be created to help enforce these laws. And last, an impartial arbiter must be established to fairly determine the guilt or innocence of the accused. Locke's social contract was quite radical in that he also counseled that people have the right to revolt if the government violates the social contract. It was this view that helped motivate American colonists to take up arms against the British in the American Revolution.

3 Summary

Steven Ferdman/Shutterstock.com

This chapter examined the major theories associated with many of the important modern political theorists. These modern political thinkers are distinct from the early political thinkers highlighted in the previous chapter in that modern thinkers adopted the empirical method of examining politics. Machiavelli's *The Prince*, Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*, and John Locke's *The Second Treatise of Government* are three of the most important political texts written in Western civilization. Machiavelli was the first to stray from the premises of early theorists by stressing that "power" rather than "justice" is the most important variable in understanding politics. Thomas Hobbes attempted to validate Machiavelli's theory on power and politics and developed the philosophical rationale for monarchs and authoritarian governments. John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau challenged Hobbes's social contract by asserting that a limited government that allows us to remain as close to our original state of nature as possible is the best form of government. These thinkers also laid the theoretical foundation for the development of democratic systems of government and the expansion of individual rights.

John Locke's social contract theory also greatly influenced Thomas Jefferson when he wrote the U.S. Declaration of Independence. At the beginning of the chapter, we asked you to consider how the Declaration of Independence helped expand political rights for women. As you might recall from earlier in the chapter, renowned women's rights activist Elizabeth Cady Stanton used the U.S. Declaration of Independence as a model when drafting the Declaration of Sentiments at the historic women's rights convention in Seneca Falls in 1848. This movement ultimately led to the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote nationally. We also discussed how women now vote in higher percentages than male voters, and in Chapter 6, we will extend this discussion by focusing on the increased percentage of women holding elected office in the United States and around the world. However, this chapter also pointed out that the *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022) Supreme Court decision that ruled the right to terminate a pregnancy is no longer constitutionally protected is generally viewed as a setback for women's rights.

In the next chapter, we will explore how John Locke's social contract theory influenced the American Framers and the creation of the American government. In addition, we will explore how American democracy has evolved and the process by which political rights for Black Americans and women were expanded.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. Is it more important to understand the way politics "ought" to be or to understand the way it is actually practiced?

   One way to categorize political theory is to distinguish between normative and empirical political theory. Normative political theory primarily concentrates on the way things ought to be, while empirical theory is concerned with the way things actually are in real-life political settings. The ancient Greek philosopher Plato is considered a normative theorist, and Machiavelli is considered an empirical theorist.

2. Is it more important for a leader to be feared or loved?

   Niccolò Machiavelli (1469–1527) in *The Prince* argued that in an ideal world, leaders should be both loved and feared to maintain control over the populace. However, he said it is more important to be feared than loved because the prince is better able to control those that fear him than those who love him because people tend to "love at their own will, but fear at the will of the prince."

3. Are you by nature more competitive or cooperative?

   Social contract theorists such as Thomas Hobbes and John Locke fundamentally disagree in their theories of human nature. Thomas Hobbes argues that people are by nature competitive and self-interested. John Locke, on the other hand, believe people are born *tabula rasa* (i.e., a blank slate) but are mostly cooperative because humans tend to be guided by natural law.

4. What is social contract theory?

   Social contract theory is most closely associated with political philosophers Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Social contract theory asserts that people live in a political community with an agreement on the larger purpose of government. Social contract theorists mostly differ on their views on human nature (self-interested or cooperative), the precontract state (mostly peaceful or violent), and the social contract itself (limited or strong government).

5. What role did the Declaration of Independence play in the expansion of political rights for women?

   The social contract theorist John Locke heavily influenced Thomas Jefferson when he penned the U.S. Declaration of Independence. Mary Wollstonecraft (1759–97), regarded by some as the founder of feminism, expanded on Locke's theories in her famous work entitled *A Vindication on the Rights of Women*. The U.S. Declaration of Independence was also used by Elizabeth Cady Stanton as a template when drafting the Declaration of Sentiments at the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls in 1848.

Key Terms

Classical Liberalism	p. 71	Nation-State System	p. 55
Environmentalism	p. 53	Power	p. 55
Feudal System	p. 54	Realist	p. 55
Marxism	p. 75	Social Contract Theory	p. 64
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Key People

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Cady Stanton, Elizabeth	p. 65	Machiavelli, Niccolò	p. 65
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Part II Comparing Governments

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5 **Nationalism and Populism in the United States and Abroad** 118

6 **Comparing Legislatures** 140

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"All government is a trust. Every branch of government is a trust, and immemorially to be so."—Jeremy Bentham.

"In order to establish a totalitarian regime, terror must be presented as an instrument for carrying out a specific ideology; and that ideology must have won the adherence of many, and even a majority, before terror can be stabilized."—Hannah Arendt

Part II will examine comparative politics, the subfield of political science that compares the ways that democracies and non-democracies function. Although democratic governments share certain traits—fair and free elections, a political culture based on the rule of law, separation of powers—quite often, their institutions and structures differ. This section will expose you to presidential and parliamentary systems and federal and unitary systems, as a way of demonstrating how power is diffused in democratic states.

Part II will also examine non-democracies; states who continue to govern with little acknowledgment to the rule of law and the protection of rights. Although we tend to think that democracies are the norm in global affairs, it is important to understand how and why authoritarian states continue to function.

Part II will begin with an overview of populism, the most recent trend affecting the stability of democratic regimes. Populism is an interesting starting point for this section because it has the ability to challenge democratic norms by blurring the line between authoritarianism and representative democracy.

4 The American Government

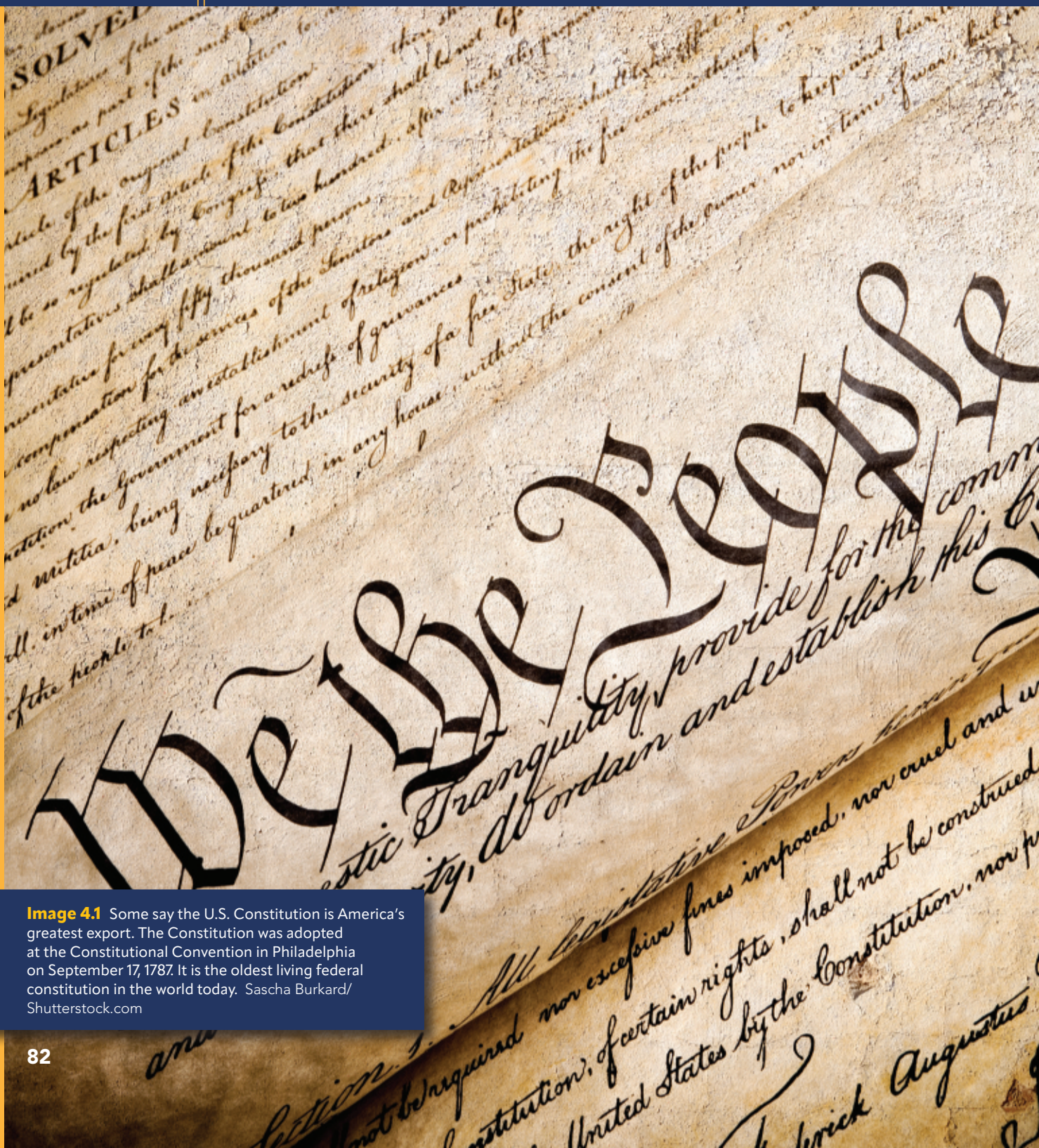

Image 4.1 Some say the U.S. Constitution is America's greatest export. The Constitution was adopted at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia on September 17, 1787. It is the oldest living federal constitution in the world today. Sascha Burkard/ Shutterstock.com

Chapter Outline

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Introduction: The Origins of American Democracy

In this chapter, we build on the previous section by surveying how the Framers of the U.S. Constitution were influenced by ancient Greek and modern political theorists in designing the American system of government. The American government is given special emphasis in this chapter because it was the "American experiment" toward representative government that ignited democratic fires across the globe, and the lessons learned from the Constitutional Convention continue to shape today's political landscape, such as in the Arab Spring uprisings in the early 2010s and beyond. The power of the ideas debated at the Constitutional Convention inspired the transformation of our international system away from authoritarian systems of government and toward democratic systems of government. The example of the United States is useful here because it was the first nation in the modern era to be guided by a national constitution based on individual rights. For students from outside of the United States, the best reference point to make comparisons to other forms of government around the world would be the government you grew up with and understand well.

American democracy was born in Philadelphia in 1787 at the Constitutional Convention. For that reason, it is somewhat ironic that the term *democracy* itself was not included in the American Constitution. This is because democracy was a loaded term in the late eighteenth century and conjured up images in the minds of the Framers of mob rule and political anarchy. Our system of government was instead referred to as a **republic** to steer clear of long-established attacks on direct democracies. We learned in Chapter 2 that Plato (427–347 BCE) viewed democracies as inferior systems of government because they are founded on the premise

▶ Questions to Consider

1. Why is the term *democracy* not included in the U.S. Constitution?
2. Which British Acts inspired the American colonists to rise up against British rule?
3. Why did the Articles of Confederation (1781–87) system of government fail?
4. How did *Shelby v. Holder* (2013) affect voter turnout?
5. Who wrote the *Federalist Papers* and why?
6. How do laws in conservative and liberal states differ on abortion rights?
7. How did the Supreme Court expand federal powers over the states in the *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) decision?
8. How has *Federalist Paper* No. 10 contributed to democratic theory?

Republic: A system of government where power lies with the body of citizens who elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

that all opinions are equally valid. A political system based on majority rule was thought to be unwise because communities typically include more ordinary than enlightened thinkers. Plato reasoned that because the overwhelming majority of citizens lack the necessary training in the virtues of justice, most would place their own selfish desires over the interests of the nation.

Because of this, many of the delegates at the Constitutional Convention believed the new government might fail if majority groups were permitted to impose their will on unreceptive political minorities. Some argued that a political system based on majority rule would degenerate into a "mobocracy," where self-interested groups would struggle to dominate over less organized interests. Thomas Jefferson made the point more clearly when he stated, "[A] democracy is nothing more than mob rule, where 51 percent of the people may take away the rights of the other forty-nine."[1] The manner in which the American Framers addressed this concern of the **tyranny of the majority** is highlighted later in the chapter in the review of James Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 10, arguably America's greatest contribution to political theory. Today, however, approximately 123 of almost 200 nations across the globe have adopted some form of popular government, making it hard to imagine what our modern world would be like without democratic systems of government. Perhaps former British prime minister Winston Churchill said it best when he remarked that "democracy is the worst form of government, except all others that have been tried."[2] In Chapter 5, we highlight how democratic systems of government across the globe have been weakened by right-wing and left-wing populist movements.

Tyranny of the Majority: A chief criticism of democratic systems of government where those in the political majority violate the rights of those in the political minority.

The Articles of Confederation: The Failed Experiment

The American system of government that existed during the Constitutional Convention was the Articles of Confederation (1781–87). As we discussed in Chapter 3, the Framers were heavily influenced by John Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, which called for a limited form of government.

Theory and Practice

"Un-Civil" Disobedience: Sons of Liberty and the American Revolution

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

No sentence ever penned has been more widely cited or has had such a transforming effect on American political culture than this second sentence of the Declaration of Independence. The fifty-six signers of the Declaration of

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

Independence sacrificed their lives when they publicly declared independence from Britain on July 4, 1776. The document drafted by Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Roger Sherman, and Robert Livingston highlighted the "repeated injuries and usurpations" of King George III, and it proclaimed the birth of a new nation to the international community.

The Declaration of Independence was inspired by a series of British laws that sought to regulate American political and economic life in a manner beneficial to the British Empire. The British Stamp Act of 1765, for instance, placed a three-pence stamp tax on the colonies on printed materials such as newspapers, magazines, and legal documents to help offset the staggering British national debt incurred from the Seven Years' War (1756–63). This act represented the British Parliament's first attempt at asserting economic control over the colonies. The Townshend Acts (1767) then exacerbated tensions by placing British tariffs on a host of other commodities, including glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea. The Massachusetts legislature was later disbanded by the British for refusing to enforce the collection of new taxes. One of the Townshend Acts also abolished New York's legislature for failing to abide by the Quartering Act (1765), which required colonists to accept British troops into their homes.

British troops were later dispatched to Boston, where opposition to the Townshend Acts was most vociferous. It was here on March 5, 1770, that British troops shot and killed five protesting American colonists, an event that later came to be known as the Boston Massacre. On December 16, 1773, a group of American colonists, some of whom were disguised as Mohawk people, protested the Tea Act (1773) by dumping 90,000 pounds of tea valued at $18,000 at the time (worth almost $1 million today) from three ships into the Boston Harbor. These acts of "un-civil" disobedience helped spark the passage of the Declaration of Independence and the American Revolution. When the residents of Boston refused to compensate Britain for the costs of the tea, Britain responded by passing what colonists referred to as the Intolerable Acts, which, among other things, closed Boston's port to commerce, encroached on the powers of the Massachusetts Assembly, and gave legal immunity to British officials.

The Boston Tea Party was organized and carried out by the Sons of Liberty, a group led by Samuel Adams that consisted of approximately sixty men, many of whom were considered to be hard-drinking troublemakers around town. Sons of Liberty was a secret paramilitary organization that formed in opposition to the Stamp Act of 1765. Prior to the Boston Tea Party, the group was known to engage in other illegal acts, such as destroying the homes of some government officials and throwing bricks at others. Because no one was killed during the Boston Tea Party, some compare the rebellious act with the type of civil disobedience practiced by Socrates, Henry David Thoreau, Mahatma Gandhi, and Martin Luther King Jr., highlighted in Chapter 2.

Think It Through

Do you consider the Boston Tea Party an act of civil disobedience? Do you believe it is ever acceptable to destroy private property or use vandalism to further a political objective? Why or why not?

The American Framers by and large shared Locke's optimistic view of human nature. Most believed that humans are inherently cooperative and defensive in nature and are not above all else the power-seeking creatures described by Thomas Hobbes. As the previous chapter highlighted, Locke believed that authoritarian governments are unworkable because they create oppressive living conditions that are far removed from the way we were intended to live in nature. He argued that living under the tyranny of monarchs takes us away from our natural cooperative state and toward an unnatural state of conflict and violence. Limited governments, Locke argued, are therefore preferred because they more closely resemble the way we lived in nature before governments were created (i.e., precontract state).

It is in part because of this view that America's first system of government was made extraordinarily weak. The Articles of Confederation lacked both executive and judicial branches of government. It granted most powers to the original thirteen state governments. Because the national government did not have the power to tax, it was frequently criticized for not sending needed supplies to American troops during the Revolutionary War (1775–83) with Britain. It soon became apparent that the Articles of Confederation did not provide a workable form of government.

Some state delegations did not take the Articles of Confederation seriously, and many delegates only sporadically attended meetings. Thomas Jefferson expressed his frustration over this in a letter to James Madison in 1784:

> We cannot make up a congress at all. There are eight states in town, six of which are represented by two members only. Of these, two members of different states are confined by gout, so that we cannot make a house, i.e., a quorum. We have not sat above three days, I believe, in as many weeks. Admonition after admonition has been sent to the states to no effect, we have sent one today. If it fails, it seems as well we should all retire.[3]

The Articles of Confederation was also unable to produce an enforceable peace treaty with Britain, create a national currency that had any meaningful value, or establish reasoned public policy in either domestic or foreign affairs. The final two fatal blows for the Articles occurred in the fall of 1786, with the disappointing Annapolis Convention and the bedlam created by Shays's Rebellion.[4]

Annapolis Convention: An interstate convention called in 1786 to discuss issues of commerce. The meeting was largely seen as a failure because only five of the thirteen states sent delegations.

The **Annapolis Convention** (1786) was called to resolve interstate trade disputes between the original thirteen states. The three-day meeting was a major disappointment in that eight of the thirteen states did not even send delegates. Delaware, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Virginia were the only five states to participate in the meeting. This poor showing prompted those who did attend, most notably Alexander Hamilton and James Madison, to issue a report urging all states to participate in a subsequent meeting the following May in Philadelphia. The purpose for calling the Philadelphia meeting was to tinker with some of the obvious weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation. This subsequent Philadelphia meeting came to be known as the Constitutional Convention. And it was at this convention that our current system of government was born.

Shays's Rebellion: An armed insurrection in Massachusetts led by Revolutionary War hero Daniel Shays. The rebellion targeted attacks on courthouses in an attempt to prevent farm foreclosures.

The second episode to cause a deliberate nudge toward the Constitutional Convention was **Shays's Rebellion**. The Revolutionary War caused economic hardships, and most states were in serious debt in the war's aftermath. These economic conditions made it difficult for many small farmers to pay back loans. In Concord, Massachusetts, in 1786, for instance, there were three times as many people "in prison for debt as there were for all other crimes combined."[5] Daniel Shays, a Revolutionary War hero who served at the Battles of Lexington and

Concord and who distinguished himself during the Battle at Bunker Hill, led a farmers' insurrection against Massachusetts. Angry farmers stormed the Springfield courthouse to prevent the foreclosure of additional farms. Although the insurrection was ultimately put down, it revealed in clear terms that most states were not willing to help Massachusetts in its moments of crisis. The Articles of Confederation failed again.

Fearing that Shays's Rebellion might prove the correctness of Thomas Hobbes's pessimistic view that democracies were unworkable and invariably degenerate into civil war and death, George Washington remarked:

> I am mortified beyond expression when I view the clouds that have spread over the brightest morn that ever dawned in any country . . . What a triumph for the advocates of despotism, to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves and that systems founded on the basis of equal liberty are merely ideal and fallacious.[6]

Others, however, viewed Shays's Rebellion through a more optimistic lens. Thomas Jefferson, for instance, reacted by saying, "A little rebellion now and then is a good thing. It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government. God forbid that we should ever be twenty years without such a rebellion."[7]

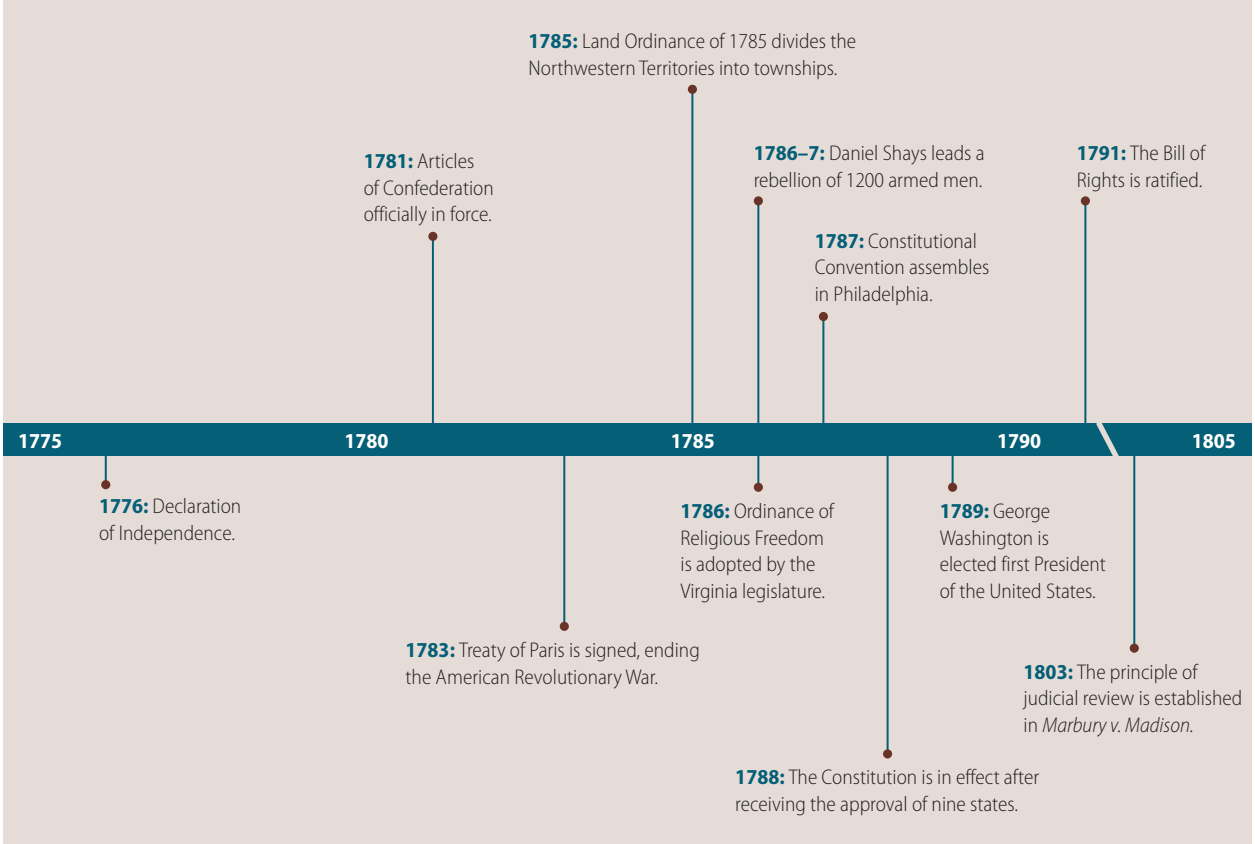
Jefferson, however, was in the minority in this view. The experiences from the Annapolis Convention and Shays's Rebellion caused many American colonists to conclude that a stronger national government was required. In Figure 4.1, we provide a timeline of important events leading up to the Constitutional Convention.

The Constitutional Convention

Many of the architects of the Articles of Confederation were selected to represent their states at the Constitutional Convention in May 1787. Although seventy-four delegates were selected to participate in the Convention, only fifty-five actually made the long and arduous trip to Philadelphia.[8] The delegates came from elite society, which was perhaps predictable considering that less than 5 percent of the population (i.e., 150,000 out of 3.9 million) was eligible to vote as free, property-owning White males over the age of 21.[9] By today's standards, the delegates were very young. The youngest delegate was New Jersey's Jonathan Dayton at 26 years of age. Alexander Hamilton of New York was 32, and James Madison, the primary author of the Constitution, was only 36 at the time of the Constitutional Convention. More than half (i.e., thirty-three) of the delegates were trained in the legal profession, and seven were former governors.[10] Unlike the Annapolis Convention, the Philadelphia Convention took on an air of importance, especially after the revered George Washington agreed to attend.

Historian Charles Beard's classic work portrays the Framers as wealthy property owners who were primarily interested in protecting property rights.[11]

Figure 4.1 Confederation to Constitution Timeline



Beard's analysis concludes that delegates had an economic interest in either supporting or opposing ratification and that delegates in favor of ratifying the Constitution represented elite society and were primarily motivated by a governmental pledge to pay off defaulted loans to well-heeled lenders of the day. Other research, however, disputes Beard's finding and argues the delegates were primarily motivated to check political tyranny at the Constitutional Convention rather than in promoting their own economic self-interest.[12] Nonetheless, each of the Framers came to the Constitutional Convention with state-centric political constraints and distinct worldviews. Alexander Hamilton (New York) was arguably a monarchist, George Washington (Virginia) and Benjamin Franklin (Pennsylvania) stopped short of that in their call for a strong national government, James Madison (Virginia) and James Wilson (Pennsylvania) advocated a more democratic form of government, and Edmund Randolph (Virginia), George Mason (Virginia), Elbridge Gerry (Massachusetts), and Luther Martin (Maryland) were altogether distrustful of national power as fierce states' rights advocates.[13] Perhaps the real genius of the U.S. Constitution is that delegates were able to compromise on many topics that appeared to have no middle ground.

Congress and Representation: Large versus Small States

These diverse worldviews clashed on almost every issue addressed at the Convention. A major rift soon emerged between delegates from the large and small states over the creation of Congress. Delegates from Virginia offered the **Virginia Plan**, which called for a strong central government. Virginia represented the interests of the large states by calling for a **bicameral legislature** with membership in the lower house determined by population and members from the upper house selected from members of the lower house. This plan benefited the more populated states such as New York, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Massachusetts because they would gain more representatives in Congress.

Virginia Plan: Primarily drafted by James Madison and Edmund Randolph of Virginia, it was proposed at the Constitutional Convention and called for representation in Congress to be apportioned according to the state's population.

Bicameral Legislature: A legislature that consists of a two-chamber body. The U.S. Congress and every state legislature except Nebraska's are bicameral.

The less populated states objected to the Virginia Plan because they believed they would lose political influence. The Articles of Confederation had an equal representation system, whereby each state was given one vote regardless of population. Smaller states were thus reluctant to form a Congress based on population because they would be giving up the voting strength they enjoyed in the Articles of Confederation system.

William Paterson of New Jersey, representing the interests of the small states, proposed the **New Jersey Plan**. The New Jersey Plan called for a **unicameral legislature** with each state having an equal number of representatives regardless of population. A Committee of Eleven was formed with the hope of finding a compromise over the structure of the national congress.

New Jersey Plan: Proposed by William Paterson at the Constitutional Convention, the plan called for a one-house chamber with equal representation from each state.

Unicameral Legislature: A legislature that consists of a one-house chamber.

This committee was successful in creating the **Connecticut Compromise**, so named because several Connecticut delegates served on the committee. The Connecticut Compromise, or the *Great Compromise* as it is sometimes known, called for a bicameral legislature comprised of the House of Representatives, with membership determined by each state's population, and the Senate, where each state was allocated two senators, thus benefiting the smaller states by adhering to the principle of equal representation.[14]

Connecticut Compromise: The Great Compromise between the large and small states at the Constitutional Convention that called for the U.S. House of Representatives to be apportioned according to the state's population and the U.S. Senate to be comprised of two senators per state.

Representation and Enslaved People: The North–South Dispute and the Three-Fifths Compromise

All of the great accomplishments of the Constitutional Convention sometimes overshadow the major failure of the meeting, which was leaving the Convention with the institution of slavery intact. The issue of slavery arose when southern states proposed counting enslaved people as part of their population when determining representation in Congress. The Constitution stipulates that each state is permitted one representative for every 30,000 residents. (This method was later altered and is explained in Chapter 6.) The southern states wanted to count enslaved people as part of their population because this would give them greater representation in Congress. In what was perhaps the low moment of the Convention, the Framers agreed to count each enslaved person as three-fifths of a person, thus

strengthening southern power in Congress. The outcome of this controversy significantly impacted the regional balance of power in the new nation as some southern states had more residents enslaved than not at the time. Approximately 65 percent of the residents of South Carolina, for example, were enslaved in the early eighteenth century. Northern states were opposed to counting those enslaved people as part of the population because they were not given any rights typically associated with citizenship, and because this would strengthen southern power in Congress. Southern slave states were apportioned forty-seven members of Congress in 1793, but they would have been apportioned only thirty-three members of Congress if enslaved people were not counted in the Three-Fifths Compromise. The excerpt below draws attention to *Federalist Paper* No. 54, which reveals the thinking of some of the Framers when they settled on the Three-Fifths Compromise.

Federalist Paper No. 54–*The Apportionment of Members Among the States as It Relates to the Issue of Slavery*, authored by Alexander Hamilton or James Madison

Slaves are considered as property, not as persons. They ought therefore to be comprehended in estimates of taxation which are founded as property, and to be excluded from representation which is regulated by a census of persons. This is the objection, as I understand it, stated in its full force. I shall be equally candid in stating the reasoning which may be offered on the opposite side. "We subscribe to the doctrine," might one of our Southern brethren observe, "that representation relates more immediately to persons, and taxation more immediately to property and we join in the application of this distinction to the case of our slaves. But we must deny the fact, that slaves are considered merely as property, and in no respect whatever as persons. The true state of the case is, that they partake of both these qualities: being considered by our laws, in some respects, as persons, and in other respects as property. In being compelled to labor, not for himself, but for a master; in being vendible by one master to another master; and in being subject at all times to be restrained in his liberty and chastised in his body, by the capricious will of another, the slave may appear to be degraded from the human rank, and classed with those irrational animals which fall under the legal denomination of property. In being protected, on the other hand, in his life and limbs, against the violence of all others, even the master of his labor and liberty; and in being punishable himself for all violence committed against others, the slave is no less evidently regarded by the law as a member of society, not as part of the irrational creation; as a moral person, not as a mere article of property. The federal Constitution, therefore, decides with great propriety on the case of our slaves, when it views them in the mixed character of persons and property . . . Let the compromising expedient of the Constitution be mutually adopted, which regards them as inhabitants, but as debased by servitude below the equal level of free inhabitants, which regards the SLAVE as divested of two fifths of the MAN.

Why Politics Matters to You!

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 to *Shelby v. Holder* (2013)

One of the reasons why it is now hard to imagine that Black Americans were originally counted as only three-fifths of a person is because of the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law on August 6, 1965. He referred to the act as his greatest accomplishment as president during his final news conference, comparing it with President Abraham Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. The original purpose of the act was to provide an enforcement mechanism to the Fifteenth Amendment by securing for Black Americans the most basic of all rights—the right to vote.

What is not widely known is the extent to which Black Americans flourished politically after the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870. Their political power was protected by federal troops dispatched to the South after the U.S. Civil War and bolstered by the fact that 90 percent of all Black Americans resided in the South during this period. Extending voting rights to formerly enslaved persons met with heavy resistance from White segregationists for a variety of reasons, not the least of which was the fact that Whites were a numerical minority in five southern states.

Black political participation was strong during the post–Civil War Reconstruction era and soon came to represent nearly one-half of the state legislative seats in Mississippi, Louisiana, and South Carolina, and sixteen Black Americans were elected to Congress.[15] A political arrangement, however, crafted by Republicans and Democrats during the controversial 1876 presidential election set off a segregationist backlash against the Fifteenth Amendment. The leaders agreed to award twenty contested electoral votes from Florida, Louisiana, and South Carolina to Republican candidate Rutherford B. Hayes in exchange for his pledge to remove federal troops from the South, effectively ending Reconstruction. This post-Reconstruction period (1877–1901) is regarded by scholars as the nadir or the "Dark Ages" of Black American political life, and it is here that the southern strategy to once again disenfranchise Black American voters took root.[16]

Southern states effectively nullified the Fifteenth Amendment by implementing disenfranchising measures such as literacy tests, which sometimes included "grandfather clauses," exempting from the test those eligible to vote before Reconstruction, or "understanding clauses," which granted broad discretionary powers to segregationist registrars to enroll illiterate White voters "who could understand constitutional provisions read to them."[17] Every southern state adopted poll taxes, where payments were required months in advance in the hope that the few Black Americans able to pay might misplace the tax receipt by Election Day. Black Americans were excluded from "White primaries" with the blessing of the U.S. Supreme Court, which upheld the notion that political parties were private associations until the *Smith v. Allwright* decision in 1944. It was also common for southern county poll officials to place registration offices and polling stations in Ku Klux Klan strongholds, where Black Americans were routinely brutally beaten and sometimes killed for attempting to exercise their right to vote.

These measures proved successful. In Louisiana, Black voter registration fell from its peak of 95.6 percent in 1896 to 1.1 percent in 1904. South Carolina, which had a Black legislator majority in its lower house during Reconstruction, did not elect one Black member to the body from 1896 until the 1970s. Congress and the executive branch largely deferred to southern home rule, and the Supreme Court routinely sided with southern state governments on substantive challenges to literacy tests, poll taxes, White primaries, and other disenfranchising measures into the mid-twentieth century. The political tide began to turn after World War II, however, when the more than one million Black soldiers sent off to defeat Hitler's racist ideology in Europe returned determined to challenge racism in their

(Continued)

own hometowns.[18] Leaders such as Georgia's Martin Luther King Jr. and Mississippi's Medgar Evers organized a civil rights movement across the region that brought northern volunteers and national attention to White supremacy in the South. It was in this climate that Congress enacted the groundbreaking Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed segregation in places of public accommodations but failed to address voter disenfranchisement.

One of the most prominent features of the Voting Rights Act (1965) is found in Section 2 of the law, which prohibits all states from imposing literacy tests and poll taxes and other voting prerequisites resulting in the disenfranchisement of voters on the basis of race. The Voting Rights Act is distinct from the Civil Rights Act in that it contains permanent and nonpermanent features. The two most controversial nonpermanent provisions are found in Sections 4 and 5. Section 4 outlines the "triggering formula," describing the conditions "that would bring a jurisdiction under the protection of the act."[19] This provision was controversial because it meant that the act would target only states with a history of discriminatory practices, defined as those jurisdictions that had a voter turnout rate of less than 50 percent and a "voting test" in place during the 1964 presidential election. The covered jurisdictions included the states of Alabama, Alaska, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, South Carolina, Virginia, and certain counties in Arizona, Hawaii, Idaho, and North Carolina.

Section 5 of the act prohibits all covered jurisdictions from implementing any electoral changes without first receiving permission from either the U.S. Attorney General's office or a D.C. district court. This "preclearance" provision shifted the legal burden of proof away from protected groups to the government entity proposing electoral reform.

The Voting Rights Act was either substantively amended and/or reauthorized in 1970, 1975, 1982, 1992, and 2006. In 1975, Rep. Barbara Jordan (D-TX) sponsored a bill that extended the provisions of the act to language minorities, requiring local jurisdictions to "provide bilingual voting registration and materials and ballots" if a particular language minority constituted more than 5 percent of the population and if that jurisdiction's voter turnout was less than 50 percent in the 1972 national election, thereby extending the act to Arizona, Texas, California, Florida, New York, and South Dakota.[20] Barack Obama was victorious in several states that were originally subject to preclearance because of a history of discriminatory voting practices as defined by the Voting Rights Act of 1965. In the 2012 presidential election, voter turnout in the Black American community eclipsed White voter turnout for the first time in history.

However, the U.S. Supreme Court recently struck down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act that prohibited all or parts of fifteen states with a history of disenfranchising voters from changing voting laws without federal approval (*Shelby County v. Holder,* 2013). States previously subject to preclearance, such as Texas and North Carolina, are now free to implement controversial "no photo, no vote" laws that require residents to show either a driver's license or special state-issued photo identification and no longer allow previously accepted forms of identification such as a birth certificate or college ID. This strict voter-photo-identification law was initially blocked by the federal government because 25 percent of Black citizens do not possess government-issued photo identification, compared with only 8 percent of White voters. In Texas, 2.4 million of the 13.5 million eligible voters (i.e., 17.8 percent) would today be turned away from the polls because of this new identification requirement. In the 2016 election, which was the first presidential election to take place after the Supreme Court struck down that provision of the Voting Rights Act, voter turnout in the Black voter community declined for the first time in twenty years, dropping seven percentage points from 66.6 percent in 2012 to 59.6 percent in 2016.[21] While Black voter turnout slightly increased in the 2020 election, the racial voter turnout gap between White voters (71 percent) and Black voters (62.7 percent) increased from 5.9 percent in 2016 to 8.3 percent in the 2020 presidential election.[22]

Think It Through

Do you believe the Supreme Court striking down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 played a role in the four-point drop in Black voter turnout from 2012 to 2020?

The Three Principles of the U.S. Constitution

The major lesson learned from living under the weak Articles of Confederation was that government needs to do more than simply not tyrannize states. Governments also need to solve problems. This is the central point of James Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 51, where he asserted that the Constitution "must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next phase oblige it to control itself."[23] To construct a government that is strong enough to solve national problems, but not so strong that it dominates over states, the Framers established three basic constitutional principles: (1) the separation of powers, (2) the system of checks and balances, and (3) the system of federalism.

Separation of Powers

You might remember from Chapter 2 that the American Framers were strongly influenced by Aristotle's theory of mixed constitutions. Aristotle did not strongly advocate for one particular political system over another. For him, political systems were not ends in and of themselves but rather the means toward the ends of justice. Aristotle believed that governments ruled by one (i.e., monarchy), by the few (i.e., aristocracy), or by many (i.e., polity) can all be effective if leaders of these particular governments pursue justice. He also asserted that each of these systems could be perverted if those leaders instead pursue self-interest over the public good. The Framers learned from Aristotle not to become preoccupied with any particular system but to instead merge the best attributes of different types of government into one. The Founders looked to Aristotle's theory of mixed constitutions as a guide to reconcile "democratic and aristocratic values."[24] The American system of government thus heeds Aristotle's advice by mixing three constitutions into one with the establishment of a president (rule of one), a Supreme Court (rule of few), and a Congress (rule of many). Below is an excerpt from Aristotle where he explains his theory on mixed constitutions:

> Aristotle's Theory of Mixed Constitutions and Its Influence on Separation of Powers
>
> For the addition of its weight to either side will turn the balance and prevent excess at the opposing extremes. For this reason it is a most happy state of affairs when those who take part in the constitution have a middling, adequate amount of property; since where one set of people possess a great deal and the other nothing, the result is either extreme democracy or unmixed oligarchy, or a tyranny due to the excess of either. For tyranny often emerges from an over-enthusiastic democracy or from an oligarchy, but much more rarely from intermediate constitutions or from those close to them . . . most states are either democratic or oligarchic; for the middle being frequently small, whichever of the two extremes is on top, those with possessions or the common

> people, abandons the middle and conducts the constitution according to its own notions, and so the result is either democracy or oligarchy. . . . Also, those who came to exercise leadership among the Greek states installed democracies or oligarchies in them according to the constitution which each had at home, looking entirely to their own advantage, not to that of the states themselves. So for these reasons the middle constitution has never occurred anywhere, or only seldom and sporadically. . . . Wherever the middle people outweigh a combination of the two extremes, or even one only, then there is a good chance of permanence for the constitution. There is no danger of the rich and poor making common cause against them; for neither will want to be slaves to the other, and if they are looking for a constitution more acceptable to both, they will not find any better than this. . . . The better mixed a constitution is, the longer it will last.[25]

This quote underscores how Aristotle's theory of mixed constitutions influenced the thinking of the American Framers at the Constitutional Convention.

Separation of Powers: A system of government that is divided between a legislative branch, an executive branch, and a judicial branch of government.

Although the **separation of powers** concept is not expressly articulated in the Constitution, the basic principle is outlined in the structure and powers of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.[26] It was believed that the national government can be restrained by making each branch of government independent of each other in the first phase and then assigning overlapping tasks to each branch of government. The legislative branch was thus created to make the law, the executive was created to enforce the law, and the federal judiciary was formed to interpret the law.

The Genius of the Constitution: The System of Checks and Balances

Although there were many major disagreements at the Constitutional Convention, the Framers did share one basic conviction: that power in one branch of government must be used to counterbalance power in the other branches of government.

Checks and Balances: A system of government where each branch of government can limit, amend, and/or nullify the acts of another branch of government.

The real genius of the Constitution is found in the system of **checks and balances**. It is here where Thomas Hobbes's view of human nature is incorporated into our system of government. In Chapter 3, we discussed Hobbes's belief that all human behavior is driven by a lust for power and his view that individual freedoms should be surrendered to the state in order to maintain security. James Madison extended these concerns in *Federalist Paper* No. 51 when he asserted that "ambition must be made to counteract ambition" and that "if men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external or internal controls on government would be necessary."[27] By making each branch of government independent, and by structuring the government so that each branch is checked by another, one branch of government is prevented from becoming dominant.

Here, Madison was also heavily influenced by Baron de Montesquieu's (1689–1755) *The Spirit of the Laws*, which argued that tyranny could be prevented by having the branches of government check each other. Montesquieu warned that tyranny is likely to reign when lawmaking and law enforcement powers are placed in the same branch of government. However, it was not enough to simply separate branches of the federal government. Who is to say there will not be collusion among the branches? To ensure that the "ambition" of one branch of government is checked by the "ambition" of another branch, the Framers created a political mechanism whereby each branch of government checks the behavior of the others.

Montesquieu, like Aristotle, advocated for a system of government that blends democratic and aristocratic values. His ideal structure of government sought the middle ground between the political extremes of democratic anarchy and oppressive monarchies. Montesquieu coined the term *checks and balances* in his description of three political classes of French society labeled as the monarchy, the aristocracy, and the commons. He promoted the division of powers between these three groups in France to prevent one class from becoming too dominant. The Framers were influenced by Montesquieu's writings when they incorporated the system of checks and balances into our government.

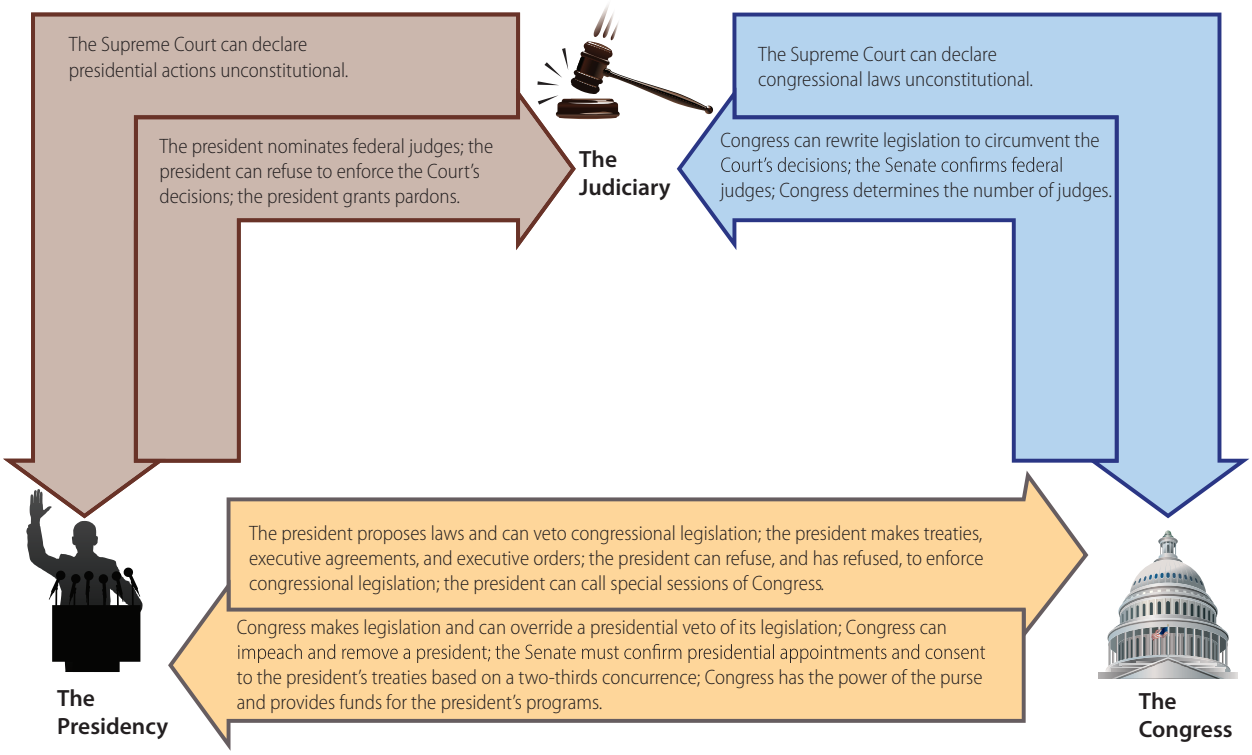
The legislative branch checks the executive through (1) its impeachment powers, (2) its ability to overturn a presidential veto with a two-thirds vote, (3) the power of the purse, and (4) the Senate's power to ratify presidential treaties and confirm presidential appointments. The legislature can also check the judiciary through its impeachment powers and the Senate's power to confirm judicial appointments. The executive branch checks the legislative branch with veto powers and checks the judiciary with the power to appoint federal judges. The judiciary checks the executive and legislative branches of government with the power to declare legislative and/or executive acts unconstitutional. Critics of the American political system argue the separation of powers systems has been used to create legislative gridlock to prevent passage of gun control measures and other proposals supported by a majority of Americans.

Figure 4.2 illustrates how each branch of government can check the other branches of government.

MPI/Archive Photos/Getty Images

Image 4.2 Howard Chandler Christy's painting titled *Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States.* Only thirty-nine of the fifty-five delegates attending the Philadelphia convention are included in the painting. George Washington, as president of the Convention, is prominently standing in front of the flags. This painting is currently on display in the United States Capitol building.

Figure 4.2 Checks and Balances



Federalism

All nations in the world can be classified as possessing either a (1) unitary government, (2) confederal government, or (3) federalist government.[28]

A **unitary system of government** grants all governmental control and power to one central government. Most nations around the world are classified as unitary governments. A **confederal system of government** gives weak authority to the central government and grants most powers to the smaller state governments. The Articles of Confederation, which vested most powers to the original thirteen states, is an example of a confederacy. A **federalist system of government** is unique in that power is shared between the national and state governments.

Unitary System of Government: A system of government where all powers are located in the central government. In this system, regional and local government derive power from the central government. Approximately 150 nations currently have a unitary system of government, including Britain, China, France, and Japan.

Confederal System of Government: A system of government that gives little power to the central government and instead gives power to smaller state governments. The United States adopted a confederal system when it operated under the Articles of Confederation system from 1781 to 1787.

Why do we have a federalist system? The Framers created a system of federalism to prevent the national government from dominating over the original thirteen state governments. Because states were in existence (i.e., colonies) for approximately 180 years prior to the Constitutional Convention, most delegates had greater loyalty to their respective state governments and were fearful that the new national government would rule over the states. For this reason, they created a federalist system of government that divided power between the national and state governments.

Dividing power between the national and state governments served as the perfect compromise between those who advocated for a stronger national government

and those who were primarily interested in preserving states' rights. The primary advantage of federalism is that states can check against abuses of federal powers and vice versa. The previously cited Voting Rights Act (1965) is a clear example of the federal government preventing southern states from disenfranchising Black Americans during the civil rights struggle in the mid-1960s. Another benefit of federalism is that it allows for "unity without uniformity" in those local customs can be incorporated into government.[29] People living in Salt Lake City, Utah, for instance, are free to live under different laws than people in New York City. Federalism also allows for creativity in government in that states can be viewed as social laboratories, free to experiment in the realm of public policy. Massachusetts, for instance, was the first state in the Union to permit same-sex marriages in 2004. In a federalist system, states can benefit from the experiences gained when similar policies are implemented in other states.

Federalist System of Government: A system of government that divides power between the national and state governments. The system is in place in a number of countries, including the United States, Canada, and India.

In Table 4.1, we highlight key differences between the Articles of Confederation system of government and the system of government created at the Constitutional Convention.

Table 4.1 Articles of Confederation versus the Constitution

	Articles of Confederation	Constitution
Tax Powers	No power to tax	The U.S. Congress has authority to tax individuals
Federal Courts	No federal courts	Created the Supreme Court and allows Congress to create other federal courts
Bill of Rights	No Bill of Rights	Bill of Rights added as the first ten amendments to the Constitution
President	No president	Created executive branch—individual executive to serve as commander-in-chief and given special powers in foreign policy
Amendment Process	All thirteen states need to approve amending the Articles	Constitution can be amended by two-thirds vote in Congress if ratified by three-fourths of states
Representation in Congress	Each state receives one vote	Seats in House of Representatives determined by population; each state sends two senators to Senate
Military	No power—militia formed by states	Congress authorized to raise armies
Trade	No involvement in regulating trade	Interstate commerce clause authorizes Congress to regulate trade between states
Passing Laws	Needs approval of nine of thirteen states	Requires majority vote in House and Senate and presidential signature

The Growth of Federal Power

The distribution of power between the state and national governments is addressed in the Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. The Tenth Amendment states that "the powers not delegated by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people."[30] The **enumerated powers** of the federal government are found in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. These powers include the power to declare war, to coin money, to regulate foreign commerce, to raise and support armies, and to establish a federal court system. The Constitution also prohibits states from engaging in certain activities, such as entering into treaties with foreign nations and placing taxes on foreign imports. Initially, state governments assumed all powers except those that were expressly assigned to the federal government or explicitly denied to them by the Constitution.

Enumerated Powers: Powers expressly granted to the government in the U.S. Constitution. The power to declare war, for example, is an enumerated power of Congress that can be found in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Theory and Practice

American Federalism and Medication Abortion after *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022)

The American system of government is complicated compared to other types of democratic governments. Based on the U.S. Constitution, federal powers over states and individuals are limited by the Tenth Amendment and the system of checks and balances. In Chapter 1, we referenced the recent Supreme Court ruling on abortion rights in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022). This case highlights how individual rights are impacted by federalism and the separation of powers system. In *Roe v. Wade* (1973), the Supreme Court struck down state laws that prohibited women from having an abortion during the first six months of pregnancy. In *Roe*, the Court ruled that state laws that ban abortion are unconstitutional because they violate a woman's fundamental right to privacy based on the due process clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.[31]

The *Roe* ruling showed that the U.S. Constitution is the highest law in the land and conferred a fundamental right to have an abortion. However, decades later in *Dobbs v. Jackson* (2022), the U.S. Supreme Court overturned the precedent from *Roe v. Wade* (1973) in ruling that the U.S. Constitution does not confer a fundamental right to have an abortion. Instead, the Court ruled in *Dobbs* that the right of states to pass laws outweighs a woman's right to an abortion.[32] Since the *Dobbs* ruling in 2022, approximately half of the states have either banned or placed restrictions on abortions. Some states, such as Texas, have banned abortions outright while other states banned abortions after 15 weeks (or fewer) of pregnancy.

Today, approximately 63 percent of abortions are medication abortions that are mostly self-administered at home rather than at abortion clinics.[33] In 2000, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the drug Mifepristone, which, combined with Misoprostol, has been used for medication abortions. These two medications have become the preferred method for pregnancy termination in the United States. During the pandemic, in 2021, the FDA expanded access to medication abortions by allowing patients to receive the drugs through the mail. So does these mean women in states that banned abortions can simply have medications facilitating abortions mailed to them from states that confer the right to abortions?

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

In addition, the U.S. Postal service is guided by federal law rather than state and local laws, which raises the question about how all of these complicated and contradictory laws going to be enforced. Approximately one million abortions were performed annually in the United States prior to the Supreme Court decision in the 2022 *Dobbs* case. Surprisingly, even though a number of states have recently banned or placed restrictions on abortion rights, the number of abortions performed in the United States has actually slightly increased since the *Dobbs* case.[34]

Think It Through

Why do you believe the number of abortions performed in the United States has increased since the Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs* in 2022?

McCulloch v. Maryland: The Elastic Clause and the Expansion of Federal Power

Federal powers were soon greatly enhanced in the landmark Supreme Court case ***McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819)**. The controversy surrounding the *McCulloch* case can be traced back to George Washington's administration.

***McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819):** The landmark Supreme Court case that expanded the powers of the national government by finding the government had "implied powers" in addition to the expressed powers found in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Alexander Hamilton, the nation's first secretary of the treasury, persuaded President Washington to form a central bank in 1791. Thomas Jefferson, Washington's secretary of state and a strong states' rights advocate, forcefully objected to Hamilton's plan on the grounds that he did not believe the Constitution granted the national government the power to create a central banking system. This power, after all, was not specifically granted to the national government in the Constitution. Jefferson believed a national banking system would be dangerous because it would allow the national government to encroach on the economic powers of states. Jefferson later resigned as Washington's secretary of state in 1793 for this and other reasons.

One of these federal banks was located in Baltimore, Maryland. The issue came to a head when the state of Maryland taxed the federal bank $15,000. The federal cashier, James McCulloch, refused to pay the tax because he did not believe Maryland had the legal authority to tax the federal government. This case raised two important constitutional questions: Does the federal government have the constitutional authority to create a federal banking system? Do states have the constitutional authority to tax the federal government?

Regarding the first question, the Supreme Court substantially expanded federal powers by asserting the national government was permitted to create a banking system because the national government had "implied powers" beyond those expressly stated in the Constitution. The Court located this power in the Constitution's **necessary and proper clause** (or elastic clause).

Necessary and Proper Clause: Also known as the elastic clause, it is found in the last paragraph of Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution and expands federal power by granting the federal government all powers that are "necessary" and "proper" to carry out the enumerated powers of Congress.

Chief Justice Marshall expanded federal powers by claiming the national government has additional implied powers when these powers are "necessary and proper" in carrying out enumerated powers, or those expressly granted to the

federal government in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. New Hampshire's Daniel Webster, arguably America's greatest orator, made the case that creating a banking system was "necessary and proper" to carry out expressed constitutional powers, such as the power to coin money and raise armies.

On the second question, the Supreme Court grappled with whether Maryland was empowered to tax the federal government. Luther Martin, Maryland's attorney general, argued the case on behalf of the state. Martin was a leading states' rights advocate who refused to sign the Constitution, opting instead to storm out of the Convention in protest of what he perceived to be the granting of excessive federal powers. He also successfully defended the former vice president Aaron Burr in his treason case in 1807. Martin argued that Maryland was within its constitutional authority to tax the federal government because taxing powers represented a **concurrent power**, in that both the federal and state governments are assigned this power in the Constitution. States, after all, are permitted to levy income and sales taxes on residents. Daniel Webster, on behalf of the national government, argued that Maryland does not have the authority to tax the federal government because the state's taxing power is limited in the Constitution. States, for example, are prohibited from taxing foreign governments and/or imports. The Supreme Court again sided with the federal government in stating that because "the power to tax involves the power to destroy," the Framers never intended to give state governments the power to tax the federal government.[35] Allowing state governments to tax the national government would place the national government at the feet of the states, a scenario never envisioned by the Framers. The Court supported this view by pointing to the Constitution's **supremacy clause**, which asserts that all federal laws that further the Constitution are the supreme laws of the land. In the end, the *McCulloch* case substantially increased federal power in relation to the state by linking additional implied powers to the national government and by denying the state the right to tax the federal government. In Chapter 8, we provide a more thorough review on the important role played by the U.S. Supreme Court in expanding federal powers over the states.

Concurrent Power: Powers that are granted to both the national and state governments in the U.S. Constitution. The power to tax is an example of a concurrent power.

Supremacy Clause: Found in Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, the supremacy clause asserts that the Constitution, national laws, and treaties are supreme over state laws when national laws are in compliance with the U.S. Constitution.

Theory and Practice

Sanctuary Cities: Federal versus State and Local Power on Immigration Policy

There are now approximately 10.5 million undocumented residents (3.2 percent of the U.S. population) living in the United States. This is down from the high mark of 12.2 million (4.0 percent of the U.S. population) that were living in the United States more than fifteen years ago.[36] Approximately 42 percent of these undocumented residents entered the United States legally and are now overstaying their visas, while the other 58 percent entered the United States illegally. The number of undocumented residents living in the United States became

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

an important political issue with the election of President Donald Trump. In June 2019, President Trump tweeted that "next week ICE will begin the process of removing the millions of illegal aliens who have illicitly found their way to the United States." The threat of mass deportation of undocumented residents has caused a political backlash in states and localities that are more inclined to support pro-immigrant policies such as DAPA (Deferred Action for Parental Accountability) and DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) that were formulated during President Obama's term. Some pro-immigrant local governments enacted "sanctuary city" policies that prohibits local government from expending public resources to assist federal immigration officials in the deportation process. Others have enacted "don't ask, don't tell" policies that prohibit local police from asking the immigration status of people they detain. As of 2019, there were nine "sanctuary states" including California, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Mexico, Oregon, and Vermont.[37]

A power struggle between the federal and local governments ensued in 2017 after President Trump issued Executive Order 13768, which required all state and local police to assist federal immigration officials in the mass deportation of undocumented residents. President Trump's order also threatened to cut off federal funds to every "sanctuary city" that refused to comply with the order. This set the stage for a constitutional heavyweight legal fight that helped clarify the boundaries between federal and state powers. The Trump administration argued that federal powers emanating from the Constitution's supremacy clause empower it to require local officials to assist in the mass deportation of undocumented residents. However, local governments pointed to the "anti-commandeering" doctrine, which prohibits the federal government from requiring local governments to carry out federal policies. While the executive order spurred on a number of legal cases across the country, the Courts to this point have upheld the "anti-commandeering" doctrine from the *Murphy v. NCAA* (2018) Supreme Court case in siding against the Trump administration and with sanctuary cities.[38] However, the deportation issue was never settled by the U.S. Supreme Court because President Joe Biden repealed former President Trump's deportation order.

Think It Through

Do you believe the federal government should be permitted to require sanctuary cities to assist federal immigration officials in the mass deportation of undocumented residents? Why or why not?

In Table 4.2, we highlight national, state, and concurrent powers as outlined in the U.S. Constitution.

Table 4.2 The Constitution's Division of Power

National Powers	State Powers	Concurrent Powers (shared by national and state governments)
Right to raise armies, declare war, coin money, regulate foreign and interstate commerce, and other powers prescribed in Article I, Section 8	Power to create county and municipal governments	Power to tax
Implied powers (elastic clause) when required to carry out enumerated powers	Power to regulate elections	Power to pass laws
Treaty-making powers	Right to all powers not granted to national government or denied to states	Power to borrow and spend

The Constitution and Interstate Relations

Federalism is complicated because it involves more than a simple understanding of national–state relations but also includes relations between the states themselves. What responsibilities do states have toward each other? Article IV of the U.S. Constitution addresses the theme of interstate relations.

Is a citizen with a North Carolina driver's license permitted to drive through Wisconsin? Is your birth certificate recognized as a legal document in all fifty states? The answer to both questions is yes. And that is because of Article IV's **full faith and credit clause**. The full faith and credit clause stipulates that "Full Faith and Credit shall be given in each state to the public Acts, records, and Judicial Proceedings of every other State."[39] The primary purpose of this clause was to ensure that legal judgments rendered in one state would be recognized by all states. Without this clause, citizens might be able to avoid the enforcement of legal contracts by simply moving to another state. Or a person might be prevented from driving through another state without first securing a driver's license from that state. All of this is avoided by the full faith and credit clause's requirement that all states recognize the public and legal records of other states.

Full Faith and Credit Clause: A clause found in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution that requires each state to recognize the civil judgments and public records of other states.

The full faith and credit clause was at the center of a major controversy in American politics. The state of Massachusetts became the first state to allow same-sex marriages in 2004. Did this mean that the other forty-nine states were required to recognize a same-sex marriage performed in Massachusetts? A marriage certificate, after all, is a public record that is recorded and filed by a state or county clerk. The issue was made more complicated by the **Defense of Marriage Act**, a federal law signed by President Bill Clinton in 1996 that permitted states to refuse recognition of same-sex marriages performed in other states. The Defense of Marriage Act also defined marriage as the union between a man and a woman as it relates to federal matters. States, therefore, were not required to recognize same-sex marriages. However, the controversy was settled when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of nationalizing same-sex marriage rights in the *Obergfell v. Hodges* (2015) case, thus prohibiting any state from denying marriage rights to same-sex couples.

Defense of Marriage Act: A federal law enacted in 1996 that allowed states to not recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

Privileges and Immunities Clause: A clause found in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution that assures nonresidents are granted basic privileges and immunities across all states.

Extradition Clause: A clause found in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution that asserts states must surrender criminal offenders to states in which the crime was committed.

Why Politics Matters to You!

The Constitution: The Privileges and Immunities Clause and College Tuition Costs

Article IV of the U.S. Constitution emphasizes three major clauses that help guide the relationship between states: the **privileges and immunities clause**, the full faith and credit clause, and the **extradition clause**.

The purpose of the privileges and immunities clause was to make certain that citizens traveling across the states would not be unfairly treated. This clause generally prohibits states from preventing nonresidents from purchasing property

(Continued)

Why Politics Matters to You! (Continued)

and conducting business and requires equal treatment in tax policy. One of the major controversies in the privilege and immunities clause was whether states can have separate tuition rates for out-of-state residents and in-state students. The courts determined that states are permitted to charge higher tuition rates for out-of-state residents because states are permitted to subsidize the education costs of residents.

Think It Through

Do you believe states should be permitted to charge higher tuition rates for out-of-state residents? Why or why not?

Ratifying the Constitution

The Constitution was not officially approved after it was signed by the delegates at the Constitutional Convention on September 17, 1787. The next hurdle was getting the individual state governments to support this new form of government. The Convention stipulated that nine of the thirteen state legislatures must ratify the Constitution before the new government could begin. Ratifying the Constitution was an intensely political process that divided the nation into two political camps. The **Federalists** believed a strong national government was necessary to address national problems and to promote a sense of national unity. Federalists were mostly wealthy property owners who primarily resided in the Northeast and Middle Atlantic states. George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, and Benjamin Franklin gave a major boost to the Federalist movement when they endorsed the Constitution. The **Anti-Federalists** were strong states' rights advocates who largely opposed the Constitution because they believed the new government would dominate over the states. Anti-Federalists were mostly farmers and merchants who advocated local control and frequent elections, and they were distrustful of the motives of the Federalists. The Anti-Federalists were disadvantaged, however, by not having an alternative plan to the Constitution. This early split between the Federalists and Anti-Federalists set the stage for the subsequent emergence of political parties in the nation.[40]

Federalists: Persons supportive of ratifying the U.S. Constitution. Federalists such as Alexander Hamilton and George Washington generally favored a stronger central government. A Federalist Party later emerged under Alexander Hamilton's leadership.

Anti-Federalists: Persons generally opposed to both a stronger central government and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

Theory and Practice

From Factions to Party: The Evolution of the American Political Party System

The U.S. Constitution makes no mention of political parties, and many of the American Framers argued against parties on the grounds that they would divide rather than unite the nation. The American political party system has evolved throughout American history. The first political party system emerged in 1796 between the Federalist Party and the Democratic-Republican Party. The Federalist Party was led by Alexander Hamilton

(Continued)

and favored a stronger central government, advocated for banking and commercial interests, and was most popular in the Northeastern and Middle Atlantic states. The Democratic-Republican Party was led by Thomas Jefferson and appealed primarily to southern agricultural interests and states' rights advocates.

The second and third political party systems were heavily influenced by the era of Jacksonian democracy. Andrew Jackson helped transform the Democratic-Republican Party into the Democratic Party, which continues as one of the two major parties in the modern era. This movement called on incorporating the masses into the political process. Later, the Whig Party included Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and a coalition of northern industrialists and southern farmers. The issue of slavery caused the downfall of the Whig Party. The fourth political party system included the pro-slavery and/or pro-states' rights Democratic Party and the antislavery Republican Party. President Abraham Lincoln was the first president elected under the Republican banner. The Democratic and the Republican Parties have served as the two leading American political parties since 1860.

Since 1860, the nation has witnessed several **political realignments**, situations in which one political party dominates over the other for an extended period of time. Famed political scientist V. O. Key argued that political realignments frequently occur after a critical presidential election.[41] Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860 started a Republican realignment that lasted for more than twenty years. Similarly, the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1932 started a twenty-year Democratic realignment.

In Table 4.3, we provide a brief summary of the evolution of the political party system in the United States.

Table 4.3 American Political Parties

The First Party System 1796–1820			
	Federalist	**vs.**	**Democratic-Republican**
1796	John Adams		
1800			Thomas Jefferson
1804			Thomas Jefferson
1808			James Madison
1812			James Madison
1816			James Monroe
1820			James Monroe
The Second Party System 1824–36			
	National Republican	**vs.**	**Democrat**
1824	John Quincy Adams		
1828			Andrew Jackson
1832			Andrew Jackson
1836			Martin Van Buren

The Third-Party System 1840–56			
	Whig	**vs.**	**Democrats**
1840	William Henry Harrison		
1844			James Polk
1848	Zachary Taylor		
1852			Franklin Pierce
1856			James Buchanan
The Modern Political Party System 1860–?			
	Republican	**vs.**	**Democrat**
1860	Abraham Lincoln		
1864	Abraham Lincoln		
1868	Ulysses S. Grant		
The Modern Political Party System 1860–?			
	Republican	**vs.**	**Democrat**
1872	Ulysses S. Grant		
1876	Rutherford B. Hayes		
1880	James A. Garfield		
1884			Grover Cleveland

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

Table 4.3 Continued

The Modern Political Party System 1860–?			
	Republican	**vs.**	**Democrat**
1888	Benjamin Harrison		
1892			Grover Cleveland
1896	William McKinley		
1900	William McKinley		
1904	Theodore Roosevelt		
1908	William H. Taft		
1912			Woodrow Wilson
1916			Woodrow Wilson
1920	Warren Harding		
1924	Calvin Coolidge		
1928	Herbert Hoover		
1932			Franklin D. Roosevelt
1936			Franklin D. Roosevelt
1940			Franklin D. Roosevelt
1944			Franklin D. Roosevelt
1948			Harry S. Truman
1952	Dwight D. Eisenhower		
1956	Dwight D. Eisenhower		
1960			John F. Kennedy
1964			Lyndon B. Johnson
1968	Richard M. Nixon		
1972	Richard M. Nixon		
The Modern Political Party System 1860–?			
	Republican	**vs.**	**Democrat**
1976			Jimmy Carter
1980	Ronald Reagan		
1984	Ronald Reagan		
1988	George H. W. Bush		
1992			Bill Clinton
1996			Bill Clinton
2000	George W. Bush		
2004	George W. Bush		
2008			Barack Obama
2012			
2016		Donald J. Trump	
2020		Joseph Biden	

Think It Through

Do you believe another political realignment is likely to emerge in the modern era? Why or why not?

The Federalists had the upper hand early on when some states' rights advocates boycotted the Constitutional Convention. Patrick Henry said that he "smelt a rat" when he declined his invitation, and Samuel Adams and other leading states' rights advocates also made the mistake of not attending. It is perhaps because of the shortage of states' rights advocates at the Convention that the Federalists were able to advance their agenda.

Political Realignments: Situations in which one political party dominates over the other for an extended period of time.

Do you believe it would be easier or more difficult for states to come to agreement on controversial issues today?

Table 4.4 chronicles the timeline associated with the ratification process across states.

Table 4.4 Ratification of the U.S. Constitution: The Process for Ratifying the U.S. Constitution Was as Contentious as It Was Long

State	Date
Delaware	December 7, 1787
Pennsylvania	December 12, 1787
New Jersey	December 19, 1787
Georgia	January 2, 1788
Connecticut	January 9, 1788
Massachusetts	February 6, 1788
Maryland	April 28, 1788
South Carolina	May 23, 1788
New Hampshire	June 21, 1788
Virginia	June 25, 1788
New York	July 26, 1788
North Carolina	November 21, 1789
Rhode Island	May 29, 1790

The *Federalist Papers*: Madison, Hamilton, and Jay

Newspapers played a particularly important role during the ratification process. The entire Constitution was printed in the *Pennsylvania Packet* two days after the end of the Convention.[42] Written editorials in support of and opposition to the Constitution soon flooded into every major newspaper around the country. From October 1787 to May 1788, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay submitted eighty-five essays to New York newspapers under the pseudonym "Publius," a Latin term translated to mean "the people." These articles are now referred to as the *Federalist Papers*. The *Federalist Papers* are significant because they provide insight into the original intent of those who drafted the Constitution. The delegates voted to conduct the meeting in secrecy in order to encourage frank discussion away from editorial writers and other curious onlookers. Guards were placed outside the Convention's doors, and George Washington assigned a chaperone to Benjamin Franklin, who had a reputation for being rather loose lipped. The *Federalist Papers* give a deeper meaning to the brief passages included in the text of the Constitution.

The Constitution's Article II, Section 4, for instance, informs us that a president can be impeached for "treason, bribery, or other high crimes and misdemeanors." Does this mean a president must commit a crime to be impeached? It is a debatable point, but an informed discussion can take place after a closer reading of the *Federalist Papers*.

The *Federalist Papers* are also significant in that they played a key role in persuading states to ratify the Constitution. Delaware was the first state to ratify the Constitution on December 7, 1787, followed within two weeks by Pennsylvania and New Jersey. The Constitution was officially ratified when New Hampshire, as the ninth state, ratified the Constitution on June 21, 1788. Virginia and New York, however, two states that included approximately 40 percent of the nation's population, still had not ratified it. James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay published the *Federalist Papers* in New York newspapers as a way to thwart New York Governor George Clinton's efforts to block ratification. Strong sentiments existed against the Constitution. The state of Rhode Island, in fact, did not even send delegates to the Constitutional Convention, and North Carolina and Rhode Island did not ratify the Constitution until months after George Washington was sworn into office.[43]

Theory and Practice

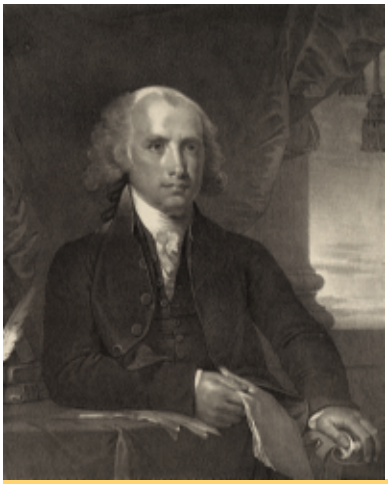
Impeachment in the American system

Throughout American history, only three American presidents have been impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives. However, no President as yet has been found guilty in the U.S Senate by a two-thirds vote and removed from office. Former President Donald Trump was the first U.S. president to be impeached more than once during his term. Trump was first impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives on December 18, 2019, after being accused of threatening to withhold hundreds of millions of dollars of foreign aid to Ukraine unless Ukrainian leaders launched a criminal investigation of his political opponent Joe Biden. Trump was impeached for a second time one week before his term expired on January 13, 2021, for his role in instigating the January 6, 2021 attack on the US. Capitol.

Former president Bill Clinton was impeached by the House of Representatives on December 19, 1998, on charges of perjury and obstruction of justice on issues relating to his extramarital affair with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. The first American president to be impeached was President Andrew Johnson, who was impeached for violating the Office of Tenure Act in 1868. The U.S. Senate did not convict any of the three impeached American presidents with the necessary two-thirds vote required for expulsion. In 1974, the House Judiciary Committee voted to impeach Richard Nixon for his involvement in the Watergate scandal, but President Nixon resigned from office before an impeachment vote was scheduled in Congress.

Think It Through

Under which conditions should impeachment be used?



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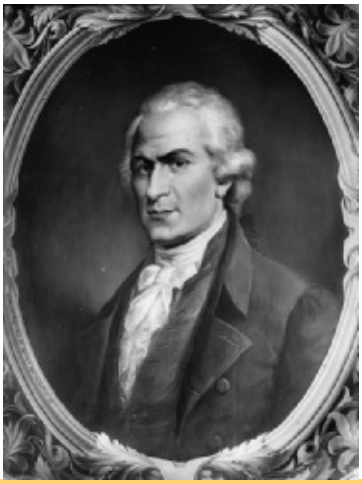

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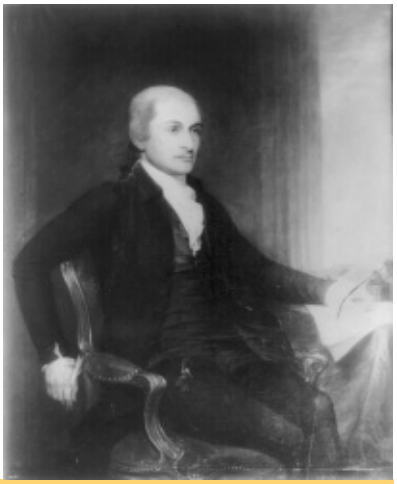

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Image 4.3 Portraits of James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, authors of the *Federalist Papers*. James Madison (1751–1836) was also the chief author of the U.S. Constitution and went on to serve as the fourth president of the United States (1809–17). Alexander Hamilton (circa 1755–1804) served as a top aide to George Washington during the Revolutionary War and went on to become the nation's first secretary of the treasury. John Jay (1745–1829) was particularly influential on matters of foreign affairs. The Jay Treaty (1794), for example, played a large role in preventing another war with Britain. He also served as the nation's first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Federalist Paper No. 17 and *Federalist Paper* No. 39

States' rights advocates argued against the Constitution because they feared that the national government would dominate over the states. They also believed that the powers granted to the American president too closely resembled the powers assigned to European monarchs.

Two of the most significant *Federalist Papers* on the issue of national–state relations can be found in Alexander Hamilton's *Federalist Paper* No. 17 and James Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 39. In these papers, Hamilton and Madison attempt to assure the Anti-Federalists that the national government will not dominate over the states.

In *Federalist Paper* No. 17, Hamilton rebuts the attacks of Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, and other states' rights advocates by asserting that the federal government will have no interest in encroaching on state powers. Hamilton argued that because the federal government will be preoccupied with issues of war and peace, interstate commerce, and foreign relations, the national government will not become entangled with the responsibilities of states. Specifically, Hamilton informs the Anti-Federalists that "the regulation of the mere domestic police of a state appears to me to hold out slender allurements to ambition."[44] He also calms some states' rights advocates by arguing that it is actually more likely that state government will encroach on the powers of the national government because citizens have greater loyalty to their state than to the national government. He claims that "because . . .

a man is more attached to his family than to his neighborhood, to his neighborhood than to the community at large, the people of each State would be apt to feel a stronger bias towards their local governments than towards the government of the Union."[45]

Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 39 eased some Anti-Federalist fears by pointing out the states' role in selecting federal officials. He argued that if states do not want the national government to have authority over states, then state legislatures should appoint states' rights advocates to the U.S. Senate. Remember, immediately following the ratification of the Constitution, most federal officials were appointed by state legislatures. Members of the House of Representatives were initially the only federal officials elected through popular elections. He also pointed out that states' rights are further protected in the process of amending the U.S. Constitution, where a three-fourths super-majority across states is required to ratify amendments.

Do you think this is still true in the twenty-first century? Do you feel greater loyalty to your national or state government?

America Meets the Greeks: *Federalist Paper* No. 10

Perhaps America's greatest contribution to political theory is found in James Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 10. It is here where Madison confronts long-standing criticisms of democracies. We began the chapter by emphasizing how great thinkers from Plato to Hobbes opposed democratic forms of government. Recall that Plato argued that the republic should be ruled by leaders who first acquire perfect knowledge in order to promote harmony and justice in society. He disliked democratic systems and blamed the Athenian democracy for killing his mentor Socrates and for losing the Peloponnesian War with Sparta. Also, Thomas Hobbes believed that all human behavior is driven by our lust for power. He therefore concluded society would degenerate into war and that life would become "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short" if people were left to govern themselves.

The reason that *Federalist Paper* No. 10 is considered by some to be America's greatest contribution to Western political thought is because it is here that Madison explains how it is possible to simultaneously have a system of government that allows for majority rule while safeguarding minority rights and the national interest. Madison was most worried about whether the new government would be durable enough to stand the test of time. He witnessed firsthand the failures of the rickety Articles of Confederation and was now principally concerned with preventing another governmental collapse. His chief concern was that citizens in the political minority might grow resentful living under the rules set by the majority. Those frequently in the minority view might become sufficiently motivated to secede and bring about the downfall of the government.

Madison addressed this theme in his discussions on factions. A faction is a group of citizens who share a common interest or impulse in conflict with the interests of others. American society is replete with competing factions, such as the

wealthy versus the poor, men versus women, competing ethnic and special interest groups, and Democratic versus Republican Party members. A faction could be a minority or a majority faction. A minority faction is considered less dangerous by Madison because its behavior can be checked by the majority. A majority faction is more precarious because it is difficult to check its behavior in a system that allows for majority rule. Madison asserted that majority factions have two cures: (1) government can remove the cause of factions, or (2) government can control the effects of factions.[46]

In the end, Madison concluded that we cannot remove the cause of factions without abolishing the major principles underlying our Constitution. Madison cited liberty as the cause of factions because people in open societies are free to form groups or associations. He draws the analogy that "air is to fire as liberty is to faction" in order to illustrate that just as eliminating air to prevent fire would be too drastic and cause our physical death, eliminating liberty to prevent majority factions would also cause our political death. We accordingly have to accept that we will not be able to eliminate factions from political life.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Do You Belong to a Political Party?

In *Federalist Paper* No. 10, James Madison warned that political factions could cause disunity and threaten the long-term survival of popular governments. For this reason George Washington advised against the establishment of political parties in his Farewell Address to the nation in 1796. He believed political parties would divide our nation into quarreling political factions. Washington warned that political parties would lead to geographic rivalries between the North and South and could negatively impact U.S. foreign relations with European powers.

On the other hand, renowned political scientist David R. Mayhew argues that political parties play a positive role in American democracy.[47] One theory behind political parties is outlined in the Responsible Party Model. The Responsible Party Model emphasizes that parties play an important role in democracies when parties offer voters a clear choice between competing political platforms, parties effectively educate voters on the differences between political platforms, and party members are effective in implementing their party's platform once elected. In Chapter 6, we highlight how party systems in parliamentary systems differ from the mostly two-party system that exists in the United States and other presidential systems.

Many Americans in the twenty-first century are politically dealigning from both the Republican and Democratic Parties. In 1952, only 23 percent of Americans identified themselves as political Independents, compared with 47 percent registered Democrats and 28 percent registered Republicans. Now, 41 percent of Americans identify themselves as Independents, compared with 28 percent registered as Democrats and 28 percent registered as Republicans in 2023.[48] College-age students are also increasingly identifying themselves as Independents.

Think It Through

1. **Do you believe political parties are good for American democracy?**
2. **Do you belong to a political party? Why or why not?**

Controlling the Effects of Factions

The brilliance of *Federalist Paper* No. 10 is on display when Madison instructs how best to control the effects of majority factions. How can you have a system of majority rule that is sensitive to those in the political minority? Madison explained that this could be accomplished by first dividing power between the national and state governments (i.e., federalism) because this structure makes it difficult for a majority faction to form in the first place. A federalist system of government is hierarchal in that it includes local governments, county governments, state governments, and a national government. He explained that because factions take shape locally, where people first meet and interact with each other, they can be contained by this hierarchal structure of government. Let's imagine a group in your town emerges that is averse to the rights of Irish Americans. It is possible that this group could become quite influential in your town and might influence local officials to work against the interests of Irish Americans. For this anti-Irish movement to become a majority faction, it will have to climb the political ladder of federalism. This local group (or faction) would then have to persuade county and state officials to advance their unfair and unconstitutional agenda before ultimately persuading the national government to do the same. Madison contends this will be difficult to do because factions (or groups) will likely grow weaker every time they take a step up the political ladder. In our current example, Irish Americans and other sympathizers will likely organize and blunt the effectiveness of this anti-Irish faction as they attempt to grow from town to county, county to state, and state to national government. This is because it is much easier to derail a movement than it is to grow one. Former Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn once remarked in another context that even a jackass can kick down a barn, but it takes a carpenter to build one.[49] The system of federalism thus makes it difficult for particular groups to dominate the national agenda because they will be weakened by opposing groups as they attempt their ascendancy to majority status.

There is no guarantee, however, that federalism will prevent majority factions from tyrannizing over those in the political minority. Black Americans, for instance, were enslaved and/or disenfranchised by the majority for most of our history. Madison's second method for controlling the destructive effects of majority factions is to institute a representative democracy (i.e., republic) rather than a **direct democracy**. He argued that the effects of tyranny of the majority can be softened by selecting the best and brightest to represent citizens in government. Because enlightened members of society would be more likely to do what is right rather than what is popular, a representative democracy will be more effective than a direct democracy in guarding against the potentially destructive impulses of the majority. Madison stressed that enlightened representatives will be more sensitive to the views of the political minority because they will more likely be educated on the virtues of justice and national interests. *Federalist Paper* No. 10 makes a major contribution to political theory by asserting that the negative impacts associated with the

Direct Democracy: A system of democracy whereby citizens directly participate in the decision-making process of government.

Do you believe members of Congress have historically represented the best and brightest in society, given that women and Black Americans were initially barred from participating in the political process?

tyranny of the majority can be weakened by creating a federalist system of government and by having the most enlightened members of society make decisions on behalf of the general population. This is why the Framers did not use the term *democracy* in any of the 4,400 words penned in the Constitution (7,500 words with twenty-seven amendments), opting instead to use the term *republic* to emphasize the need to have the best and brightest assume leadership positions in government.

Adopting the Constitution

The eighty-five essays that came to be known as the *Federalist Papers* were mostly effective in calming Anti-Federalist fears that the national government would dominate over the state governments. On June 25, 1788, the populous state of Virginia ratified the U.S. Constitution in a narrow vote, and New York followed suit a month later. The Anti-Federalists were also concerned, however, that the Constitution did not include a Bill of Rights. North Carolina still refused to ratify the Constitution over this issue, arguing that the Constitution should not be ratified until the natural rights of individuals were protected. The Anti-Federalists wondered why it was necessary to have a Bill of Rights in state constitutions but not in the national Constitution. They were worried that if natural rights were not specifically protected, there would be nothing to prevent the national government from restricting free speech, encroaching on the freedom of the press, and infringing on the free exercise of religion. The Federalists, on the other hand, were opposed to including a Bill of Rights for two reasons. First, they believed the main text of the Constitution already prohibited the national government from violating the natural rights of citizens. Including a Bill of Rights could become a slippery slope by creating the impression that the national government was authorized to violate any individual right not listed in a Bill of Rights. Second, the Federalists were also concerned that a call for a Bill of Rights would require a second Constitutional Convention. The Federalists believed a second Constitutional Convention could cause the unraveling of all of the progress made in the first Constitutional Convention. The rules of the Constitutional Convention permitted any delegate to revisit any previously approved measure. A second Constitutional Convention might therefore be used by Anti-Federalists to rescind other provisions that were already agreed on in the first Constitutional Convention.

The Federalists and the Anti-Federalists again found compromise by agreeing to add a Bill of Rights by attaching those rights as amendments to the Constitution. This satisfied the Anti-Federalist demand for a Bill of Rights and was ultimately agreeable to the Federalists because the process would not require a second Constitutional Convention. Thomas Jefferson was one of the strongest advocates for the inclusion of a Bill of Rights and pledged to voters in Virginia that if he was elected to Congress, he would "prepare and recommend to the states for ratification, the most satisfactory provisions for all essential rights."[50]

Table 4.5 The Bill of Rights: The First Ten Amendments to the Constitution	
First Amendment	Protects freedom of speech, press, and religion and the right to assemble
Second Amendment	Protects the right to bear arms
Third Amendment	Prevents quartering of soldiers
Fourth Amendment	Prevents illegal searches and seizures
Fifth Amendment	Rights pertaining to grand juries, self-incrimination, double jeopardy, due process, and eminent domain
Sixth Amendment	Right to speedy trial
Seventh Amendment	Right to trial by jury
Eighth Amendment	Prevents cruel and unusual punishment
Ninth Amendment	Broadly protects individual civil rights
Tenth Amendment	Divides power between national and state government

James Madison was then assigned the difficult task of sifting through the hundreds of potential amendments that came flooding in from across the thirteen states. Madison ultimately recommended that the Bill of Rights should consist of seventeen amendments. Congress later did away with five of the amendments, and two of the amendments that dealt with the apportionments of members of Congress and congressional salaries were not ratified by the states.[51] The Bill of Rights was ratified on December 15, 1791, as the first ten amendments to the Constitution. Table 4.5 highlights the Bill of Rights.

Amending the Constitution

The U.S. Constitution is a natural law constitution meant to address enduring principles. Thomas Jefferson argued that because the "Constitution belongs to the living and not the dead," it must be altered periodically to reflect the wishes of those living under it. The formal process for amending the Constitution is found in Article V. Amending the Constitution is a two-step process that requires a proposal and a ratification stage. Although there have been more than ten thousand constitutional amendments proposed in Congress, the Constitution has only been officially amended twenty-seven times. The first step of the amendment process is the proposal stage. The Constitution stipulates that a proposal to amend the Constitution must be approved by either a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate or by two-thirds of the states at a national convention. All proposals to date have come from a two-thirds vote in the House and Senate.

The Constitution also provides two possible methods for ratifying constitutional amendments, as shown in Table 4.6. An amendment can either be ratified by a majority vote in three-fourths of the state legislatures (i.e., thirty-eight states) or by the

Table 4.6 How to Amend the Constitution		
Proposing amendment	Two-thirds vote in both houses of Congress	Congress convenes national convention and two-thirds of state legislatures support the proposal
Ratifying amendments	Majority vote in three-fourths of state legislatures	Three-fourths of states approving at national convention

approval of special state conventions called in at least three-fourths of the states. The Twenty-First Amendment, which repealed the Eighteenth Amendment's prohibition of alcohol in 1933, is the only amendment to be ratified by state conventions. All others were ratified by state legislatures. The Framers made it difficult to amend the Constitution by requiring a supermajority vote in both the proposal and ratification stages of the amendment process. Most constitutional amendments fail at the proposal stage. Of the more than ten thousand constitutional amendments proposed to the House and Senate, only thirty-three have passed the proposal stage with a two-thirds vote in Congress. Most of the seventeen amendments passed since the ratification of the Bill of Rights (i.e., the first ten amendments) have either expanded the political rights of citizens (i.e., Thirteenth, Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Seventeenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-Fourth, and Twenty-Sixth) and/or altered the presidential selection process (i.e., Twelfth, Twentieth, Twenty-Second, Twenty-Third, and Twenty-Fifth).

One of the few amendments to clear the proposal stage but not the ratification stage is the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), which stipulates that "equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." Although this amendment is widely popular with the majority of Americans, several southern states voiced opposition and successfully blocked ratification of the ERA.

Why do you believe the Equal Rights Amendment for women has never been ratified?

4 Summary

Sascha Burkard/Shutterstock.com

The American Constitution is the oldest and most revered national constitution in the world today. The core of the Constitution rests on the assumption that a tyrannical system of government can be avoided by adopting a federalist system of government that includes a system of checks and balances and a Bill of Rights. This chapter highlighted the weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation, the major principles underlying the American Constitution, and the politics associated with the ratification of the Constitution. It also revealed that the system of government created by the American Framers is quite different from the government we have in the twenty-first century. The American Framers were well aware of Plato's and Hobbes's critique that democracies left to their own devices will eventually degenerate into "mobocracies." James Madison and the other delegates at the

Constitutional Convention sought to build a system of government that blended both democratic and aristocratic values into a new type of government.

The U.S. Constitution has since emerged as America's "most important export" in both promoting democratic values and in setting the international trend on establishing a constitution to guide the relationship between the government and the people. The power of the ideas expressed in the U.S. Constitution inspired a Belgian revolution in 1789, influenced Poland and France to adopt constitutions in 1791, and caused Spain to follow suit in 1812, with other nations following until we now have only a handful of democratic nations (e.g., the United Kingdom, Israel, and New Zealand) and a few nondemocratic nations (Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Libya) that still do not have a guiding constitution.[52]

In Chapters 6, 7, and 8, we will examine the expansion of American democracy and provide a comparative perspective as it relates to the structure and powers of legislatures, executive leadership, and judiciaries across the globe. Since the Constitutional Convention, the Electoral College has been democratized, judicial elections are in place in most states, and Americans now directly elect U.S. senators. This democratic movement in the United States, in conjunction with advances in mass communications and a more informed electorate, has also helped change the political landscape across the globe. In the next chapter, we will compare populist movements and nationalistic trends in the United States and around the world.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. Why is the term *democracy* not included in the U.S. Constitution?

   The term democracy had negative connotations to most of the American Framers because they believed democracies would lead to mob rule and political chaos. Most early political theorists did not believe citizens were capable of governing themselves. The Framers instead referred to the American system of government as a republic.

2. Which British laws inspired the American colonists to rise up against British rule?

   American colonists began to rise up against British rule once Britain began taxing the American colonies. The Stamp Act of 1765 placed a British tax against most published documents in the colonies, such as newspapers and magazines. The Townshend Acts of 1767 also placed British taxes on glass, lead, paper, paint, and tea. The Intolerable Acts also encroached on the powers of the colonies and extended legal immunity to British soldiers.

3. Why did the Articles of Confederation (1781–87) system of government fail?

   The Articles of Confederation failed because it did not have a national executive or judicial branch of government. Powers were instead given to the thirteen state colonies. Because the national government did not have the power to tax, it was not able to pass laws to send needed supplies to American troops during the Revolutionary War.

4. How did *Shelby v. Holder* (2013) affect voter turnout?

In *Shelby v Holder* (2013), the U.S. Supreme Court weakened the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by allowing states with a history of restricting the voting rights of Black voters to change voting laws in ways that could lower Black voter turnout. Black voter turnout in the presidential election after the *Shelby v. Holder* decision was lower than it was prior to the decision.

5. Who wrote the *Federalist Papers* and why?

The Federalist Papers were written by James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay. The purpose of the Federalist Papers was to explain the rationale for the major principles inherent in the U.S. Constitution and to persuade states to ratify the Constitution.

6. How do laws in conservative and liberal states differ on abortion rights?

The Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022) overturned the precedent that abortion rights were a fundamental right granted to all women. Since the *Dobbs*, decision a wide range of abortion laws were enacted across states. Most liberal states have enshrined a woman's right to terminate a pregnancy, while some conservative states have placed restrictions on this right or banned abortions outright.

7. How did the Supreme Court expand federal powers over the states in the *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) decision?

McCulloch v. Maryland (1819) expanded federal powers over states through the necessary and proper clause (i.e., elastic clause) by ruling the national government has implied powers if they are necessary and proper in carrying out the enumerated powers. The Court also ruled that states were not permitted to tax the national government because the power to tax is the power to destroy.

8. How has *Federalist Paper* No. 10 contributed to democratic theory?

Madison's *Federalist Paper* No. 10 explained how it is possible for citizens to rule over themselves without it leading to a tyranny of the majority system. Madison argued that by creating a representative democracy (i.e., a republic) rather than a direct democracy system, the United States is able to promote liberty while preventing the majority from tyrannizing groups in the minority.

Key Terms

Annapolis Convention p. 86
Anti-Federalists p. 103
Bicameral Legislature p. 89
Checks and Balances p. 94
Concurrent Power p. 100
Confederal Form of Government p. 96
Connecticut Compromise p. 89
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5 Nationalism and Populism in the United States and Abroad

Image 5.1 American President Joe Biden, seen here, has had to govern within a country that has seen an increase in nationalism and populism. AP Images/ Andrew Harnik

Chapter Outline

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Introduction: The Underlying Causes of Nationalism and Populism

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What are the root causes of nationalism and populism in the modern era?
2. What is meant by the term *populism?*
3. How do people vote in presidential elections based on race, ethnicity, gender, and age?
4. How have demographic changes influenced right-wing populism in the United States?
5. How do nationalism and populism in the United States compare with the same phenomena in Europe?

Donald Trump's emergence onto the American political landscape has changed the tenor of electoral campaigns by focusing on divisive issues that pit Americans against one another. Trump's 2024 campaign, which is in many ways a continuation of his approach as president, has focused on the growing divide between political elites and what he and his supporters referred to as "regular Americans." Any segment of the electorate that challenges former President Trump's views on the outcome of the 2020 election are by his definition, "unAmerican." The people who stormed the United States Capitol on January 6 in the hopes that the election results would be invalidated are considered "patriots" by the former president. This rhetoric, which has been broadly defined as "populist," focuses primarily on rallying a particular political faction against another through a robust defense of national traditions and established norms. Populists tend to direct their anger toward many of the features of the contemporary international system that they argue has brought about the destruction of national borders and, more importantly, the traditions of each nation-state. To the right-wing populist, the world is being torn apart by a cadre of pro-globalization international businesses and financiers, pro-immigrant political liberals, and a cosmopolitan agenda that places the interests of outsiders ahead of the interests of longstanding citizens. In many ways, the liberal, democratic order that had been established at the conclusion of World War II is now under attack.

In 1945, the world was still reeling from the effects of World War II. As a result, a new political consensus emerged that redefined the roles of states, markets,

and international organizations. Economists had begun to see the connection between trade and large-scale political violence just as political scientists were arguing for the promotion and preservation of liberal democracy. It was theorized that if currencies could be stabilized and trade could proliferate against a backdrop of representative rule and the protection of individual freedoms, then the likelihood of war could be reduced. The result of this consensus was the creation of an international regime predicated on the balancing of state and international powers.

The states of Europe began the long process toward economic and political unification just as the United States began to shape a global order that prioritized free trade, debt reduction, and human rights. The European Union (EU), the United Nations, and the three main international economic organizations—the International Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT, now known as the World Trade Organization [WTO])—were designed to promote the spread of democratic values and the free movement of currencies, goods, services, and people. Their foundations were built on the beliefs that nationalism and fascism (the dominant political ideologies of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) stymied not only human rights but also economic development. During the Cold War, these international organizations helped prevent the expansion of communism and promoted the kind of unity based on democracy and free trade that was impossible in parts of the world directly or indirectly controlled by the Soviet Union. When poor countries were facing economic catastrophes because of national disasters or changes in consumer behavior on the international market, they could reach out to these international economic organizations for help. For the most part, it was international aid and American military support that prevented the Soviet Union from taking over Western Europe in the days following the end of World War II.

However, the Soviet Union dissolved in 1991, and what has transpired over the past thirty years is an international economic and political system struggling to produce a better quality of life for millions around the world. Some countries have continued to suffer economic deprivation, while other countries may have had more economic success but now see a growing class divide. During this time, many began to ask, "If the international order is designed to enhance the overall human condition, then why are so many suffering?" "Why do the haves have so much and the have-nots so little?" Then came 2008, the year that many political scientists and economists claim as a flashpoint for the contemporary populist revolt. The following section will examine how two global crises sparked a populist resurgence in some of the most democratically stable parts of the world: the United States and Europe. It will begin with a brief overview of the financial catastrophe of 2007–2009.

The Emergence of Nationalism and Populism in the United States in the Twenty-First Century

Between 2007 and 2009, the world witnessed the greatest economic catastrophe since the Great Depression (1929). What began as a practice known as **subprime mortgage lending** in the United States culminated in a bursting of a "housing bubble" and a weakening of global financial institutions and widespread economic chaos. Throughout the early 2000s, large investment and commercial banks began to provide mortgages to individuals who had poor credit scores, low wages, and a variety of other criteria that would make them unlikely to qualify for home mortgages in previous years. As more and more people received these subprime mortgages, home ownership shot up. However, the risk of defaulting on these subprime mortgages increased exponentially. Large investment and commercial banks then devised a system to ensure that if the mortgage payments went unfulfilled, as many had suspected, they would still be protected. As a result, these subprime mortgages proliferated, reaching almost 20 percent of the U.S. market. The resultant housing bubble saw housing prices skyrocket as more and more homeowners refinanced their loans to secure lower monthly payments.

Subprime Mortgage Lending: Home mortgages provided to borrowers with lower-than-average credit ratings. Banks charge much higher interest rates to these borrowers because they are at greater risk of defaulting on loans.

According to *The Economist,* between 2006 (the high-water mark for housing prices) and September of 2008, the average home price in the United States dropped by as much as 20 percent[1] as homeowners began to default on their mortgages. In 2007 alone, there were more than 2.2 million foreclosure filings, up 75 percent from the previous year.[2] By the fall of 2009, more than 14 percent of all homes in the United States were in a state of foreclosure.[3] The system had become corrupted and had brought down the housing market, which led to a weakening of major financial institutions and had a ripple effect in markets all around the world. The bursting of the housing bubble and the subsequent large-scale economic downturn were major contributors to the emerging populist movement. However, they were not the only ones. Another component that fueled populist anger against the international system was focused on how the central banks around the world handled the crisis.

Instead of governments opting for a solution that punished large financial institutions, they instead bailed them out with tax dollars and then overwhelmingly opted for **austerity measures** to stabilize their economies. In other words, the central banks protected the large commercial and investment banks while the citizens were left to foot the bill. To make matters worse, economic stimulus took the form of austerity packages, government policies that further stressed private investment over public support. The days of the progressive welfare state—one in which government spending was used to repair damaged infrastructure, social services, and

Austerity Measures: A political budgeting strategy that attempts to reduce budget deficits by raising taxes and/or cutting governmental spending.

overall economic woes—had seemingly disappeared. Government officials fearful of political reprisals were influenced by private corporations and international investors and decided to limit government spending to fuel economic growth. Such measures forged a strange coalition among the citizens of Europe and the United States, one that merged those who had felt that the government had made promises but offered little returns (left-wing voters) with those who felt that free market globalization had destroyed the essence of national identities and traditional institutions (right-wing voters). This alignment created a new argument in global politics and to a certain degree allowed populist candidates to take the mantle of leadership.

But what is a populist candidate? Historically, populists are political figures who cater to the masses and seek to portray themselves as being "of the people." In current American politics, it could be said that both Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump were portrayed by the media as "populist" candidates.[4] But what could Sanders and Trump have in common? Sanders is a self-proclaimed socialist U.S. senator from Vermont who rails against corporate greed and advocates for a "Medicare for all" single-payer health care system. Trump, on the other hand, is a pro-business billionaire who, as president, lowered the corporate tax rate from 35 to 21 percent and sought to spur economic growth by reducing the role of government through deregulatory policies. So how can two politicians who appear to be polar opposites be considered populists? One defining characteristic of populism is the belief that politics should be framed as a "conflict between the people and the elite."[5] Both Sanders and Trump are perceived by their respective political bases as faithful champions of the "people" fighting against Washington's corrupt ruling establishment. Where they differ is in how they identify the root causes of political corruption and in how they define the "ruling establishment." Sanders is a **left-wing populist** who brands himself as a defender of the working class, challenging self-dealing billionaires who control the political agenda by contributing unlimited amounts of money to political candidates. Trump is considered a **right-wing populist** because he offers a nationalistic message, attacking liberal immigration policies for diluting America's cultural identity, disparaging trade agreements that he believes undercuts U.S. manufacturing and displaces U.S. workers, and bluntly stating that the media and liberals are anti-American for investigating him for his behavior while in office. In Trump's worldview, the country is being weakened by external forces and can only be saved if Americans have the resolve to "Make America Great Again." On March 6, 2023, at the annual Conservative Political Action Committee convention, Trump declared, "The sinister forces trying to kill America have done everything they can to stop me, to silence you, and to turn this nation into a socialist dumping ground for criminals, junkies, Marxists, thugs, radicals and dangerous refugees that no other country wants. If those opposing us succeed, our once beautiful USA will be a failed country that no one will even recognize."[6] This is a clear example of right-wing populism; a leader attempting to scapegoat the problems of the country on forces seen as standing in opposition to their version of American values.

Left-Wing Populist: Believe the interests of the people are best served by expanding federal regulations over the private sectors to promote equality.

Right-Wing Populist: Tend to stress nationalistic and anti-elitist themes and are inclined to believe international organizations, trade agreements, and illegal immigration hurt the nation and its working class.

Although this type of rhetoric seems to be out of the mainstream of American political life, it is not. A variety of presidential candidates throughout American history have run as political outsiders and launched antiestablishment campaigns by promising to bend government policies toward the will of the people. In 1828, Andrew Jackson railed against the political establishment's **corrupt bargain** that secured the presidency for John Quincy Adams in 1824.[7] Franklin Delano Roosevelt promised the American people a **New Deal** in pledging to reduce the 25 percent unemployment rate and lift the nation out of the Great Depression. And it was as a California "outsider" that Ronald Reagan in 1980 first campaigned with the slogan "Let's Make America Great Again."[8] So is there anything really new about the populist movement unfolding in American politics today?

Yes! A second defining and more perilous feature of modern populist candidates is their tendency toward **anti-pluralist** worldviews.[9] Rather than following the trend of past presidents by attempting to unify the country by stitching together the patchwork of groups that make up our pluralistic democratic society, modern populists instead seek to attract some groups by alienating others. Jan-Werner Muller's book titled *What Is Populism?* argues that modern populists have a certain "moralistic imagination of politics" and view the political world as a **Manichean** struggle between good and evil, with lines neatly drawn and sides clearly established. Muller argues that in viewing politics as a dualistic struggle between the "elite" and the "people," today's populists are less inclined to advocate for all the people, opting instead to only advocate for the "good people," defined as those belonging to that candidate's political base. One of the central claims of modern populists is that "only some of the people are really the people."[10] In one of his political rallies during the 2016 campaign, then-candidate Trump remarked that "the only important thing is the unification of the people—because the other people don't mean anything."[11] And at a 2016 political fundraiser in New York City, his Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton said half of Trump's supporters belong in a "basket of deplorables" because they all hold "racist, sexist, homophobic, xenophobic, and Islamophobic views."[12] It is hard to imagine presidential candidates from previous generations publicly saying half of the country's population either "don't mean anything" or belong in a "basket of deplorables."

Corrupt Bargain: A theory that John Quincy Adams secured the presidency in 1824 by engaging in a corrupt bargain with Speaker of the House Henry Clay. Adams allegedly promised to appoint Clay U.S. Secretary of State if Clay delivered the House vote for Adams. Neither candidate received a majority vote in the Electoral College, thus leaving it to the U.S. House of Representatives to determine the winner in the 1824 presidential election.

New Deal: Series of policies enacted during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt geared toward lifting the United States out of the Great Depression. Some policies, such as the Social Security Act of 1935, still have a major impact on American society.

Anti-Pluralist: One who opposes a political system where power is shared between a wide array of people from different social, cultural, and political backgrounds.

Manichean: Relating to the ancient religion of Manichaeism, which believes in a dualistic vision of the universe where everything is either good or evil.

Political Polarization and Presidential Politics

Another worrisome aspect of the modern populist movement in the United States is that political messaging is increasingly based less on policy preferences or ideological differences and more on the racial and ethnic identities of "the people." Today's populists practice **identity politics** and are particularly adept at political messaging that pits some racial and ethnic groups against others.[13] This political targeting of racial and ethnic groups is particularly dangerous because populism can easily creep

Identity Politics: A form of politics where people of different racial, ethnic and/or religious factions promote the interests of their particular group.

into authoritarianism when factions are formed along racial, religious, or ethnic lines (for further discussion see Chapter 9, Authoritarian States). Identity politics also cause groups to further "subdivide" into an ever-expanding number of identity groups that compete with one another for political power.[14] Facebook, for example, allows users to choose from a menu of fifty-one options when classifying their gender, which on one level is an empowering gesture for marginalized groups but on another can cause hyper-fragmentation if subgroups compete with one another for wider national recognition.[15] More recently, Instagram has become the social media outlet of choice for young people, with nearly 88 percent of 18 to 29 year olds having an account.[16] In many ways, Instagram has continued the trends established by Facebook. Its members, through short stories or short clips called "reels," demonstrate a diversity that has historically lain in the shadows.

But for all of Instagram's ability to promote diversity, it has also been a place for those who want to divide further. Populist candidates have exacerbated this trend by communicating directly with the ever-growing number of "political tribes" rather than stressing the important shared values of liberty, freedom of speech, and equality, which have historically served as the adhesive holding our pluralistic society together.[17]

Recent presidential elections also show that political tribes have increasingly formed along racial and ethnic lines. Tables 5.1 to 5.3 highlight how voting blocs in the United States have been shaped by race, ethnicity, gender, and age. Table 5.1 illustrates that demographic characteristics played a large role in determining whether one voted for Trump or Biden in the 2020 presidential election. While Trump won the Caucasian vote by 17 percentage points (58–41), Biden won the African American vote by 75 percentage points (87–12) and the Hispanic vote by 33 percentage points (65–32). Like race and ethnicity, political tribes are also starting to coalesce around gender, as Table 5.2 shows. In 2020, Trump won the male vote by 8 percentage points (53–45),

Table 5.1 Voting Behavior in Presidential Elections Based on Race and Ethnicity, 2004–2020[18]

Year	Presidential Candidates	Caucasian	African American	Hispanic	Other
2020	Donald Trump (R) Joe Biden (D)	58% 41%	12% 87%	32% 65%	41% 55%
2016	Donald Trump (R) Hillary Clinton (D)	57% 37%	8% 89%	11% 66%	36% 56%
2012	Barack Obama (D) Mitt Romney (R)	39% 59%	93% 6%	71% 27%	58% 38%
2008	Barack Obama (D) John McCain (R)	43% 55%	95% 4%	67% 31%	66% 31%
2004	George W. Bush (R) John Kerry (D)	58% 41%	11% 88%	44% 53%	54% 40%

Source: Data from Roper Center for Public Opinion Research. "How Groups Voted in 2016," found at http://ropercenter.cornell.edu/how-groups-voted-2016.

Table 5.2 Voting Behavior by Gender in Presidential Elections, 2004–2020[19]

Year	Presidential Candidates	Women	Men	Gender Gap %
2020	Donald Trump (R) Joe Biden (D)	42% 57%	53% 45%	11 points
2016	Donald Trump (R) Hillary Clinton (D)	41% 54%	52% 41%	11 points
2012	Barack Obama (D) Mitt Romney (R)	55% 44%	45% 52%	10 points
2008	Barack Obama (D) John McCain (R)	56% 43%	49% 48%	7 points
2004	George W. Bush (R) John Kerry (D)	48% 51%	55% 44%	7 points

Source: Center for American Women and Politics. "Gender Gap: Voting Choices in Presidential Elections," found at https://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/resources/ggpresvote.pdf.

Table 5.3 Voting Behavior of 18–29-Year-Olds in Presidential Elections, 2012–2020[20]

Year	Presidential Candidates	18–29-Year-Old Vote
2020	Donald Trump (R) Joe Biden (D)	36% 60%
2016	Donald Trump (R) Hillary Clinton (D)	37% 58%
2012	Barack Obama (D) Mitt Romney (R)	60% 37%

Source: Data from The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE), "Youth Voting," found at https://civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting/#2020.

but Biden won the women's vote by 15 percentage points (57–42). Likewise, Table 5.3 shows that in 2020, 18- to 29-year-old voters have also preferred Democratic candidates, with young people favoring Biden over Trump by 24 percentage points (60–36).

Political tribalism is being driven in part by the shifting demographic trends in the United States. White voters made up 88 percent of the national electorate when Bill Clinton first ran for president in 1992, but White voters dropped to 66.7 percent of the electorate in the 2020 presidential election.[21] Today, approximately 33 percent of voters in U.S. presidential election are non-White voters, whereas non-White voters made up only 12 percent of the national electorate in 1992. Based on those figures, the White vote has shrunk by an average of three percentage points in every presidential election since 1992. These shifting demographic trends might explain why one study found that White Trump supporters were more fearful about future cultural displacement than they were angry about previous policy decisions.[22] Voters who claimed that cultural changes were making them feel like strangers in their own country were 3.5 times more likely to support Trump, and voters who supported large-scale deportation of undocumented

residents were 3.3 times more likely to support him.[23] Conversely, the political strength of Hispanic voters is going in the opposite direction, as Hispanic voters were 13 percent of the electorate in 2020, which is more than three times higher than the 1984 election, when Hispanic voters comprised only 4 percent of the electorate. The Hispanic vote also equaled theAfrican American vote for the first time in 2020.

Amy Chua's book *Political Tribes* sums up modern American politics this way: "Today, no group in America feels comfortably dominant. Every group feels attacked, pitted against other groups not just for jobs and spoils but for the right to define the nation's identity. In these conditions, democracy devolves into zero-sum competition—pure political tribalism."[24] It is because of this increased competition between racial and ethnic political tribes that presidential candidates have increasingly organized campaigns around them. Democratic nominee Barack Obama was the first to employ a winning 80/40 strategy in 2008 by winning 80 percent of the non-White vote and 40 percent of the White vote. His Republican challenger Mitt Romney fell short in his campaign's 61/74 strategy, where he sought 61 percent of the White vote and hoped that White turnout would make up at least 74 percent of the national electorate.[25]

Why Politics Matters to You!

Is Political Polarization Harming Relationships With Friends and Family?

In Chapter 1, we discussed how we are living in hyperpartisan times where it is not uncommon for friendships to form or end based solely upon political viewpoints. You might even be noticing some tension on campus when classmates openly disagree with one another over current events or express viewpoints that are different from your own. The emergence of political polarization and identity politics is making it increasingly difficult for many Americans to navigate through personal relationships with friends and family. One Pew Research poll in 2023 found that 65 percent of Americans say they "always or often feel exhausted" when thinking about how unpleasant politics has become in the United States.[26] Political divisions within families is even ruining family holidays for some. One study found that families that are politically unified spend on average fifty minutes longer together on Thanksgiving Day than families who are politically divided.[27]

Political polarization is even harming some romantic relationships, with one study finding that 11 percent of millennials have broken up with a partner over politics and another 22 percent saying they at least know one couple whose relationship has been harmed over political differences. Personal relationships are sometimes harmed when we ascribe the perceived negative traits associated with national political figures (e.g., Trump or Biden) to family and friends who support them. One recent study found that relationships are sometimes significantly improved when we engage in constructive conversations with political opposites with the goal of trying to understand why they hold their political views rather than trying to convert them to our way of thinking.[28]

Think It Through

Has political polarization caused tension in any of your relationships with friends or family?

The Arab Spring of 2010–11 was the revolutionary movement that attempted to radically alter the governments of certain states in the Middle East and North Africa. In the early days of the Arab Spring, political commentators were hopeful that democracy was on the march. Praised at the time for their boldness in standing up to the authoritarian regimes of Egypt, Tunisia, and Syria, the thousands of political protesters who took to the streets of their respective capitols experienced mixed results. Although both Egypt and Tunisia experienced regime changes, their post-regime governments have been quite different. Tunisia can claim for itself a somewhat stable, somewhat democratic parliament. Although it has had ten governments over the past eight years and is still suffering with high unemployment rates and a great deal of economic uncertainty, it has created a multiparty parliamentary model that has been able to represent a wide array of political ideologies and govern through coalitions.[29]

Egypt has not been as successful. Following the ouster of former president Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled Egypt for thirty years, the Egyptian government was supposed to follow a similar path to that of Tunisia. Unfortunately, however, this was not to happen. Shortly after the legal election of Mohammed el-Morsi, the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed Forces removed Morsi from power and installed the current president, Abdel Fatah al-Sisi.[30] Since taking office, Sisi has eliminated opposition groups and provided a legal framework for himself to consolidate even more power. The movement that was to usher in greater freedom to an area in such need of political reform was slowly dying. Nevertheless, the failure to enact reforms in Egypt pales in comparison to what has transpired in Syria, the regional epicenter of civil strife, war crimes, and displacement. What has been taking place in Syria has resulted in a massive flow of individuals fleeing for their safety, which has further exacerbated populist hostilities and is currently changing the political map of long-standing democracies.

The revolts and the reaction to them that took place in Syria in 2010 were measurably different than those of their neighbors. The Syrian civil war began as a response to both external and internal factors. Syria, like Tunisia and Egypt, was suffering from economic stagnation and a government that was unwilling to provide even the most basic protections of human rights. Syria's president, Bashar al-Assad, had read the writing on the wall. He understood that there was a call for change in the region and that he would need to act forcefully to maintain control. As long as Assad could maintain control over the Syrian military, he would have a chance to stay in power.

In March 2011, a handful of teenagers in the Syrian city of Dara'a wrote graffiti on the exterior of their school to demonstrate their displeasure with Assad and the hopefulness that he would be removed like his Egyptian and Tunisian counterparts. The teens were arrested and detained. As a result, massive protests took place in Dara'a calling for their immediate release. Unfortunately, the government's

response was brutal. On April 25, the Syrian army started its attacks on the protestors. Many were beaten and by the end of the eleven-day attack, dozens had been killed.[31]

Since March 2011, the Syrian army has targeted dissidents, political protestors, and anyone it considers enemies of the state. According to *The Syrian Observatory for Human Rights*, more than 367,000 people have been killed.[32] The divide in Syria is based on the divide among a variety of groups backed by international actors. The traditional divide between Sunni and Shi'ite has been exacerbated by Assad's ties to Russia and Iran. The rebels have been supported by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Turkey, and several Sunni majority Persian Gulf States.[33]

As of 2022, more than 12 million of the twenty-two million people in Syria has been displaced.[34] To put it plainly, these are individuals who have lost their homes, farms, businesses, and families to the war and were forced to flee and seek refuge in other countries. Seeking asylum and gaining refugee status, however, is not that simple. Each country has its own process and particular sets of rules to allow such entry to take place. For example, the United States has a process for granting asylum and refugee status that is different than the processes in the countries of the Middle East, Asia, or Western Europe. It is therefore a challenging proposition for both those individuals seeking refuge and those countries accepting them. Remember, those who seek refuge are not only seeking protection for themselves and perhaps their families, but they are also having to contend with neighboring countries who may or may not accept them. Thus, resettlement is both a humanitarian and political problem that has led to the resurgence of nationalist and populist parties in both the United States and various countries in the EU.

The European Migration Crisis and the Rise of Nationalist-Populism in Western Europe

In the first seven months of 2023, Germany accepted more than 30,000 applications for asylum. Those seeking asylum have opted for the wealthy European countries that have the most liberal refugee and asylum-seeking policies; namely, Germany, France, Italy, Austria, and Sweden. Between 2014 and 2023, Germany topped the list of "asylum application accepting countries." As of 2022, Germany has accepted more than 2 million refugees.[35] To put this in perspective, the next nine countries on the list, when added together, do not even come close to Germany's acceptance rate.

But what does this have to do with the emergence of nationalist, populist parties? Well, everything. Most of the countries on the aforementioned list have

witnessed a resurgence of political parties and political ideologies that were long believed to be dead. The political ideologies of these parties are overtly anti-immigrant, anti-EU, anti-Muslim, and anti-globalization. Take, for example, the trajectory of the Alternative for Germany (AfD), a nationalist party that came into existence in 2013. Although the AfD began as a conservative party opposed to further expansion of the EU and the bailout of poorer member states, it quickly splintered into two factions: one committed to a more conservative approach to economics, the other committed to an overtly anti-immigrant platform. The latter faction has retained the name Alternative for Germany, while the former has changed its name to the Liberal Conservative Reformers. Recently, the AfD has made former German Chancellor Angela Merkel the main target of its anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim messaging. According to the German webzine Deutsche Welle (DW):

Pacific Press/LightRocket/Getty Images

Image 5.2 Anti-AfD protesters take to the streets to protest the policies and platforms of the AfD.

> The party wants to change Germany's constitution to get rid of the right to an individual hearing in asylum cases …(it) seek(s) to immediately deport all those whose applications to remain in Germany are rejected, regardless of whether the countries to which deportees are sent back are safe or not. It also advocates foreigners who commit crimes in Germany being sentenced to prisons outside the country and treating minors as young as 12 as adults for certain offenses… It also argues that Germany is being "Islamified" and portrays itself as a bulwark for traditional Christian values.[36]

The influx of asylum seekers and refugees is challenging the social norms that have developed in Germany since the end of World War II. The memories of the Holocaust and German militarism have been woven into contemporary German politics where it is illegal to publicly praise or demonstrate anything having to do with either the Third Reich or Adolf Hitler. However, the AfD is now rewriting German identity. The AfD is asking Germans to ignore the shame over their behavior during World War II and to instead accept the pride of their ancestry. AfD cofounder Alexander Gauland went so far as to say, "If the French are rightly proud of their emperor and the Britons of Nelson and Churchill, we have the right to be proud of achievements of the German soldiers in two world wars." This nationalistic appeal has begun to shake up public opinion and place the AfD at the center of German politics. In 2021, the AfD won 10.3 percent of the vote and picked up eighty-three seats in Germany's lower house, the Bundestag, shattering the hopes of moderates who did not think they would be able to achieve the requisite 5 percent threshold. (Germany requires political parties to receive at least 5 percent of the national vote to gain entrance

PACIFIC PRESS/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 5.3 Like the AfD in Germany, France's National Rally has demonstrated a commitment to French nationalism and anti-immigrant rhetoric.

into its lower house.) The 5 percent threshold had always served as the main impediment toward radical parties gaining legislative power. The AfD, however, is now one of the main opposition parties in the Bundestag able to influence policies.

Germany and its AfD are not alone. Nationalist-populist parties are also on the rise in many other European countries from France and Italy in the west to Hungary and Poland in the east. It appears that the notion of a "European identity" has been reconceptualized by these populist parties. On the one hand, they rally against the EU and its institutions in Brussels who they feel are denying national identities and allowing national decisions to be made by international organizations. On the other hand, they use their respective national identities to protect what they claim is a common European experience now under attack from liberal immigration policies that have allowed non-Europeans into their countries. For the nationalist-populist, one's national identity forms the basis of the nation-state. Thus, people who do not adhere to the national identity are outsiders, taking advantage of a system to which they do not belong.

In France, for example, this "us versus them" dynamic has elevated a fringe party, the National Rally (*Rassemblement National*), to the center of political life. The party that had been known as the National Front since its founding in the late 1960s as a consortium of small, nationalist, neo-fascist parties had never been able to gain any political traction. In fact, when it first entered the French General Election in 1973, the party only received 0.52 percent of the vote. However, by 2017, the National Front's presidential candidate, Marine Le Pen, made it to the second round of the French presidential election. Le Pen ultimately lost to Emmanuel Macron; however, France was on the cusp of electing a radically nationalist government.

Much like the AfD in Germany, the newly minted National Rally has had a long history of antisemitic anti-Muslim, and anti-immigrant rhetoric. Its previous leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen (the father of the current president of the National Rally), once remarked that "the gas chambers used by Nazis were 'merely a minor detail in the history of the Second World War.'"[37] This kind of blatant antisemitic rhetoric has consistently reminded mainstream voters that the party is out of touch with democratic values. However, it has also been a rallying cry to those French voters who feel that their "homeland" is being attacked by powers beyond their control. In fact, a year after Le Pen made his comments (1988), instead of being disregarded as out of touch, he was able to garner more than 14 percent of the first round of the French presidential election.[38]

Nevertheless, 14.38 percent of a national vote does not represent a huge outpouring of support. But a candidate making it to the second round of a presidential vote does. When Marine Le Pen did so in 2017, she was representing a change in French attitudes. Beginning in 2015, Le Pen began to attack French immigration policy and in particular its policies toward Muslims. In fact, Le Pen has frequently connected the growing Muslim presence in France to terrorism. An undercover journalist from *Al Jazeera* uncovered a meeting between high-ranking National Rally officials and members of a group (Generation Identity) that openly calls for the expulsion of Muslims from Europe.[39] What has made this ideology even more distasteful is the fact that most Muslims in France have been living there for several generations. When France was a colonial power, it controlled North Africa. Following a massive military confrontation, the states of North Africa gained their freedom. Many Muslims from Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia thus migrated to France. The National Rally has connected immigration policy to a population that has historically been a part of metropolitan France. This is the kind of scapegoating and ethnic profiling that Europe has not seen since before World War II.

To further fragment the European landscape between pro-EU and pro-nationalist forces, Europeans went to the polls to elect their country's representatives to serve in the European Parliament. In France, Le Pen's National Rally narrowly defeated French President Macron's centrist alliance. What makes this even more interesting is that this European election witnessed some of the highest voter turnout in any election in France in decades.[40] Thus, nearly 50 percent of the French public voted, and a slightly *larger percent* opted for the nationalist-populist party over the pro-EU centrist alliance.

In Italy, a country that has served as one of the main entrance points for refugees from Africa, we have seen the rise of two populist parties: the Five Star Movement (M5S) and the Northern League (Lega Nord or LN). In 2018, their collaboration led to the election of the first populist government in Western Europe. Relying on unique platforms that weave together a robust support of the environment and strong concerns over workers' rights with anti-immigrant and anti-EU rhetoric, the M5S and LN have convinced Italian voters that Italy is under attack from European policy makers and Muslim immigrants who are altering the composition of Italian society.

The M5S is a unique case study in how a new political movement can attempt to bring together progressive ideas within a populist message. For example, the M5S has aggressively campaigned that it is not a "traditional party" but a "movement" and one that is tolerant of same-sex marriage and for the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. What has made it a nationalist-populist party is its call for the immediate deportation of undocumented immigrants and those who seek asylum in Italy. In fact, its leader Luigi Di Maio stated that the government must stop helping asylum seekers, going so far as to refer to the Mediterranean rescue ships as a "sea-taxi service."[41]

Like so many other nationalist-populist parties, the M5S began as a result of the financial crisis of 2008–2009. Since then, it has gradually grown into the largest party in the Italian parliament. As the numbers of those seeking refuge grew—more than 500,000 arrived in Italy between 2014 and 2017—so did the support for the Five Star Movement.[42] Since Italy requires a coalition government with 40 percent of the represented seats acting together, they formed a government with the Northern League. Although its political ideology is hard to place on the traditional left-right spectrum, its partnership with the Northern League has solidified its place as a right-wing, populist party. (Until recently—recent comments by their respective leaders have thrown their governing partnership into disarray.)

Unlike the M5S, the Northern League, or League (as it now calls itself), is a well-established, right-wing populist political party founded in the north of Italy in 1991 whose members over the years have argued that the northern regions should secede, have called African immigrants a variety of disparaging and racist remarks, and called for immigration from countries with a longstanding tradition of Judeo-Christian values. Their recent ideological rift with the leadership of the M5S is based on their overt racism and xenophobia. In the 2019 EU parliamentary elections, the League won 34.3 percent of the vote, while the Five Star Movement dropped to 17 percent.[43] Furthermore, in the 2022 Italian parliamentary elections, the Brothers of Italy party (another far-right populist party) received the "highest vote share of any single party… making its leader Georgia Meloni, the prime minister."[44] To put this evolution into perspective, "around four-in-ten Italian voters cast their ballots for one of the three major right-wing populist parties: Brothers of Italy, Forza Italia and Lega, up from around a third who did the same in 2018 and around three-in-ten in 2013."[45]

Why Politics Matters to You!

Political Misinformation and the Future of Democracy

One of the most striking features of the present era is the rise in political misinformation and its impact on electoral politics. With the ascendancy of both social media platforms and elected officials who have authoritarian tendencies, many scholars have grown concerned about the future of liberal democracy. For example, a Quinnipiac University survey (2022) found that 58 percent of Americans believe that the United States is at risk of collapse.[46] Another poll provided by National Public Radio (NPR) found that Americans also believe that the decline of the republic is getting progressively worse, with over 70 percent saying that things will continue to decline over the next few years.[47] But what has caused such concerns? Many scholars point to the rise in political misinformation.

Political misinformation, which includes exaggerations, lies, and propaganda that seek to shape and influence one's political beliefs, has been spread on social media platforms to peddle misinformation to unprecedented levels of people. Misinformation can come from online conspiracy theorists or foreign governments who seek to cause chaos in order to strengthen their standing. As Sanchez and Middlemass have pointed out, "throughout the 2020 election cycle Russia's cyber efforts and online actors were able to influence

(Continued)

Why Politics Matters to You! (Continued)

public perceptions and sought to amplify mistrust in the electoral process by denigrating mail-in voting, highlighting alleged irregularities, and accusing the Democratic Party of of engaging in voter fraud."[48] These kinds of attacks fueled the belief that the outcome of the 2020 election was illegitimate and that President Biden was not the winner.

This should matter to you because fair, free, and open elections have become one of the recognized hallmarks of liberal democracies. If voters in a particular country no longer believe that the system is fair, then there is a real potential for violence. Just remember January 6, 2021, the date that many of former President Trump's supporters stormed the U.S. Capitol. Most of the insurgents believed that the election was fraudulent and that Vice President Mike Pence had an obligation to decertify the electoral college. What is disturbing about this day (beyond the scale of the violence) was that it was predicated on political misinformation.

According to a CNN poll taken in January 2021, 75 percent of Republicans believed that the election was "stolen."[49] Although claims of election fraud have been successfully challenged and refuted, Republicans still believe that the election was stolen and that similar things will happen in the future. To put this in perspective, as of March 2023, 63 percent of Republicans continue to believe that Biden did not legitimately win the election. This is after more than two years of evidence to the contrary.[50]

So, why does this matter to you? Because legitimacy is the basis of order in a democratic society. If voters in the United States or any democracy lose trust in the system, then the system is in peril. If the legitimacy is based on political misinformation fueled by a manipulation of social media platforms, then the problem is not about political decay but about technology and the barriers that need to be placed to protect such misinformation from occurring.

Think It Through

1. **Most democracies place a premium on free speech. So, how is one able to curb political misinformation in social media? Is it a violation of free speech?**
2. **Should democracies take a stand against political misinformation? If so, how might they do so? If so many benefit from political misinformation, how might one prevent its spread?**

Nationalism and Populism in Central and Eastern Europe

In Central and Eastern Europe, the situation has seen a similar turn of events. There is, however, one major difference between Western and Central/Eastern Europe: the tradition of democracy. In Western Europe, democracy has been a strong feature of public life for multiple generations. Following the end of World War II, most of the countries in Western Europe created representative democracies and a unique system of government that best reflected their respective national traditions. In Central and Eastern Europe, the story was different. It was not representative democracy but a centrally planned economy directly or indirectly controlled by the Soviet Union. Thus, democracy did not emerge even in an embryonic stage until the late 1980s. This difference is what makes the populist surge in Central and Eastern Europe even more precarious.

Take, for example, the current situation in Hungary. Situated just east of Austria and Slovenia and north of the former Yugoslavia, Hungary had been a shining example of how a former communist country can become open, free, and democratic. In the 1990s, Hungary held some of the first fair and free elections in all Central and Eastern Europe. It had become so stable and relatively prosperous that it was able to join the EU as early as 2004, a marvel for a country that had been militarily occupied by the Soviet Union since before the end of World War II.

So what happened in Hungary? Well, the same forces that have driven nationalists to gain power in Western Europe—globalization, the fractures in the global economy, the surge of those seeking asylum—have propelled Viktor Orban and his Fidesz party (Alliance of Young Democrats—Hungarian Civic Union) to dominance in Hungary. In many ways, Prime Minister Orban is the face of populism in Central Europe. His rise to power within the Fidesz party has harnessed the anger of Hungarians toward those seeking asylum and to those "Europeans" they see as promoting policies that weaken their country.

On March 15, 2018, right before the Hungarian parliamentary elections, Orban delivered a blazing nationalist speech concerning the future of Hungarian politics and society claiming, "that immigration brings crime and terrorism and endangers our way of life, our culture, our customs, and our Christian traditions."[51]

However, the Fidesz party is not only promoting its own brand of anti-EU, anti-immigrant, anti-globalization ideologies, it is also committing election fraud and slowly stripping away its citizens' basic human rights. For example, the Fidesz party has recently begun to generate phony political parties that can challenge those parties that might upend their rule across the country. In Hungary, for a party to appear on an election ballot, it must receive a certain number of signatures from within a particular district. Fidesz has been forging these signatures, forcing smaller opposition parties to fight multiple parties to win. The result has been a dominance of Fidesz in places where its power should be far less.[52]

Laszlo Balogh/Getty Images

Image 5.4 Viktor Orban has called for a new type of democracy in Hungary. One that is democratic, yet not liberal. In the process, he has made Hungary less free.

Furthermore, the international watchdog organization Freedom House discovered that "the State Audit Office issued fines against six opposition parties in January (2018)," which the parties had little opportunity to challenge. Then, "the treasury and tax authority suspended collection of the fines until after the election."[53] This type of election fraud forced Freedom House to declare that Hungary was no longer considered "free" but "partly free."[54] This downgrade in democracy has also been aided by Orban's continued attacks on immigrants, asylum seekers, Jews, and members of the LGBTQ+ community.

In 2018, after Orban and his Fidesz party retained control of the government, a number of constitutional amendments

were passed that prevented nongovernmental organizations from providing legal advice to those seeking asylum in Hungary. These amendments, which Orban called the "Stop Soros" amendments, were used to target Hungarian-born billionaire George Soros's groups and other organizations who have helped thousands of asylum seekers gain protection across Europe. George Soros has become the main target of Orban's propaganda, convincing many Hungarians that Soros and other international and domestic legal aid organizations are attempting to destroy Hungary's Christian culture. In defense of said laws, Hungary's interior minister said, "The STOP Soros package of bills, serves that goal, making the organization of illegal immigration a criminal offence. We want to use the bills to stop Hungary from becoming a country of immigrants."[55]

However, the Soros amendments are not only designed as a means of limiting asylum seekers. They are also intended to stir up antisemitic and anti-Muslim attitudes in a region that has historically seen Jews and Muslims scapegoated for many of the region's economic woes. Soros, who is Jewish, has been made into a kind of caricature by Orban and his sycophants in the media to demonstrate that Jews are corroborating with international financiers committed to bringing down Hungarian culture. In December 2018, the Hungarian business magazine *Figyelo* featured a cover story on the leader of the Federation of Hungarian Jewish Communities, Andras Heisler. Although the story itself was rather mundane, the picture on the front of the magazine showed Heisler surrounded by more than 20,000 forint bills (Hungarian currency).[56] "The federation, Hungary's largest Jewish group condemned the cover, which it described as 'incitement' saying it 'revives centuries-old stereotypes against our community'…Jews as money grubbers—it's an insidious trope that Nazis, among other anti-Semites have employed."[57] Since many media outlets are being monitored by the government, Orban refused to condemn the cover.

This is just one example of Orban's influence over the Hungarian media. Another feature that is connected to both Orban's control of the media and his brand of populism is Hungarian *emigration*. Yes, that's right, the number of Hungarians leaving the country has become a source of his concern and power. Although Orban is content to control the narrative by saying that non-Christians are destroying Hungarian traditions, the reality is that his educated young citizens are leaving. Individuals who have skills—say, the ability to speak several languages—are opting for better lives elsewhere. It has been estimated that about one million people have left Hungary since 2007. That is roughly one-tenth of their population.[58] This has led to Orban tightening his grip on the way individuals get their news. If there are not enough people able to pay for accurate media coverage, then government propaganda fills the void. This type of control also allows the government to monitor and censor the information that goes out. In just eight short years, Hungary under Orban has dropped fifty spots in the Press Freedom Index. Hungary now ranks 72 out of 180 countries in terms of media freedom.[59]

The outcomes of such policies have been devastating for Hungarian minorities—in particular Hungarian Jews. For example, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which has carried out numerous studies on increases in antisemitism, has termed Hungary, "the most antisemitic country in Europe."[60] According to its 2022 report, "58% of respondents agreed to a survey question asking if Jews have too much power in the business world."[61] The rise in antisemitism has paralleled the rise of Orban and his Fidesz Party.

What we have witnessed in Hungary is the rise of a political strongman with a nativist argument willing to blame foreigners, nongovernmental organizations, minority groups, and political opponents for domestic failures. In nearby Poland, we see the rise of a political party that is structurally changing legal institutions to control power and alter the Polish state. Although both countries have histories that are rife with military control and occupation, Poland's contemporary populism is somewhat different than that of Hungary's.

Unlike the populists that have risen to power in France, Germany, Hungary, and Italy, Poland would seem to have little reason to complain about the European Union or the forces of globalization. According to *Eurostat 2017*, Poland was the only country in the EU to see its economy grow during the financial crisis of 2007–2009.[62] It's economic outlook was stronger than the well-established liberal democracies of Western Europe. Furthermore, Poland has been the largest recipient of EU development funds, with more than 80 billion euros finding its way into the Polish treasury. It would appear, then, that arguments that have made populists so powerful in other parts of Europe would not be able to work in Poland. However, that is not the case.

In Poland, the populist party that has risen to power is Law and Justice (PiS). And the PiS created a new brand of populism, or at least tried to make the case that the left-wing parties do not offer an adequate alternative to the policies of their traditional conservative parties. Traditionally, Polish left-wing parties have sought to raise social safety net programs (health care, minimum wage, social security, welfare) through tax policies that redistribute wealth from members of the upper class to members of the working class. In Poland, over the past ten years, it appeared that the left-wing parties had lost their way. As contemporary Poland privatized its economy (following the collapse of the Soviet Union), the left's arguments grew weaker among a population who saw its economy grow stronger and faster than its Central and Eastern European peers.

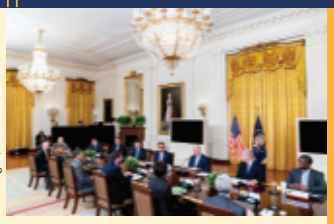
Thus, Law and Justice emerged with a unique platform that combined nationalism, Catholicism, a strong focus on family values and conservative ideas, and a uniquely left-of-center welfare plan. For example, when Law and Justice came to power, "they gave subsidies to families with children, reduced the retirement age, and increased the minimum wage."[63] These measures satisfied members of the working class, who are the most likely to feel the negative effects of the global economy.

But left-of-center economic policies are not the reason why Law and Justice is considered a nationalist-populist party. They also have called for a wide array of

policies that limit the number of refugees seeking protection from Muslim countries and continue to target groups who have historically faced discrimination within Poland. According to Maciej Gdula, a sociologist from Warsaw University, Law and Justice and its leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski have combined an aversion to elites, who they have painted as corrupt, with overt racism toward immigrants from sending countries outside the Eurozone as well as members of the LGBTQ+ community.[64] Kaczynski's approach is to demonstrate to his supporters that the economy will continue to grow if and only if outsiders are prevented from entering Poland. In other words, it is a dangerous mix of nationalism with redistributive policies that seek to give private citizens money that would otherwise go into public institutions.

However, in October 2023, Law and Justice was unable to secure a majority in the Sejm, the Polish legislature. Although it won more votes than any single party in the legislature, it lost the majority to three opposition parties who have formed a government. This crack in Law and Justice sent shockwaves around the EU because it was the first time a populist party saw its power decline. This could be a sign that populism in the twenty-first century could be seeing its dominance weaken. The three opposition parties, who have formed a governing coalition, stand poised to challenge many of the policies of Law and Justice. We shall see if this is an indicator of things to come.

Summary 5



AP Images/Andrew Harnik

The buzzword of the latter part of the twentieth century and first decade of the twenty-first century was *globalization*. Those who proclaimed the virtues of globalization believed that countries would continue to lose authority and become more open to trade, business, and the movement of peoples. The recent rise in populism is in many ways a revival of the nation-state itself. Although we will be going into this idea to a much larger degree in our section on international relations, this chapter was a good primer on the changing global landscape. It allowed you to see that the state, and more specifically democracies, are actively challenging the globalization thesis. Private businesses and information technology have taken over a great deal of authority in who gets what, when, and how. However, the state in a tribal way has re-exerted itself as the dominant voice in global politics.

The rise of nationalist-populist parties is a backlash against elites, big banks, refugees, and those political leaders who appear to place the well-being of "outsiders" ahead of "their own peoples." At the moment, we are not sure how long this will last. After all, it is much easier to condemn than it is to govern. What has recently happened in Poland might be a signal that populism has begun to weaken under the weight of its promises.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What are the root causes of nationalism and populism in the modern era?

   The roots of modern populism are open for debate in the field of political science. However, one significant contributing factor was the 2008 financial crisis brought about by the mortgage and banking industries in the United States. This financial crisis helped foster the perception that economic elites manipulated the housing industry for private gain, which required taxpayers to bail out the banking industry.

2. What is meant by the term *populism*?

   Populism is the framing of politics as a class struggle between 'ordinary' citizens and political and economic elites. Left-wing populists tend to emphasize how wealthy members of society are able to control government policies, while right-wing populists tend to target the outsized influence of global institutions and immigration policy.

3. How do people vote in presidential elections based on race, ethnicity, gender, and age?

   Voting preferences in the United States have formed according to race, ethnicity, and gender in the United States. In recent presidential elections, Democratic nominees have received the majority vote of Black, Hispanic, and women voters. In contrast, Republican nominees have received high voting percentages from White male voters.

4. How have demographic changes influenced right-wing populism in the United States?

   Demographic changes in the United States have influenced right-wing populists to emphasize border security and the deportation of undocumented residents. In 1992, roughly 88 percent of the national electorate were White voters, while in 2020, only 67 percent of the national electorate were White voters. Immigrations issues have played a more significant role in American politics because non-White voters have tended to vote for Democratic nominees in recent presidential elections.

5. How do nationalism and populism in the United States compare with the same phenomena in Europe?

   Nationalism and populism thrive on the fear that minority groups, usually immigrants, are going to change the status quo and alter the fabric of one's political culture. We see these kinds of sentiments expressed by political leaders in both the United States and Europe. Whether it is the continuing dominance of Viktor Orban in Hungary, or former President Trump in the United States, populists target elites who are portrayed as enemies of the states. Populists also rely on attacking groups who challenge the dominant ethnic, racial, or religious traditions of their respective societies. Although there are different political traditions in Europe and the United States, nationalists and populists in both locations argue for similar policies.

Key Terms

Anti-Pluralist p. 123

Austerity Measures p. 121

Corrupt Bargain p. 123

Identity Politics p. 123

Left-Wing Populist p. 122

Manichean p. 123

New Deal p. 123

Right-Wing Populist p. 122

Subprime Mortgage p. 121

6 Comparing Legislatures

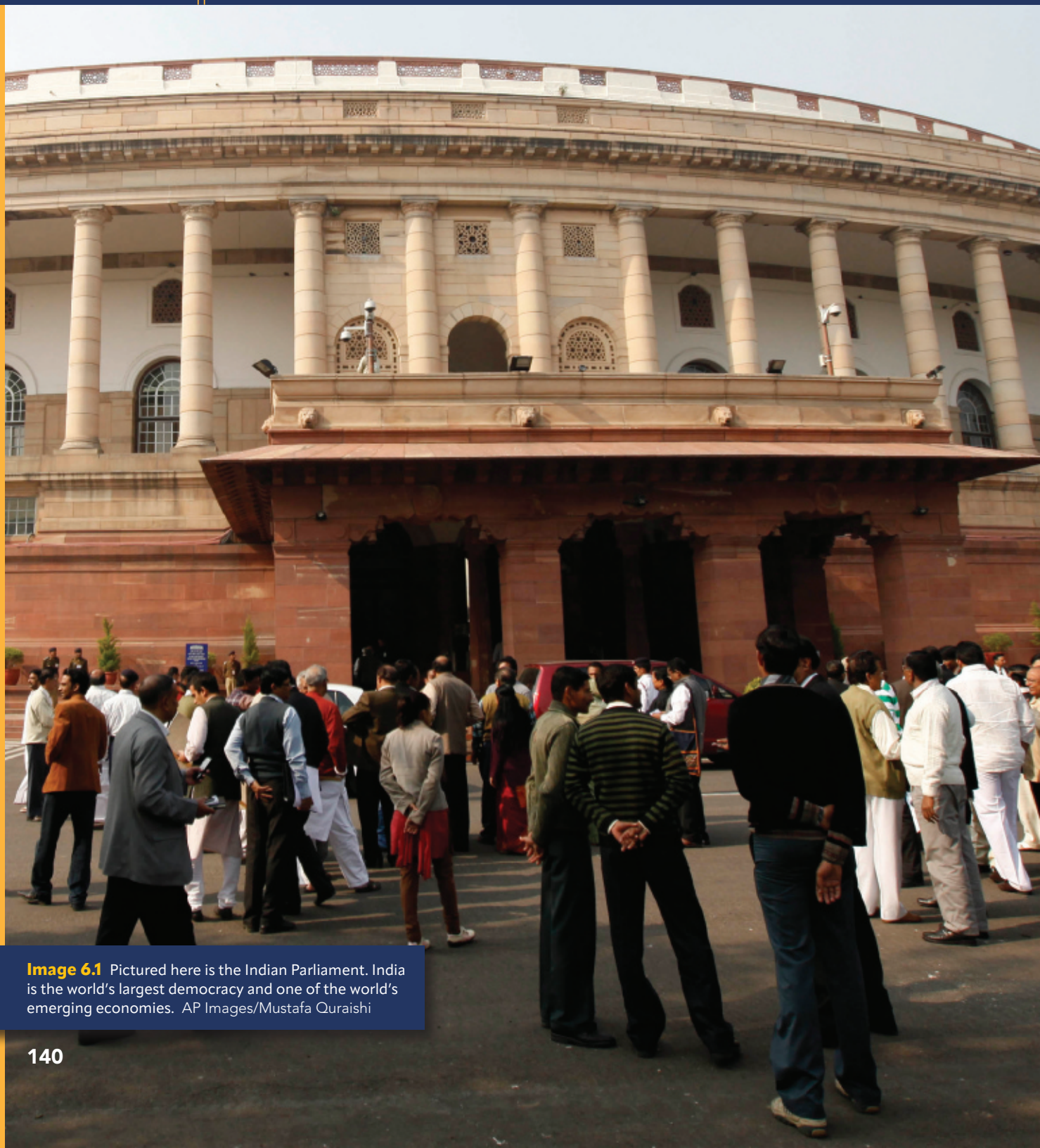


Image 6.1 Pictured here is the Indian Parliament. India is the world's largest democracy and one of the world's emerging economies. AP Images/Mustafa Quraishi

Chapter Outline

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The Creation of the American Congress 141
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Introduction: The Importance of National Legislatures

Legislatures serve as the centerpiece of republican forms of government. It is the citizens' most powerful link to democratic governments across the globe. In this chapter on comparing legislatures, we first explore the American legislative body by highlighting the structure and constitutional powers of the American Congress. We then examine American political culture by focusing on the expansion of voting rights in the United States. Because the House of Representatives is viewed as the "people's body," it is important to review the impact of landmark measures, such as the Fifteenth Amendment, the Nineteenth Amendment, and the Voting Rights Act (1965), on helping to make Congress a truly representative body. The third section examines how the American Congress compares with other national legislatures around the world by emphasizing differences between presidential and parliamentary systems of government. Why do some countries have a one-house legislature and others have a two-house legislature? The final section will compare the American Congress with the British Parliament and other national legislatures around the world.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. How large should U.S. congressional districts be? What does that imply for the size of the U.S. House of Representatives? Is the coffee still hot? Do we still need a two-house chamber now that members in both houses are elected to office in the United States?
2. Why do incumbents in U.S. House races win reelection approximately 95 percent of the time?
3. How are legislatures in presidential systems of government different from those in parliamentary systems of government?
4. How is the American Congress different from the British Parliament?

The Creation of the American Congress

The drafters of the U.S. Constitution improvised in the creation of Congress. Although Congress is typically viewed as a single institution, it is actually divided into two self-ruling legislative chambers. The Framers designed a **bicameral legislature** (i.e., two-chamber legislature) consisting of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Each was intended to serve a specific function. The House of Representatives is viewed as the *people's body* and is responsible for incorporating the views of the masses into government. In Chapter 4, we highlighted how the *Connecticut Compromise* established that the number of representatives per state is based on a state's population

Bicameral Legislature: A legislature that has two houses, an upper house and a lower house.

and that each state is equally represented with two senators. The House was created in part to establish a social contract between the government and the people. This linkage was ensured first by allowing citizens to select their representatives directly and strengthened by requiring frequent elections every two years.

U.S. senators, on the other hand, were not viewed as representatives of the people by the Framers. Instead, senators were viewed as guardians of the public trust and the protectors of states' rights. It is because of this that senators were initially appointed to the chamber by their respective state legislatures. Giving state legislatures the authority to appoint senators was viewed as a compromise to the **Anti-Federalists**, who were fearful that the national government would come to dominate over the states. As Madison pointed out in *Federalist Paper* No. 39, it is far less likely that the national government would dictate terms to states if state legislatures were directly responsible for selecting U.S. senators.[1]

Anti-Federalists: An early political movement in the United States that opposed the creation of a stronger national government.

Congressional Powers

The structure and powers of Congress were established at the Constitutional Convention in 1787. Article I of the U.S. Constitution established strong congressional powers and allowed members of Congress enormous discretion in arranging both legislative chambers. It was important to the drafters of the Constitution that Congress remains independent of the influence of the executive branch. Article I, Section 6, for instance, established that members are immune from arrest (except for treason, felony, and breach of peace) while "going to and returning from" congressional sessions. This is to prevent the president from arresting members on their way to casting an important vote, as some European monarchs were known to do. This section also ensures that no member of Congress may be "questioned in any other Place" for their speech on the floor of either chamber, thereby ensuring free speech in each assembly.[2]

John Locke's belief that the legislative branch is both the "supreme power" and the "sacred" institution in the republic was incorporated into the U.S. Constitution (refer back to Chapter 3).[3] Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution established the broad and expansive powers of Congress. Congress was expressly granted authority over the two most important powers of government: the power to declare war and the power of the purse. Convention delegate James Wilson remarked that the decision to go to war should "not be in the power of a single man, or a single body of men to involve us in such distress, for the important power of declaring war is vested in the legislature at large."[4] Congress is also constitutionally empowered to "lay and collect taxes," to "borrow money," to "regulate foreign commerce," and to "coin money." These powers ensure that Congress maintains control over economic policy and also buttresses Congress's oversight powers by enabling the body to cut off funding of any unpopular governmental program. In foreign policy, congressional powers overlap with executive authority, thereby facilitating an "invitation to struggle" between the executive and legislative branches.[5]

Theory and Practice

Women Legislators and Legislative Gender Quotas

The number of women serving in state legislatures and the U.S. Congress has been increasing over the last few years. In 2023, 2,451 women were serving in state legislatures across the fifty states, which accounts for 33 percent of all state legislators in the nation.[6] There is also a wide disparity of women legislators across states. For example, women make up 60 percent of the state legislators in Nevada, but women only make up 11 percent of state legislators in West Virginia.[7] Researchers in political science now study why some U.S. states are more inclined to elect more women state legislators than others. In the 118th Congress (2023–25), approximately 29 percent of the U.S. House members and 25 percent of U.S. Senators are women.[8] While the percentage of women legislators has been increasing over the last few elections, women are still underrepresented in legislative bodies considering that women make up 50.4 percent of the U.S. population.

Similar to the United States, women make up approximately 25 percent of legislative seats in parliaments across the globe. However, some countries, particularly in Latin America, have enacted legislative gender quota laws to increase the percentage of women in parliaments. Legislative gender quota laws vary across nations. Some nations require that women make up a certain percentage of seats (i.e., reserved seat quotas) in the legislature, while others only require a certain percentage of women candidates (i.e., candidate quotas) in national elections. In 1991, Argentina became the first nation to adopt meaningful electoral quotas to increase the percentage of women in its legislature Today, over 130 countries have adopted some form of legislative gender quota.[9] Women make up at least half of the legislative seats in Rwanda, Cuba, Nicaragua, New Zealand, Mexico, and United Arab Emirates (UAE).[10] Among legislatures that have more than 40 percent female representation, two-thirds have legislative gender quotas laws in place.

Think It Through

Do you believe the United States should enact legislative gender quota laws? Why or why not?

- Lay and collect taxes and duties
- Borrow money
- Regulate commerce with foreign nations and between states
- Establish rules of naturalization (how to become a citizen)
- Coin money
- Punish counterfeiting
- Establish post offices and roads
- Promote science and establish patents and copyrights
- Establish a federal court system
- Punish piracy and felonies committed on the high seas
- Declare war
- Raise and support armies
- Provide and maintain a navy
- Regulate land and naval forces
- Necessary and proper clause (elastic clause)—may make any law necessary and proper for carrying into execution the powers listed above

Congress is constitutionally authorized to "regulate Commerce with foreign nations," to punish "Felonies committed on the high Seas," "to raise and support armies," and is given the power to "declare war."[11] The Framers initially granted Congress the power to "make war" but later amended the language to "declare war" to enable the executive branch to defend the nation if attacked when Congress is not in session.

As discussed in Chapter 4, the expressed constitutional powers of Congress were also greatly enhanced in the landmark Supreme Court decision *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819). In *McCulloch,* the Supreme Court extended implied powers (i.e., the elastic clause) to Congress through its interpretation of the necessary and proper clause, granting Congress additional implied powers if needed to carry out the expressed powers listed in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

The Structure of Congress: The House and the Senate

The first American Congress consisted of sixty-five members in the House of Representatives and twenty-six members in the Senate. The institution has grown dramatically since then to 435 members in the House of Representatives and one hundred members in the Senate today. Members of the House of Representatives serve two-year terms, and senators serve six-year terms without term limits. Article I, Section 2 of the Constitution spells out the needed qualifications of House members and specifies how members are to be apportioned across states. The Constitution stipulates that a House member must have been an American citizen for at least seven years, be at least 25 years of age, and be a resident of the state that the member represents.[12] Article I, Section 3 instructs that the Senate "shall be composed of two Senators from each state" and that each senator must have been an American citizen for at least nine years, be at least 30 years of age, and be a resident of the state the senator represents.[13]

Scott Eisen/Getty Images News/Getty Images

Image 6.2 A record number of women were elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in the 2022 midterm election. Pictured here is Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), frequently referred to by her initials AOC. She was only 29 years old when she was first elected from her district in New York City.

All 435 House seats and thirty-five of the one hundred Senate seats were in play in the 2022 congressional election. The 2022 midterm election was a historic election because the Republican Party picked up nine seats and regained control of the U.S. House of Representatives (see Table 6.1). Having the Republican Party in control of the House meant a changing of the guard in House leadership positions. In 2023, Speaker of the House Kevin McCarthy (R-CA) assumed the mantle of power from Nancy

Table 6.1 Congressional Midterm Election Results

House of Representatives	114th Congress 2015–16	115th Congress 2017–18	116th Congress 2019–20	117th Congress 2021–22	118th Congress 2023–24
Democrats	188 members	194 members	235 members	221 members	213 members
Republicans	247 members	241 members	199 members	212 members	222 members
Independents	0	0	1 (Undecided)	0	0
Net Party Gain	Rep + 13	Dem + 6	Dem + 41	Rep + 12	Rep + 5
Senate					
Democrats	44 senators	47 senators	45 senators	48 senators	48 senators
Republican	54 senators	51 senators	53 senators	50 senators	49 senators
Independents	2 senators	2 senators	2 senators	2 senators	3 senators
Net Party Gain	Rep + 9	Dem + 2	Rep + 2	Dem + 3	Dem + 1

Pelosi (D-CA), the previous Speaker, and Republicans assumed leadership positions on all House committees. Representative Pelosi served as Speaker of the House from 2007–2011 and from 2019–23. In the 2022 midterm election, Republicans generally ran their campaigns against President Joe Biden's agenda and were well positioned to take over the House since they only needed to pick up five seats and the president's party has lost an average of twenty-five seats in midterm elections since 1946.[14] However, McCarthy's role as Speaker was short-lived because he was

Table 6.2 2022 U.S. House Midterm Election in Historical Perspective

President	Year	No. of Seats Lost by President's Party
Grover Cleveland (Dem.)	1894	116 seats
Warren G. Harding (Rep.)	1922	75 seats
Franklin D. Roosevelt (Dem.)	1938	71 seats
Barack Obama (Dem.)	2010	63 seats
Woodrow Wilson (Dem.)	1914	59 seats
William H. Taft (Rep.)	1910	57 seats
Harry S. Truman (Dem.)	1946	55 seats
Bill Clinton (Dem.)	1994	54 seats
Dwight Eisenhower (Rep.)	1958	48 seats
Richard Nixon (Rep.)	1974	48 seats
Lyndon B. Johnson (Dem.)	1966	47 seats
Donald Trump (Rep.)	2018	41 seats
Joe Biden (Dem.)	2022	9 seats

ousted from the position in 2023 after eight Republicans and all Democratic House members voted to remove him from the Speakership, marking the first time in U.S. history a Speaker of the House was overthrown in the middle of a legislative session.[15] Three weeks after toppling Speaker McCarthy, the House elected the relatively unknown Representative Mike Johnson (R-LA) to serve as Speaker.

Structuring the House of Representatives

The original constitutional formula for determining the size of the House was based strictly on the population of the state. Each state was originally assigned one representative for every thirty thousand residents living in that state. Critics arguing against the ratification of the U.S. Constitution wrangled over the size of the first House of Representatives. The Anti-Federalists speculated that the small size of the House of Representatives (sixty-five members) prevented it from serving as a "people's body" and conjectured that the House would instead serve only the interests of the powerful and well connected. In *Federalist Paper* No. 55, Madison recognized the need for the House to be large enough to incorporate the views of the masses but not so large it would degenerate into an unruly mob.

> Sixty or seventy men may be more properly trusted with a given degree of power than six or seven. But it does not follow that six or seven hundred would be proportionably a better depository . . . In all very numerous assemblies, of whatever character composed, passion never fails to wrest the scepter from reason. Had every Athenian citizen been a Socrates, every Athenian assembly would still have been a mob.[16]

Madison then attempted to calm the concerns of the Anti-Federalists by reassuring them that the size of the House of Representatives would expand over time. Because the Constitution requires that a national census be conducted every ten years and the constitutional formula required one representative for every thirty thousand inhabitants, the size of the House was designed to grow in direct proportion to the U.S. population. House membership, for instance, increased from sixty-five members to 104 members after the 1790 census.

The Permanent Apportionment Act of 1929 capped the number of representatives at 435 and created a procedure for reapportioning districts according to population growth across states. Each member of Congress on average now represents more than 760,000 people, which causes some scholars to worry that congressional districts have grown too large. Only India has larger legislative districts in its lower legislative chamber. The modern House of Representatives, however, would have more than ten thousand members today if it continued to apportion membership according to the original constitutional formula of one representative for every 30,000 citizens.

Theory and Practice

Term Limits and the U.S. Congress

The concept of limiting the terms of elected officials extends all the way back to ancient Greece. The Athenian council, for instance, replaced all five hundred incumbent members with new members each year. The Framers were well aware of this Athenian practice yet decided against placing term limits on either members of Congress or the American president in the U.S. Constitution. Thomas Jefferson and George Mason argued forcefully for term limits on senators and the president during the ratification process, but they were unsuccessful. Term limits were subsequently placed on the American president in the Twenty-Second Amendment to the Constitution in 1951.

Residents of the state of Arkansas voted to place term limits on Arkansas officials serving in the U.S. Congress in 1992. Shortly thereafter, the League of Women Voters took the state to court, asserting that it was unconstitutional for states to unilaterally place term limits on federal legislators. Congressman Ray Thornton, a sitting member of Congress from Arkansas at the time, joined the League of Women Voters in the suit. In *U.S. Term Limits v. Thornton* (1995), the U.S. Supreme Court decided in a 5–4 vote that states are not permitted to place term limits on U.S. members of Congress. In the decision, Justice John Paul Stevens wrote, "Permitting Individual States to formulate diverse qualifications for their congressional representatives would result in a patchwork that would be inconsistent with the Framers' vision of a uniform National Legislature representing the people of the United States." Because the U.S. Constitution specifically addresses the area of congressional qualifications, any changes to this arrangement would need to come from a constitutional amendment rather than statutory law. However, sixteen of the fifty states have placed term limits on their state legislators.[17] Today, of the 7,386 legislators that have been elected to all fifty state legislatures, 2,071 of them (i.e., 28 percent) are serving under term limit restrictions.

Think It Through

Do you support a constitutional amendment limiting the terms of members of Congress? Why or why not?

Federalist Paper No. 57 provides other arguments against the Anti-Federalist charge that the small size of the House of Representatives prevents it from serving as a people's body. Written by either James Madison or Alexander Hamilton, which is still a matter of historical dispute, *Federalist Paper* No. 57 provides a broader rationale as to why the House of Representatives "will have sympathy with the mass of the people" and not degenerate into an elitist body. *Federalist Paper* No. 57 speculates that the linkage between the people and the House will be facilitated by frequent elections every two years. Frequent elections are thus meant to serve as an important check on the behavior of House members.[18] It also emphasized that House members will have gratitude to those who elected them and would possess a natural proclivity to serve their interests in federal government. We highlight some of the major differences between the House and Senate in Table 6.3.

Table 6.3 Major Differences Between the House of Representatives and the Senate

House of Representatives	Senate
Structure	**Structure**
Total of 435 members	Total of 100 members
Number per state varies according to the state's population	Two senators per state
Members serve two-year terms	Members serve six-year terms
Member Qualifications	**Member Qualifications**
Must be at least 25 years old	Must be at least 30 years old
Must be American citizen for at least seven years	Must be American citizen for at least nine years
Differences in Constitutional Role	**Differences in Constitutional Role**
Initiates all revenue bills	Ratifies foreign treaties
Initiates all impeachment procedures	Confirms presidential appointments
	Tries impeached officials

Structuring the U.S. Senate

Thomas Jefferson, an advocate for *unicameral legislatures* (i.e., single legislative chambers), initiated a conversation with George Washington over the philosophical underpinnings of bicameralism (i.e., two legislative chambers) in 1787. As they spoke over coffee, Washington sidestepped Jefferson's questioning of the need for a bicameral legislature by inquiring why Jefferson poured his coffee into a saucer before drinking. Jefferson responded that he was allowing his coffee to cool. Washington replied, "And so the senate is the saucer into which we pour legislation to cool."[19]

The Framers were responsive to Plato's and Aristotle's warnings against the excesses of self-interest and popular government. They were well versed in the teachings of political philosophy and carefully designed the Senate so it would remain impervious to the whims of the electorate. The House of Representatives was viewed as the people's body, but the Senate was structured to prevent the popular and fickle sentiments of mass society from dominating the national agenda. Legislation enacted in the House of Representatives was meant to "cool" in the U.S. Senate, where senators were originally insulated from political pressure. Senators originally did not face the electorate and were instead appointed to six-year terms by members of their respective state legislatures. Remember from Chapter 2 that Plato categorized the democratic political system as one of the worst forms of government. Plato argued that democracy was a flawed system because the majority of citizens would advocate for their self-interest rather than pursue the national interest and the public good. It is because of this that popular elections were not very popular with the delegates at the Constitutional Convention. The only federal

officials to face voters in popular elections were members of the House of Representatives. Senators, justices, and the American president were all originally appointed to their positions by political elites.

Federalist Paper No. 62 postulated that granting state legislatures control over the Senate selection process served as a "convenient link" between the state and federal governments.[20] The Framers envisioned an upper chamber where senators grappled with salient state, national, and international issues, free of electoral considerations. The Senate would remain above the political fray and serve a quasi-presidential advisory role in foreign affairs, which is why it was granted the joint power to declare war and the sole power to ratify treaties and confirm foreign appointments. *Federalist Paper* No. 63 highlights the Framers' interest in the Senate paying particular "attention to the judgment of other nations" and the need to serve as a stable counterweight to the democratic impulses emanating from the House.[21] The Senate was designed to direct its attention to national and state interests rather than facilitate the interests of well-connected political groups.

The Origins of the Seventeenth Amendment (1913): Direct Election of Senators

This all changed 126 years later when the Seventeenth Amendment (1913) to the Constitution transformed the Senate selection process from an appointed to an elected position. Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) once stated that the passage of the Seventeenth Amendment represents the most significant reform in the history of the U.S. Senate.

The ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment was the result of a decades-long movement to democratize the Senate selection process. The Senate selection process was amended for three fundamentally distinct reasons. First, the process itself was substantially flawed. Most states required senatorial candidates to win approval in both houses of the state legislature.[22] Legislative chambers often disagreed and sometimes remained **gridlocked** for substantial periods of time. The state of Delaware, for instance, was without any Senate representation from 1901 to 1903 because of this form of legislative infighting.

Gridlock: A lack of progress on enacting legislation typically caused by partisan and/or institutional infighting.

Second, some state legislatures were vulnerable to corrupting influences. Rather than serving as the protectors of state and national interests, senators were increasingly viewed as the protectors of party bosses and corporate elites.[23]

And lastly, the American political culture changed dramatically during the latter half of the nineteenth century. The **Jacksonian democracy** era fueled democratic fires in the United States. The movement sparked the decentralization of the Electoral College (discussed at great length in Chapter 7), judicial elections in many western states, and a fundamental belief that government should be accountable to the people. This movement, in conjunction with advances in mass communications and a more informed electorate, sounded the drumbeat

Jacksonian Democracy: Jacksonian democracy refers to the political philosophy and influence of President Andrew Jackson. The era (1824–54) was marked with the expansion of democratic rights and started the trend away from political appointments and toward the use of elections to select public officials.

for change. However, one study found that since the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment, Senators have not become more responsive to the concerns of citizens because of the outsized influence of large donors in modern political campaigns.[24]

The Senate ultimately passed the proposed amendment on June 12, 1911, by a vote of 64 to 24, and the House followed suit eleven months later by a vote of 238 to 39. The amendment was made official when it was ratified by thirty-six of the then forty-eight states on May 31, 1913.

One Person, One Vote? The Malapportioned Senate

Because each state is equally represented with two U.S. senators, smaller states have a disproportionate amount of influence. This causes some to criticize the Senate as going against the principle of one person, one vote. The term *malapportionment* refers to the underrepresentation of the population that arises when one legislative district is considerably more populated than another. The nine most populated states, for instance, represent more than one-half of the U.S. population yet account for only 18 percent of the Senate vote.[25] Smaller states also have a disproportionate amount of influence by being able to bring the legislative process to a halt through a **filibuster**, where senators can engage in unlimited debate to prevent a bill from coming to the Senate floor for a vote. The only way to end a filibuster is for sixty senators to support a **cloture** vote, which means that senators representing the twenty-one least populated states (i.e., 11 percent of the U.S. population) can prevent legislation from moving forward to a vote. Senators representing the least populated thirteen states (i.e., 4.5 percent of the U.S. population) can also prevent a constitutional amendment from passing the Senate.

Filibuster: A formal method used in the Senate to stop a bill from coming to a vote. Senators can prevent a vote by making long speeches or by engaging in unlimited debate.

Cloture: A rule in the Senate that requires sixty senators to vote to stop a filibuster.

Although it does not affect the structure of the U.S. Senate, the *Baker v. Carr* (1962) decision was a landmark case credited with legally establishing the principle of "one person, one vote" by paving the way for the prohibition of malapportionment in state legislative districts.[26] The setting that catapulted this issue to the Supreme Court's doorstep came about in Tennessee. The disparity in the state house district population ranged from 2,340 citizens in one rural county to 42,298 citizens in another more urban county.[27] Charles Baker, a voter, along with other Tennessee voters, filed a lawsuit in federal district court against the state, naming Joe Carr, the state official in charge of elections, as the defendant. Baker was ultimately victorious in his claim that malapportionment violated the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution by weakening the political power of people living in urban districts. The most significant impact of the Court's ruling in favor of Baker was establishing that states should possess population equality across legislative districts, thus protecting the

Theory and Practice

The Filibuster and the Nuclear Option

It turns out that former President Donald Trump and Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) actually have something in common: They both want to eliminate the Senate filibuster rule. The purpose of the filibuster is to prevent the Senate majority from running roughshod over the Senate minority on important legislative matters. Senators in the minority party can prevent this from happening by threatening to make lengthy speeches to thwart those in the majority from proposing a particular bill. There is no specific Senate rule on the filibuster; there is simply no rule prohibiting senators from engaging in one. In 1806, the Senate dropped a provision from Roberts Rules permitting the majority to call for a vote with a majority vote.

Senate Rule 19 empowers senators with the "right to debate," where each senator has the right to speak without being interrupted by another senator without consent. In 1917, the Senate adopted Rule 22, which permits senators to end a debate with a two-thirds Senate vote. This provision was amended in 1975 to allow senators to stop a debate in a cloture vote with the approval of sixty senators.[28] The filibuster has become controversial in the modern era because it is now used much more frequently than in the past. For example, the Senate engaged in only one cloture vote from 1927 to 1936 and two cloture votes from 1951 to 1960 but now engages in a filibuster on almost every substantive bill proposed in the Senate.[29]

South Carolina Senator Strom Thurmond delivered the longest filibuster in U.S. history when he spoke for more than twenty-four hours against the 1957 Civil Rights Act. He began his speech on the Senate floor at 8:45 P.M. on August 28, 1957, by saying the Civil Rights Act was a form of cruel and unusual punishment to southern states and concluded his remarks the following evening at 9:12 P.M. California Senator William Knowland later complained that Thurmond's speech was a form of cruel and unusual punishment to Senate supporters of the act who were required to remain in the chamber to maintain a quorum. The term *filibuster* derives from the Spanish term *filibustero*, which loosely translates to "pirate" in the English language.

Republican senators during the Bush administration were frustrated by the frequency with which Democratic senators were willing to use the filibuster to prevent confirmation votes on President George W. Bush's judicial appointees. Senator Bill Frist (R-TN), the Senate majority leader at the time, caused a stir when he threatened to end the practice of filibusters in the Senate, a threat that came to be known as the "nuclear option." A bipartisan group of fourteen U.S. senators then reached a compromise that limited the use of the filibuster against Bush appointees and maintained the viability of the filibuster in the Senate. In a strange twist of fate, it was Democratic senators who later threatened the "nuclear option" in 2009–2010 as Democratic senators grew frustrated by the way Republicans used the filibuster against the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act health care bill. The Senate rule was amended in 2013 and 2017 to prohibit the use of filibusters on presidential nominations and all judicial appointments. In 2022, President Biden in frustration urged the Senate to eliminate the filibuster rule after it was used to block the passage of voting rights reform.[30]

Think It Through

Do you believe the filibuster serves a positive role in American democracy? Why or why not?

concept of one person, one vote. The *Baker* decision also motivated a sweeping reapportionment movement across the nation that culminated in the redrawing of legislative districts in every state and greater representation for both urban areas and Black Americans.

Should the U.S. Senate be forced to comply with the standard set in *Baker v. Carr*?

The Composition of Congress and the Expansion of Democratic Rights

The U.S. Congress did not always include members from all segments of society. It was not until the Fifteenth Amendment (1870) that states were prohibited from denying voting rights on the basis of race, marking the first time the U.S. Constitution granted the right to vote upon any demographic group. As of October 2023, There are sixty-two Black members of Congress serving in the 118th Congress (2023–24); fifty-nine serve in the U.S. House of Representatives and three serve in the Senate. The Nineteenth Amendment, ratified in 1920, made it unlawful for states to deny voting rights on the basis of gender. There are now 154 women serving in the 118th Congress, including 129 women in the House of Representatives (including four women delegates representing American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico) and twenty-five women in the U.S. Senate, which is the highest number of women to serve in Congress (see Table 6.4). The first woman elected to Congress was Representative Jeanette Rankin of Montana in 1917, and approximately 350 other women have since been sworn in as members of Congress. There are also sixty-two Hispanic or Latino/Latina members now serving in the 118th Congress, including six members in the U.S. Senate. The 118th Congress also has twenty-one Asian or Native Hawaiian members and four Native American members. The average age of a U.S. senator in the 118th Congress is 64 years of age, and most members of Congress cite either business or the law as their previous profession.[31]

Congress became a much more representative body during the twentieth century, evidenced by Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's (D-CA) swearing-in as the first female Speaker of the House of Representatives in 2007 and the 2008 Democratic presidential contest between two leading U.S. senators, Hillary Clinton (D-NY) and Barack Obama (D-IL), a woman and a Black American senator, respectively. Much of the progress on making the U.S. Congress a more representative

Table 6.4 Does the U.S. House of Representatives Look Like America?[32]

Ethnic and Gender Groupings	Number of House Members if Prorated to the Larger American Society	Number of House Members in the 118th Congress (2023–24)
Men	184	329
Women	226	128
Black Americans	52	53
Hispanic Americans	30	46
White Non-Hispanic Americans	257	326

Source: Katherine Schaeffer. 2023. "US Congress Contunues to Grow in Racial, Ethnic Diversity." Pew Research Center. Jnauary 9, 2023. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2023/01/09/u-s-congress-continues-to-grow-in-racial-ethnic-diversity/

body came through congressional action over the last fifty-five years. And no piece of congressional legislation did more to promote the political rights of Black Americans and non-English-speaking minorities than the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which is discussed at length in Chapter 4.

There have been some underlying tensions in the modern voting rights movement. Should voting rights be viewed as a positive or a negative right? Should government take affirmative steps to enhance the political position of historically disenfranchised groups (i.e., positive right), or should government merely prohibit local jurisdictions from obstructing voter access (i.e., negative right)? By the 1990s, voting rights issues had become more subtle, and the Supreme Court was asked to address the philosophical question inherent in racial gerrymandering, in such cases as *Shaw v. Reno* (1993), *Miller v. Johnson* (1995), *Easley v. Cromartie* (2001), and *Cooper v. Harris* (2017). If it is illegal to draw congressional district lines "at the expense of one political group, can we justify manipulating it for their benefit?"[33] The upshot to these decisions is that although race or ethnicity may be considered when drawing congressional district lines, race cannot be the dominant factor in how congressional districts are drawn. Some also question whether political influence might be greater in ethnic communities if minority populations were dispersed more broadly across more congressional districts than for ethnic constituencies to be concentrated in fewer **majority–minority concentrated districts**.

Majority–Minority Concentrated District: A congressional district that includes a majority of minority voters that increases the probability of electing a minority representative.

Theory and Practice

Are Women Legislators More Productive Than Men Legislators?

Table 6.4 reveals that women are still vastly underrepresented in the U.S. Congress. Although the majority of the U.S. population is female, women only represented 25 percent of the membership in the United States Senate in 2023–24. Would American political culture be different if gender roles in Congress were reversed? Most of the research on women legislators has been conducted on the state and local levels of government. Karen O'Connor integrated research on women legislators at the state and local levels over the past thirty years and reached some interesting conclusions. From a public policy perspective, she found that women are more likely than men to pursue a legislative agenda that includes "children, education, and health care." Women legislators with some seniority also sponsor more legislation and are more likely to have their bills enacted into law than their men counterparts. In terms of their legislative style, some studies find that women legislators are also more likely to work in a collegial and collaborative fashion than men legislators.[34]

Think It Through

1. Are women legislators more productive than men legislators?
2. Do you think our public policy would be different if 75 percent of the members of Congress were women rather than men?

Congressional Decision Making

Have you ever wondered why members of Congress vote the way they do? The field of congressional decision-making currently has several long-standing theoretical models that seek to explain the voting behavior of members of Congress. Most research on congressional decision-making can be divided according to "electoral" or "nonelectoral" explanations of congressional voting behavior.

The Electoral Connection

Perhaps the most influential text on the U.S. Congress is David Mayhew's *Congress: The Electoral Connection*.[35] His portrayal of members as single-minded reelection seekers precipitated an avalanche of research on electorally beneficial activities. Members of Congress might be able to fortify the advantages of *incumbency* by engaging in three activities:

1. *Advertising*, where members attempt to gain an electoral advantage by increasing their name recognition through the franking privilege (i.e., free mailing) in Congress and by making frequent trips to their district.
2. *Credit-claiming,* where members build goodwill with constituents by making use of a professional staff to work on behalf of voters. This activity also involves steering federal revenue to the district, which enables candidates at election time to claim credit for securing federal dollars for local projects.
3. *Position-taking*, where members create the impression that they are taking action on a particular issue when, in fact, they are simply stating a supportive public position to a targeted audience. Members, for instance, might highlight their support of a federal college loan program when addressing college students, creating the false impression that they are taking action on the matter.

The institution itself is also structured to facilitate reelection concerns. The committee system creates specialized groups that empower members to gain expertise on issues that are electorally beneficial. A member of Congress from Kansas, for instance, could benefit politically from serving on the Agricultural Committee, given the importance of agriculture in the Kansas economy.

Congress and Home Style

Building on Mayhew's research, Richard Fenno (1978) argues that members of Congress have two goals: to enact meaningful public policy (i.e., *Washington style*) and reelection concerns (i.e., *home style*).[36] He puts forward that legislators are as interested in policy goals as they are in reelection ambitions. Members of Congress

thus need to balance their professional lives in Washington against the need to maintain strong ties to the home district. Members spending too much time in Washington could pay the price on Election Day if voters come to believe they are out of touch with the concerns of the district. Conversely, members of Congress will lose the respect of their Washington colleagues if they spend an inordinate amount of time engaging in district political matters rather than engaging in the important policy matters in Washington. Members of Congress thus need to balance their "Washington style" against their "home style" because too much emphasis placed in one area might hurt them in the other.

Fenno, like Mayhew, views the electoral goal as the primary objective of most members of Congress. Because the electoral goal is critical, members tend to alter their behavior in a manner that best ingratiates them to their constituency. This is accomplished through "resource allocation, presentation of self, and their explanation of Washington activities." Fenno finds that legislators routinely place distance between themselves and other legislators, and they are inclined to campaign as outsiders against the Washington establishment. This occurrence might reveal why the institution of Congress traditionally suffers from low public approval ratings while individual members are frequently held in high regard by their respective constituencies.

The Electoral Connection and Partisan Gerrymandering

The attention paid to the goal of reelection has also caused some to focus on the manner by which congressional districts are drawn by state legislatures. **Partisan gerrymandering** refers to the state legislative practice of drawing congressional districts to benefit one political party over the other. The redistricting of congressional districts within states occurs every ten years following the constitutionally mandated national census. The methods employed in partisan gerrymandering include "cracking" (dividing) a legislative district to dilute the influence of one party and "packing" a legislative district to strengthen the influence of a particular party. The state of Texas, for example, redrew its congressional districts in a manner that benefited the Republican Party in 2003. Democrats held seventeen of the thirty-two congressional districts in Texas before the 2003 redistricting plan. After the redistricting plan, Republicans in Texas went on to win twenty-one of the thirty-two congressional districts in the 2004 election. The congressional redistricting process became so overtly political that Texas Democrats in the state legislature fled to Oklahoma to prevent Texas Republicans from having a legislative **quorum** on the vote. The Texas Democrats eventually returned to the state and were defeated in their attempt to stop the controversial redistricting plan.

Partisan Gerrymandering: The act of dividing congressional districts to give one political party an unfair advantage in congressional elections.

Quorum: A legislative rule that requires a minimum number of legislators to be present for a bill to be voted on.

It is in part because of these practices that the average margin of victory for incumbents is 40 percentage points, and it is also why members of Congress enjoyed a 97 percent reelection rate in 2016 and a 91 percent reelection rate in

Cue-Taking: Taking a political cue from a respected colleague or party leader when determining how to vote on a particular bill.

Speaker of the House (U.S.): The presiding officer of the House of Representatives. The Speaker is the highest-ranking official in the House of Representatives. The Speaker is third in line of succession to the presidency and is responsible for establishing the political agenda of the body.

House Majority Leader (U.S.): The second-most important person in the House of Representatives. The majority leader assists the Speaker in establishing the political agenda in the House.

House Minority Leader (U.S.): The elected leader of the party with minority status in the House of Representatives.

Whip: Party leaders who work closely with rank-and-file members to ensure individual members vote in accordance with the wishes of party leaders.

Senate Majority Leader (U.S.): The elected leader of the majority party in the U.S. Senate. The majority leader is responsible for setting the agenda in the U.S. Senate and plays a role in selecting committee assignments.

Senate Minority Leader (U.S.): The elected leader of the minority party in the U.S. Senate.

Logrolling: Trading influence or votes among legislators to achieve the passage of projects that are of interest to one another.

2018. In *Vieth v. Jubelirer* (2004), the Supreme Court opted not to declare partisan gerrymandering unconstitutional mostly because it could not establish an objective standard for determining at what point partisan gerrymandering becomes a Fourteenth Amendment Equal Protection violation. In *Rucho v. Common Cause* (2019), the Supreme Court decided in a 5–4 decision not to strike down state political maps that are clearly drawn to benefit one party over the other.[37] The U.S. Supreme Court in using the Political Question Doctrine once again ruled that issues stemming from partisan gerrymandering are best left for state legislatures to address rather than federal courts. However, some state Supreme Courts, such as in North Carolina and Wisconsin, have been more willing to strike down legislative maps as a violation of principles inherent in state constitutions. In addition some states such as Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Michigan, Montana, and Washington have taken partisan politics out of the legislative redistricting process by having nonpartisan commissions, rather than political officials, draw legislative districts.

Other Explanations of Congressional Voting Behavior

Others contend that congressional voting behavior is instead primarily motivated by "internal" considerations, such as the influence of congressional leaders, the congressional committee system, or a member's personal ideology. Mann and Ornstein's (2006) seminal work highlights how congressional rules and party leaders impact the congressional agenda and the political climate in Congress.[38] Other studies highlight the extent to which members of Congress are influenced by each other. Some members engage in institutional "**cue-taking**" and vote with the herd when an issue is perceived to be noncontroversial. Members are most likely to take political cues from congressional leaders in the House and Senate and colleagues from their state delegation. The **Speaker of the House**, the **House majority** and **House minority leaders**, and the Republican and Democratic **whips** play an especially important role in influencing members on how to vote in the House of Representatives. The **Senate majority leader** and the **Senate minority leader** also have an inordinate amount of influence on the voting behavior of senators.

Some legislators also engage in **logrolling**, where members make agreements with each other to trade their vote on a particular bill in exchange for a member's pledge to support or oppose an upcoming bill. If, however, an issue is surrounded by controversy, legislators tend to isolate the principal actors in their "perceptual field of forces"—namely, their constituencies, their political party, and relevant political action committees (PACs)—and vote with the majority opinion of this group.

Others contend that congressional voting behavior is motivated by the committee assignments of individual members of Congress. Congress institutionalized

Theory and Practice

Locking Up the Vote

There are now approximately 1.8 million people behind bars in the United States, which is almost a 500 percent increase in the number of people incarcerated during the 1970s.[39] The United States has more people in its prisons than any other country in the world. Today, forty-eight American states prohibit prisoners from voting in elections (only Maine and Vermont allow people who are incarcerated to vote), and during the 2016 U.S. presidential election, eleven states in some form or fashion denied voting rights to formerly incarcerated people who had reintegrated back into society. In the 2016 presidential election, approximately six million Americans were denied the right to vote because of felony disenfranchisement laws across states. Some of these states permanently deny voting to those convicted of certain types of crimes, others require an appeals process (many quite cumbersome) before restoring voting rights, and some place a permanent voting ban on all formerly incarcerated peoples.[40]

The process for purging state voting rolls to ensure formerly incarcerated people are not eligible to vote was a matter of great controversy in the 2000 presidential election between George W. Bush and Al Gore. The state of Florida hired a private company from Texas to purge the voting rolls. This company erroneously purged approximately eight thousand names, mainly from Black community strongholds (90 percent of Black Floridians voted for Gore) in the days leading up to the 2000 election. These eight thousand Florida residents were wrongfully prohibited from voting in the 2000 election. This was particularly controversial because the 2000 presidential election was ultimately decided in the state of Florida, which George W. Bush won by 537 votes, and because the brother of George W. Bush was the Florida governor at the time.

Nicholas Thompson's article titled "Locking Up the Vote" reveals that there are now approximately one million people who were previously incarcerated who have rejoined U.S. society and are ineligible to vote by state law. The article further points out that nationally "one out of seven adult Black men will never again get to vote. In Alabama, which permanently denies felons the right to vote, about one out of three adult Black men is barred for life."[41] In *Farrakhan v. Gregoire* (2010), the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled that Washington State's law banning people who were previously incarcerated rom voting violates the Voting Rights Act because it has the effect of disproportionally disenfranchising Black voters. The Ninth Circuit found that because of racial discrimination in the state's criminal justice system, denying voter access to formerly incarcerated people disproportionately impacts the state's Black voters. In 2019, voters in Florida overwhelmingly passed a ballot initiative to restore voting rights to formerly incarcerated people.

Think It Through

Do you believe people who have been incarcerated should be forever stripped of their voting rights, or should they be permitted to vote after their release from prison?

the committee system in 1816, and numerous committees have been created since then. There are four distinct types of committees in Congress:

1. *Standing committees:* the committees that "stand" from one Congress to the next. These committees receive proposed legislation from members. The U.S. House of Representatives is organized around twenty standing committees. The U.S. Senate currently has sixteen standing committees (see Table 6.5).

Table 6.5 Committees in the 118th Congress

House of Representatives	Senate
Agriculture	Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
Appropriations	Appropriations
Armed Services	Armed Services
Budget	Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
Education and Labor	Budget
Energy and Commerce	Commerce, Science, and Transportation
Financial Services	Energy and Natural Resources
Foreign Affairs	Environment and Public Works
Homeland Security	Finance
House Administration	Foreign Relations
Judiciary	Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Natural Resources	Homeland Security
Oversight and Government Reform	Judiciary
Rules	Rules and Administration
Science and Technology	Small Business and Entrepreneurship
Small Business	Veterans' Affairs
Standards of Official Conduct	
Transportation	
Veterans' Affairs	
Ways and Means	

2. *Conference committees:* a committee of members of the House and Senate formed to merge differences between Senate and House versions of the same bill.
3. *Joint committees:* these include members of both the House and Senate. Joint committees are typically formed to investigate a particular matter or concern.
4. *Select committees:* special committees in each house created to investigate a particular matter.

Senate committees are generally less significant than House committees in the extent to which they dominate a legislator's role in that body. The smaller, more elite nature of the Senate extends greater stature to senators and more flexibility to vote in accordance with their personal belief systems. There is little question, however, that a member's committee assignments play a significant role in why members of Congress vote the way they do.

Still others point to a member's political *ideology* as explaining why members of Congress vote the way they do. Most issues by their very nature can be viewed

through a liberal or conservative prism. The congruity between a legislator's ideology and the partisan leaning of a legislator's constituency makes it difficult to extrapolate the extent to which the constituency influences a legislator's belief system.

1812, Gilbert Stuart

Image 6.3 The term *gerrymander* stems from this Gilbert Stuart cartoon from 1812 of a Massachusetts electoral district twisted beyond all reason. Stuart thought the shape of the district resembled a salamander, but his friend who showed him the original map called it a "Gerry-mander" after then Massachusetts Governor Elbridge Gerry approved rearranging legislative districts for partisan advantage.

How a Bill Becomes a Law

There were roughly 13,556 bills proposed during the 2017–19 legislative sessions.[42] However, the overwhelming majority of these bills will never make it to a full vote on the floor of the House or Senate.[43] Only 443 of the 13,556 bills (approximately 3 percent) were actually signed into law.[44] Many of these enacted bills were merely symbolic in nature. For instance, a large percentage of recently enacted legislation (32 percent) simply renamed federal buildings.[45] The number of bills enacted into law has sharply dropped in the modern era in large part because of increased partisanship between the two parties and the rise in **omnibus legislation**, where dozens of smaller bills are collapsed into one large bill.

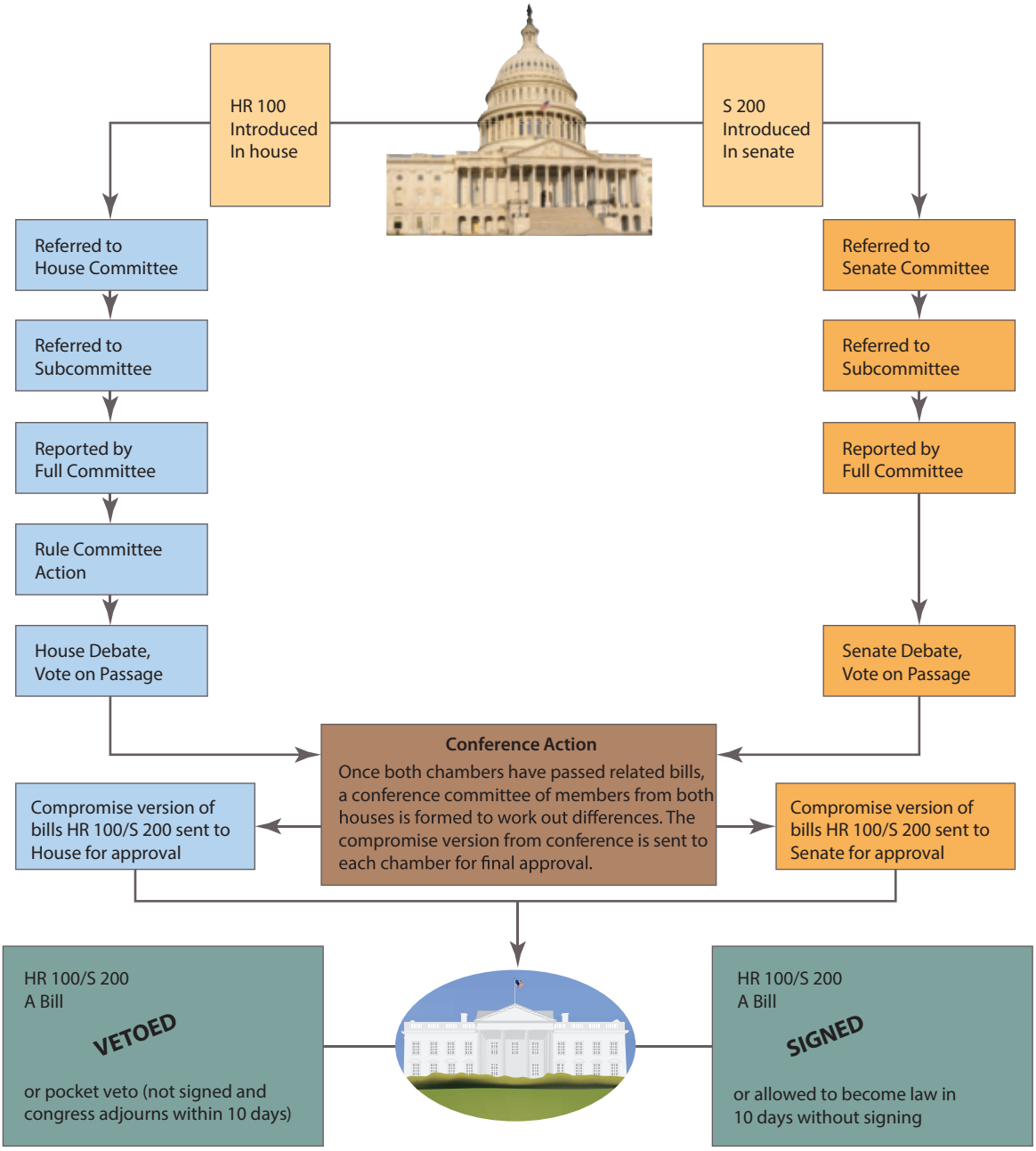
The process by which a congressional bill becomes a law is a long and difficult road (refer to Figure 6.1). A successful bill must secure a majority vote in the House of Representatives and the Senate before it is signed into law by the president. Once introduced by a member of Congress, a bill is first assigned to an appropriate congressional committee by either the Speaker of the House or the Senate majority leader. The committee chair will then assign the bill to the appropriate subcommittee where public hearings are held to allow for expert testimony either in favor of or in opposition to the bill.[46] Committee members can then "mark up" or alter the original bill by receiving a majority committee vote to amend the bill. Committees will then vote on whether to report the bill to the full chamber. Once a bill is approved at the committee level, it is sent on to the Rules Committee. In the U.S. House, the Rules Committee then establishes the rules guiding the floor debate in that chamber. The Rules Committee plays an important role because its members can vote to prohibit motions to amend the bill during the full session on the floor of each chamber. If the House and Senate vote on different versions of the same bill, a conference committee of House and Senate members convenes to iron out discrepancies in the bills.

Omnibus Legislation: A large bill that contains several smaller bills.

Once the bill passes the House and the Senate, it is forwarded to the executive branch, where the president can do one of three things: sign the bill into law; veto the bill, thus returning it to Congress, where the veto could potentially be overridden with a two-thirds **supermajority vote** in both chambers; or simply

Supermajority Vote: A congressional vote requiring more than a simple majority vote. The Constitution requires a two-thirds supermajority vote in Congress in five instances: when overriding a presidential veto, when impeaching federal officials, on Senate treaty ratification votes, when removing fellow members for misconduct, and when proposing constitutional amendments.

Figure 6.1 How a Bill Becomes a Law



Pocket Veto: An indirect presidential veto occurs when a president takes no action on a bill for ten days and Congress has adjourned.

ignore the bill. If the president takes no action on the bill it will become law within ten days if Congress remains in session. If no action is taken by the president and Congress adjourns within this ten-day period, the bill will be defeated by a **pocket veto**.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Congress and the Affordable Health Care Act of 2010: The Impact on College-Age Students

In 2010, there were approximately 46 million Americans without health care. Over 30 percent of those without health insurance were in the 18- to 29-year-old age bracket, a bracket that included only 17 percent of the U.S. population. So why did so many young people lack health insurance? Many recent college graduates were required to leave their parents' insurance policies or "age off" of other children's health insurance programs.[47] Compounding the problem was the fact that unemployment rates had skyrocketed in the youth demographic, then at 17.2 percent in the 20- to 24-year-old age group. A study in 2009 found that 76 percent of the uninsured youth did not get needed medical treatment, and 46 percent of uninsured youth with a chronic health issue claimed their condition worsened because of an inability to afford health care costs.[48] To address this problem and others, Congress enacted the Affordable Care Act of 2010, sometimes dubbed "Obamacare" by critics. This was the most sweeping piece of health care legislation since Congress enacted Medicare and Medicaid in 1965.

The Affordable Care Act of 2010 endured a bruising battle in Congress before ultimately passing in the House by a razor-slim margin of 219 to 212, with all Republicans and thirty-four Democrats voting against it. Recognizing that the success of his presidency was on the line, President Obama invoked Abraham Lincoln in a speech to House Democrats the day before the vote. In what might be his most memorable speech in his first few years of office, Obama called on House Democrats to have the courage of their convictions and twice recited Lincoln's line that "I am not bound to win, but I am bound to be true."

Approximately thirty-five million Americans now receive health care through the Affordable Care Act. The act most specifically targets young Americans by requiring insurance carriers to expand dependent coverage until they are 26 years of age (this became effective in September 2010 and expanded coverage for 1.2 million young adults), banning the practice of placing lifetime limits on how much insurance companies will pay for any individual throughout their lifetime (effective in 2014), and expanding Medicaid to adults at 133 percent of the federal poverty level. This is likely to have the greatest impact on the young. More than half of uninsured youth live in families that earn less than 133 percent of the poverty level.[49] One of the more controversial aspects of the act was that it required those able to buy health insurance to do so, which was later repealed by the Trump administration. It also requires each state to establish health care exchanges where individuals and small businesses can purchase insurance more efficiently by purchasing insurance in bulk. The act also prohibits insurance companies from discriminating against those with preexisting conditions. Because some states opposed creating state-based health care exchanges, the federal government created a federally run health care exchange program. In addition, not all states have opted to expand Medicaid coverage to adults at 133 percent of the poverty level.

Think It Through

Would you have voted for the Affordable Care Act if you were a member of Congress in 2010? Why or why not?

Presidential Versus Parliamentary Systems of Government

Now that you're familiar with the U.S. Congress, let's compare this system with other legislatures around the world. For this discussion, it is important to understand the difference between legislatures operating in presidential and parliamentary

systems. Almost all democratic legislatures originate from either an American presidential model or a British parliamentary model. Table 6.6 compares executive and legislative systems used by a number of countries around the world. The most obvious distinction between presidential and parliamentary systems is the manner in which the head of government is elected. In **presidential systems**, like those in Argentina, Mexico, Ukraine, and the United States, the head of government, the president, is elected by the citizens by means of a separate election. This means that the people themselves, rather than the parliament or congress, decide on the chief executive.

Presidential System: A system in which the executive branch is separate from the legislature.

While presidential systems are defined by the presence of an independent executive branch, determined by the citizens directly, **parliamentary systems** are defined by the fusion of their legislative and executive branches. The head of the government in a parliamentary system—the prime minister—serves as head of both the executive and legislative branches. Prime ministers come to power through their party and are elected to their position by their colleagues in parliament. In this way, parliamentary systems are designed to allow their elected officials, and not the citizens, the opportunity of choosing the head of government.

Parliamentary System: A system in which the executive branch is part of the legislature.

Bicameral Versus Unicameral Legislatures

Within the three branches of government, the legislature is considered the most representative agent of the people. Legislatures allow local interests to permeate national debates and best reflect the political beliefs of the population at large. Although the president or prime minister may "put a face" on the entire government, it is the local/national representatives that allow modern citizens to have their own unique interests served. The following section will examine the nature of the modern democratic legislature. Modern democracies

Table 6.6 Comparing Democracies

Country	Executive Model	Legislative Model	Judicial Review	Parties
United States	Presidential	Bicameral	Yes	Two party
United Kingdom	Parliamentary	Bicameral	No	Two party
Japan	Parliamentary	Bicameral	Yes	Multiparty
Germany	Parliamentary	Bicameral	Yes	Multiparty
Denmark	Parliamentary	Unicameral	Yes	Multiparty
Israel	Parliamentary	Unicameral	No	Multiparty
Ukraine	Presidential	Unicameral	Yes	Multiparty
Costa Rica	Parliamentary	Unicameral	Yes	Multiparty

are structured to avoid centralized authority (one branch of government gaining too much authority) and to best represent the interests of their citizens. Therefore, the size, strength, and configuration of the national legislature are important features of the life of the state. In contemporary politics, democracies have opted for one of two legislative models—legislatures with one house (known as **unicameral legislatures**) or those with two houses (known as *bicameral legislatures*). The strengths and weaknesses of each type will be examined, along with several examples of each. We will begin with a look at the British parliament.

Unicameral Legislature: A legislature that has only one house.

House of Lords (British): The upper house in the British parliament. The House of Lords reflects the history and traditions of British society. Today, it serves as a deliberative body that can no longer prevent the passage of legislation but can only delay it.

House of Commons (British): The lower house in the British parliament. Members of the House of Commons (known as members of Parliament or MPs) are directly elected by the people and therefore are charged with the duty of passing legislation.

Bicameral Legislatures

The British Parliament

The belief governments need a two-chambered legislature comes from the British model of governance. To unite and better represent the different interests in British society, the British parliament was divided between an upper-class conservative **House of Lords** and a working- or middle-class **House of Commons**. The houses were designed to lessen the legislative power of the monarch and to give an appropriate level of representation to the competing socioeconomic interests in the United Kingdom. It was believed that two houses, each reflecting the citizens' particular interests, would provide the British people with the greatest ability to have their voices heard.

What has resulted is a trend in bicameralism that not only divides authority between two houses but also grants more authority to the house that more directly represents the people—the house commonly referred to as the **lower house**.[50] Serving as the model for how political scientists examine legislatures, it was the British system that allowed us to refer to the house nearer to the people as the lower house and the house somewhat removed from the general public as the **upper house**. Therefore, in contemporary politics, the house with more political power is not only more representative of the people but also universally referred to as the *lower* house.

Lower houses, such as the British House of Commons or the Japanese House of Representatives, are designed to represent local interests from across the entire country. Although Madison had envisioned the creation of two houses with *different* areas of authority, most democracies have interpreted this distinction to mean that the house that best represents the "will of the people" must be given more power than the house that does not. Thus, most of the lower houses not only have the authority to name the prime minister (in the case of a parliamentary system) but also the authority to propose, pass, and implement important policy choices.

Truba7113/Shutterstock.com

Image 6.4 India is the world's largest democracy. Seated here is Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was reelected in 2024. He is India's first prime minister to be born after Indian Independence from Britain.

PA Images/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 6.5 The debating chamber during Prime Minister's Questions in the House of Commons, London, England.

In contrast, most upper houses in today's world have been designed to provide a national focus to the concerns of the people and to allow a more removed segment of the government the opportunity to evaluate potential legislation.[51] For example, the upper houses in Japan and the United Kingdom are limited to delaying legislation and/or making recommendations on legislation rather than having the authority to change it themselves. (The United States is a unique exception in that its upper house, the Senate, and lower house, House of Representatives, have a greater degree of equity in the making of legislation.)

Lower House: A lower house, like the British House of Commons, is designed to best represent the will of the people. Thus, its members are elected directly by the people and their representation is based on population.

Upper House: An upper house is intended to be removed from the day-to-day activities of the legislature. Thus, it promotes the national interest and provides consultation on serious issues.

The United Kingdom is considered by many to be the model of the modern parliamentary state. Although its election process is considered unique by modern parliamentary standards (as will be discussed later) and its two dominant parties are an exception, its influence in terms of legislative structuring is unsurpassed. Centering the prime minister as head of government within the lower house of parliament has served as a model for most contemporary democracies. Even the terms *parliament* and *upper* and *lower houses* emerged from the British style of governance.[52]

For two and a half centuries, the United Kingdom (which includes Britain, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland) possessed an empire that brought its domination, people, goods, and services to every corner of the globe. Following World War II, the British government lost its colonial empire but sealed its reputation as the democratic model of choice. Since the end of World War II, the bicameral, parliamentary model of democracy has been the choice of most new countries. The bicameral system, with its two houses, has allowed many burgeoning democracies the opportunity to balance tradition and cultural distinctiveness with local representation and national interests. The British system in many ways has been the model for this mindset.

As noted, the British legislature consists of the House of Lords and the House of Commons. Although traditionally both chambers represented the different socioeconomic interests in British society, they no longer have this distinction. Today, the House of Lords (the upper house in the British parliament) is to a large degree an ineffectual institution; it comprises leaders of the Church of England and landed nobles who, up until 1999, had maintained their seats on the basis of heredity.[53] As Peters concludes, "[T]oday the House of Lords may not delay money bills longer than one month—nor can it vote them down and prevent their implementation—and any legislation passed by the House of Commons in two successive sessions of Parliament, provided one calendar year has passed, goes into effect without approval by the Lords."[54] The House of Lords is mainly used as a forum for discussion. Because democracies are designed to provide individuals with the greatest

opportunity for debate and protest, it is best to value the House of Lords as a place where debates are continued, and tradition is maintained. Today, independent members of the House of Lords are appointed by the King after receiving input from the Prime Minister and an Appointments Commission.

In the United Kingdom, it is the House of Commons that represents a truer expression of the will of the people and is therefore responsible for passing legislation. It must be stated that the British system is designed to be adversarial. In Great Britain, there are two dominant political parties, Conservative and Labour, and several smaller parties including the Liberal Democratic Party and the Scottish National Party. Although Great Britain's election system and political affiliations will be discussed later, it is important to know that political debates in the House of Commons are made by the prime minister (head of government and leader of the prime minister's political party) and waged against political opponents, namely, the members of the opposition party and its leader.

Because policies are generated within the prime minister's cabinet, the prime minister of the United Kingdom is mandated to discuss policy choices within the

Theory and Practice

How the Past Can Impact Policy

One of the more interesting questions concerning representation in governments around the world relates to history's influence on the political system. We tend to think that the founding of the United States played a major role in American federalism and the systems of checks and balances and separation of powers. We tend to see the American system as one based on constitutionality and jurisprudence. When we look to times in our past that were less than democratic (eradication of Native Americans, the institution of slavery, limitations placed on women, Japanese and German American internments during World War II, etc.), we rarely let them influence our present situation. For example, women received the right to vote nationally in 1920. Although women are rarely given equal treatment in terms of pay compared to their men counterparts, they technically have equal protection under the law. Once again, it is the *law* to the rescue.

In Germany, however, its past (and its actions toward minority groups during World War II) is alive in its present political affairs. According to David P. Conradt, the placement of the Bundestag, the German lower house, is an example of this. The Bundestag was built directly across the street from the Holocaust Museum in Berlin. Why? Was this accidental? No, absolutely not. It was deliberately placed there as a constant reminder of the threat of fascism to those currently holding office there. It was designed to keep the memory of the Holocaust alive for not only German citizens but also for those entrusted with the passage of law. The memory of the Holocaust in many ways still dictates contemporary German policies toward minority groups and its limitations on what is known as "hate speech."[55]

Think It Through

1. Do you think the past should play a role in the making of public policy?
2. Should groups that have been the targets of racial or religious discrimination be given fair compensation?
3. If so, how could this be accomplished?

House of Commons at a weekly, half-hour session called Prime Minister's Questions. During this time, the prime minister is required to answer all of the questions related to policy decisions and argue in front of a televised audience all of the policies that the prime minister has chosen.[56] Many have argued that this requirement has added to the strength of the British system by keeping a "leash" on the otherwise dominant power of the prime minister and allowing those in the loyal opposition a fair chance to raise objections.

Although the British system, with its largely ineffectual House of Lords and its dominant House of Commons, may appear strange to someone living in a presidential system, it is a division that reflects the history and culture of the United Kingdom. Just as the British people value the importance of the monarch as part of the dual executive branch, so too do they value the legislative branch. The House of Lords and House of Commons are important reminders of both democracy and tradition. We must remember that democracies allow governments to change peacefully to meet the needs of the people in such a way that recognized traditions are still maintained.

National Diet: The formal name of the Japanese legislature composed of the House of Councilors and the House of Representatives.

House of Councilors (Japanese): The upper house in the Japanese parliament. It is designed to approve proposed legislation that has already been passed in the lower House of Representatives. However, if it chooses to reject the proposed law, its ruling can be overturned in the House of Representatives by a two-thirds majority vote.

House of Representatives (Japanese): The lower house in the Japanese parliament. Its members are directly elected by the people, and it is the ultimate source of authority in the legislative process.

The Japanese Legislature

In Japan, where the legislature is referred to as the **National Diet**, there is also a bicameral legislature composed of the **House of Councilors** (upper house) and the **House of Representatives** (lower house). Following World War II, the Japanese

Why Politics Matters to You!

Parliamentary Supremacy or Judicial Review?

What has always confused many political science students is the fact that the United Kingdom lacks a written constitution but is still considered a functioning democracy with a long legal tradition. How can this be? How do citizens of the United Kingdom operate knowing that their laws are decided exclusively by the House of Commons and, to a lesser degree, the House of Lords? What is the power of a supreme or high court if it cannot deem laws unconstitutional? How can a British citizen (or a citizen in most parliamentary systems) appeal a law if there is not a court given this ability?

These questions are easily answered by means of parliamentary procedure. In the United Kingdom, the political agenda is set, and policies are formulated and enacted by the prime minister and their political party. So, once a law is formalized, it is seen as a mark on the ruling party. If, over time, that law or a particular policy choice becomes perceived as something negative to the people of the United Kingdom and as a defining feature of the prime minister's agenda, the opposition party may win the next election and change the law.

Think It Through

1. Is this fair? The British system allows the government (and only the government) to determine the laws. Is this a good idea or not?
2. Is judicial review a positive feature of democratic life?

constitution created a parliamentary democracy that required legislative approval from both houses. However, when one examines the power between the two houses, it becomes clear that the House of Representatives has the upper hand in shaping and passing legislation.

The Japanese House of Representatives has a constitutional mandate to serve as the ultimate voice in choosing the prime minister and has the ability to sign international treaties and create and approve the final budget. Although both houses have the authority to name potential candidates for prime minister, it is the House of Representatives that has the final say. In fact, the House of Representatives also can pass legislation voted down by the House of Councilors. For example, suppose a legislative bill is created in and approved by the House of Representatives. The rules require that the bill must go to the House of Councilors for approval. However, even if the House of Councilors rejects the bill, it still goes back to the House of Representatives for another vote.[57] If the bill then receives a two-thirds majority in the House of Representatives, it becomes law. Thus, even if a potential piece of legislation arises in the upper house, it can become law only upon its acceptance in the lower house.

Although this may sound a great deal like the British parliamentary system, the Japanese Diet does have several unique characteristics. First, the members of both the upper and lower house in Japan are elected by the people. Although the upper house operates according to a proportional representation of the people based on party affiliation, they are elected nonetheless.

Second, Japan is a **multiparty parliamentary democracy**. Even though the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) dominated the government from the mid-1950s until the early 1990s, it now has to operate among a group of contending parties such as the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), the Clean Government Party (CGP), the Liberal Party (LP), the Social Democratic Party (SDP), and the Japan Communist Party (JCP). The presence of a multiparty system is an important feature of many modern parliamentary democracies. In fact, most of the democracies in the world today have a number of different political parties that allow each constituency to feel that it has some voice in the shaping of national policies.

Multiparty Parliamentary Democracy: A democratic state that has more than two active political parties in the legislature.

The Asahi Shimbun/Getty Images

Image 6.6 The Japanese House of Representatives is shown here approving the nomination of a new governor for the Bank of Japan.

Unicameral Legislatures: One Voice, One House

Although most democracies seem to have adopted the Madisonian theory of bicameralism and the practice of the British parliament, there are several states that have opted for one-chambered national legislatures. Proponents of unicameralism, like Jeremy Bentham

and Louis Rockow, have argued that a one-house system offers its people three superior options: greater efficiency, greater accountability, and fewer expenses. These three arguments will serve as the focus of the following sections.

Efficiency

Most proponents of a unicameral system claim that it is a more efficient system of conducting the people's business. Why? Because the policy and legislative processes of most states revolve around the ability to place important issues or problems on the agenda, formulate appropriate measures to handle these problems, and finally, implement programs that actually solve them. One of the strongest arguments against bicameralism is that it is a slow process *by design*. Although deliberation is a necessary part of the passage of productive legislation and the overall functioning of democracy, it can sometimes cause problems that ultimately hurt the citizens.

In today's world, many states have opted for unicameralism because of the arguments made by Louis Rockow. They underline the belief that an efficient legislature is one that creates and implements *effective* policies and that a two-house system potentially prevents such levels of efficiency. As Tom Todd writes,

Theory and Practice

Two Houses Might Not Be Better Than One

In 1928, Lewis Rockow published an article titled "Bentham on the Theory of Second Chambers." In addition to summarizing Bentham's beliefs on two-chambered houses, Rockow argued that second legislative chambers are impediments to good legislation because they are largely redundant.[58] In the article, Rockow writes:

> The existence of two chambers, each sharing in legislation, will, [according to Bentham] involve useless delay in the process of legislation. To pass a law will then cost double the amount of effort. The same documents, witnesses, and most of the arguments will have to be presented in both chambers. In fact, the delay which the existence of a second chamber will produce may be infinite, for in addition to the double amount of work there will also arise deadlocks due to mutual jealousies and conflict of authority. Thus wholesome legislation will be retarded and the people derived of its benefit, while those who are opposed to all reform will have additional opportunities to conceal their selfish interests behind parliamentary guile and craft.[59]

For Bentham, slower deliberation is not good for democracy. In fact, he argued that a faster, leaner legislature will ensure that the people's immediate interests are met.

Think It Through

1. What do you think? Are two chambers better than one?
2. Can you think of any other benefits to a one-chambered legislature?

"Because its decision-making process is relatively simple and efficient, a unicameral legislature has the time to provide a fuller and fairer hearing to all interests and points of view."[60]

Greater Accountability

Although efficiency in passing legislation is a necessary feature of any legislature, democratic rule also requires an accurate representation of the people's will. As redundant and obvious as this appears, an argument has been made by those in favor of unicameralism suggesting that upper houses lack an appropriate level of accountability necessary to democratic governance. We must remember that most upper houses are designed to be removed from local interests and that in many countries, their ministers are elected as representatives of political parties rather than as representatives of the people themselves.[61] Thus, those in favor of unicameralism have suggested that, if anything, upper houses are less representative than lower houses and bicameral systems are less democratic.

Fewer Expenses

Last, those in favor of unicameralism also argue that it is more cost-effective. To put it in plain economic terms, two houses cost more money and also generate more waste than one. As government responsibilities have grown, so too has the number of individuals who work for the elected members of the legislature.

Consider the example of the state of Nebraska. Although the national government of the United States is bicameral because it is a federal system, it allows its states to have their own types of legislatures. Nebraska is the only state in the United States that has a unicameral legislature. This example is important for the "fewer expenses" argument because it demonstrates the amount of money that Nebraska has saved since the state voted to transition from a bicameral structure to a unicameral one in 1934. As Zanotelli writes, "the difference between the last bicameral session of the (Nebraska) legislature ($202,593) and the first unicameral session ($103,445) yielded a savings of nearly $100,000—almost a fifty percent savings in this instance."[62]

Although political systems must be chosen on merit and ability to legislate rather than financial expenditures, those systems that yield fewer costs are still important to examine. The case of Nebraska is important because it has operated within a sea of bicameralism, and it has largely been successful. If citizens have kept it alive in the heartland of the United States for almost seventy years, it must have certain popular traits—one of which is that it has allowed Nebraskans to lower the cost of government and limit the amount of waste.

Unicameral Systems: Ukraine and Costa Rica

The previous section examined the general merits of a unicameral system. It focused on both its strengths as a system and its strength in relation to bicameralism. The

following case studies will briefly outline the basic structures of two specific unicameral systems: Ukraine, a state currently under siege from neighboring Russia, and Costa Rica, the most democratically stable state in Latin America. These analyses are designed to shed greater light on both the general theory of unicameralism and the more specific characteristics of each state. We will begin with Ukraine, a unitary presidential democracy in Eastern Europe.

Ukraine

Today, Ukraine is classified as a unitary presidential democracy. However, this is a recent designation. Like many other states in Eastern Europe, Ukraine's history, people, and culture have largely been shaped by its relationship with Russia. Although its current political borders were established at the end of World War II (see Figure 6.2), the Russo-Ukrainian story began with the earliest founding of the city of Kiev, the current capital of Ukraine. Established in the ninth century as a political unit known as Kievan Rus', the founders of Kiev served as the historical basis for the modern states of Belarus, Ukraine, and Russia—three peoples who have claimed Kievan ancestry. For centuries, this claim has perpetuated the tension between Russia and Ukraine.

Figure 6.2 Map of Ukraine and Russia

As you can see, Ukraine is situated between two worlds. Will its leaders look to the West or to the East? Only time will tell.

Because Ukraine is often understood as sitting between Western Europe and Russia, its population has historically been politically divided: Individuals in the East have historically favored a Russian viewpoint, and those in the West favored a more European one. Once Russia began to grow in influence over a segment of the Ukrainian population and made claims of common ancestry, it was not long before Ukraine was conquered and placed under its control. Although Ukraine experienced a brief period of independence following World War I, it eventually fell under the domain of the Soviet Union, where it remained until 1991.[63]

It is this historical connection with Russia that has formed many of the contemporary opinions of Ukrainian society as well as certain features of the Ukrainian government. Today, culturally, Ukraine is still a divided nation, with its Western population favoring a more European existence and its Eastern

population favoring a more Russian one.[64] Divisions like these are hard to mend. Yet, the establishment of a free Ukraine in the early 1990s marked the beginning of an attempt to mend these differences through democratic institutions and a unitary system of authority.

In 1991, the government created a unitary, unicameral, presidential democracy—one that divides power between a president and a one-house legislature. It was decided that a country that had operated as part of the Soviet Union for so long needed a form of rule that was democratic yet still powerful enough to pass necessary legislation in the face of a culturally divided people, and a bicameral legislature would only serve as an impediment to the proper functioning of government.

In Ukraine, proposed legislation is seen as a direct debate between the one-chambered legislature known as the *Verkhovna Rada* (national parliament) and the country's president, who is elected by the people in a separate election (as is the case in all presidential democracies) and who serves five years (with a limit of two terms). The Ukrainian president also has a number of constitutional powers relating to parliament. Once legislation is approved in the Rada, it is signed by the chair of the Verkhovna Rada; it then goes on to the president for approval. Given the relatively recent creation of the independent state of Ukraine and its long history with Russia, its constitution has attempted to place a relative balance between its different branches. Although the president is the most visible person in government and is entitled to a great many powers over the Rada, including the constitutional right of naming/dismissing the prime minister, the constitution of Ukraine operates by a unique separation of powers.

According to Chapter 4, Article 76 of the Ukrainian constitution, "The constitutional composition of the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine consists of 450 National Deputies of Ukraine who are elected for a four-year term on the basis of universal, equal and direct suffrage, by secret ballot." Each deputy has the right to propose legislation, and when the piece of legislation is approved after review by special committees (mostly by majority vote), it is sent to the president for final passage. Once the bill is received by the president, the president has fifteen days to either pass it or send it back for further changes. According to Article 94,

> In the event that the President of Ukraine has not returned a law for repeat consideration within the established term, the law is deemed to be approved by the President of Ukraine and shall be signed and officially promulgated. If a law, during its repeat consideration, is again adopted by the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine by no less than two-thirds of its constitutional composition, the President of Ukraine is obliged to sign and to officially promulgate it within ten days. A law enters into force in ten days from the day of its official promulgation, unless otherwise envisaged by the law itself, but not prior to the day of its publication.

The Ukrainian legislature was designed to create legislation that both properly serves the people's interests and serves them in a reasonable amount of time.

The unicameral legislature within this unitary democracy was designed to promote political freedoms while also creating a sense of stability. Although there are many arguments that concern presidential power and the different segments of society who favor either a more Euro-centric Ukraine or a Russo-centric one, it has been the one-chambered house balanced by a separate and powerful executive that has quite possibly created the stability the world has recently witnessed.

As the war in Ukraine continues, it is difficult to say how well the government in its current form is performing. States at war tend to suspend political routines like the collection of taxes or deliberative sessions in parliament. Thus it is tough to determine what the future looks like for the Ukrainian people. One feature that might be helping its military campaign is the fact that its president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, is the head of government and thus the head of the military. This autonomy, much like that of the American president, can make foreign policy decisions less cumbersome than in parliamentary systems, whose executives have greater connections to both their party and the government as a whole.

Although there have been recent attempts and arguments made in favor of creating a federal, bicameral legislature, this is most likely years away from happening. Many segments of Ukrainian society are still divided on the issue concerning its role in the world, and as was already stated, countries engaged in war have greater things to consider than arguments surrounding whether it is better to have one or two legislative bodies.

Costa Rica

Like Ukraine, Costa Rica is classified as a unitary presidential democracy. Situated between Nicaragua and Panama (see Figure 6.3), Costa Rica stands as one of the most stable states in Central America. In fact, since its independence from Spain in 1821, Costa Rica has had only two brief periods of nondemocratic rule.[65]

So what has caused this stability? How has Costa Rica been able to maintain a legitimate electoral system and a valid government? The most significant answer seems to be the creation of government agencies committed to protecting the sanctity of the electoral process. As Booth suggests, it has been this protection that has made all the difference in Costa Rica:

> [L]iberal democracy in Costa Rica could not have survived without something "most untypical of Latin America: honest elections. . . . The establishment of liberal democracies . . . included the creation of powerful, independent agencies to administer the electoral process, agencies carefully structured to assure that neither the government nor any party could covertly control an election."[66]

The agency known as the Tribunal Supremo de Elecciones (TSE) monitors the election process from the distribution of voter identification cards to the management and organization of procedures. "The TSE normally consists of three magistrates and six *suplentes* (substitutes) who are appointed to staggered six-year terms

by the Supreme Court of Justice."[67] It has been successful in "keeping tabs" on the tendencies of political parties and presidential candidates toward fraud.

Yuri Cortez/AFP/Getty Images

Image 6.7 The electronic voting system in Costa Rica.

Because Costa Rica is a unitary, unicameral, presidential democracy, its system is based on a direct division of legislative authority between its president and its Asamblea Legislativa (Legislative Assembly). Unlike the decentralized nature of federal systems, Costa Rican policies are made at the national level on behalf of its seven provinces. The seven provinces, however, do not constitute seven different local governments. Provinces are divided into smaller political units known as cantons, whose sizes are determined by population. The configuration of each canton's municipal government is usually determined by the success or failure of the national political elections (held on the same day as the local elections) and in particular the success or failure of the two dominant political parties, the Partido Unidad Social Cristiana and the Partido Liberacion Nacional.

Costa Rica's Asamblea Legislativa has fifty-seven seats, and they are directly elected by the people in proportion to the state's population from the seven provinces. According to Title IX of the Costa Rican Constitution, the "Assembly's powers include the following: to amend the Constitution; legislate; declare war and peace; approve the national budget; levy taxes; ratify treaties; authorize the suspension of civil liberties; appoint magistrates to the Supreme Court of Justice and the TSE; and many similar tasks."[68] This is what has made Costa Rica a well-balanced democracy. It has created a system that effectively monitors elections and affords its legislature with the type of authority not often found in one-chambered systems.

Unfortunately, however, this authority has recently been challenged by a growth in presidential power related to economic mismanagement by the Assembly and a series of economic crises.[69] Because the government of Costa Rica and in particular the Assembly controls a great many of the nation's major industries, they have been associated with causing many of the recent economic crises. As a result, the presidency has grown in authority and popularity.

Figure 6.3 Map of Central America with Costa Rica

Situated in the heart of Latin America, Costa Rica has always been valued as one of the most stable states in the region.

Are Two Houses Better Than One?

Based on the factors involved, it appears that the answer to this question is based on each state's history, culture, and interpretation of democracy—namely, how the power should be distributed. Because most federal states are bicameral, it would appear that the two designations seem to imply some coordination. In federal states, where power is decentralized to lesser regional/provincial governments—as in the United States, Canada, and Australia—the concept of democracy is based on the concept of diffusion as a remedy against tyranny. However, in unitary, bicameral states such as France, the United Kingdom, and Japan, the two-house structure is employed as a way of continuing debate while maintaining historical traditions of *removed* representation.

Although unitary unicameral states are found in diverse locations around the world, they do possess some similar features. First, unitary, unicameral states are usually more culturally and linguistically homogeneous than federal, bicameral states. It is believed that one-chambered houses are designed to concentrate the beliefs of individuals and/or political parties yet also reflect the nation as a whole. Ideological differences are valued as necessary to democracies but should never be powerful enough to destroy the entire system; one-chambered houses like those in Ukraine and Costa Rica reflect this attitude.

Second, unitary unicameral states are the most common form of government in the world today. With the end of the colonial era and a rise in those who believe in direct representation, most newly created states have opted for unitary unicameral systems. As was previously stated, many of the new states do not see the need for a two-chambered legislature. Therefore, most new states that share a common culture and history have opted for unicameralism.

6 Summary

AP Images/Mustafa Quraishi

The U.S. Congress was addressed in the first article of the U.S. Constitution because the Framers believed it to be the most important branch of our government. This chapter examined the original intent of the Framers in creating our legislative branch. It also compared the U.S. Congress with other national legislatures across the globe.

This chapter focused on presidential and parliamentary systems of government and the similarities and differences in legislative branches in democratic systems of government. By comparing legislative branches of government within the context of different systems of rule, we hope to have shed a greater light on the ways in which other democracies function.

In an era of globalization, every student of politics should know how some of the world's democracies work. Americans need to be reminded that change in a democracy is a positive force and can lead to greater accomplishments. The focus of this chapter was on the institutional analysis of the legislative branches in contemporary democracies, and the following chapter will examine the similarities and differences among executive branches in contemporary democracies.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. How large should U.S. congressional districts be? What does that imply for the size of the U.S. House of Representatives?

   In the U.S. Constitution, the Framers stipulated that there should be one U.S. House member for every 30,000 citizens. They reasoned that the House size should be large enough to reflect all of the views in society but not so large that the assembly will become an unruly mob. In 1929, Congress set the size of the U.S. House at 435 members. Today, each U.S. House member represents approximately 760,000 people.

2. Is the coffee still hot? Do we still need a two-house chamber now that members in both houses are elected to office in the United States?

   The American Framers designed a two-house legislative chamber because the U.S. House was created to represent the interests of the people and the U.S. Senate was designed to represent the interests of the state, which is why U.S. senators were initially appointed into the office by state legislatures. However, in 1913, the senate selection process transitioned to a direct election system by the Seventeenth Amendment. Now, all members of Congress are voted into office by the people.

3. Why do incumbents in U.S. House races win reelection approximately 95 percent of the time?

   Members of the U.S. House now have close to 95 percent reelection rates because of the powers of incumbency, which elevates their name recognition with voters and allows them to claim credit for bringing federal resources to their district. Incumbents also benefit from gerrymandered districts that tend to favor the incumbent's party in congressional elections.

4. How are legislatures in presidential systems of government different from those in parliamentary systems of government?

   The American presidential system is structured according to a separation of powers system between the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government, while most parliamentary systems of government favor a fusion of power system where the executive is also a member of the parliament. Presidential systems also tend to elect the executive in a national vote, but prime ministers in parliamentary systems are selected by members of the parliament.

5. How is the American Congress different from the British Parliament?

The American Congress is different from the British Parliament in that U.S. Senators are elected by people in their state whereas in Britain, the King appoints members to the House of Lords. In their respective upper chambers, the U.S. Senate has significant legislative power, while in Britain, the House of Lords lacks significant power. The British prime minister also serves as a member of the House of Commons, but the American president heads a separate branch of government.

Key Terms

Anti-Federalists p. 142
Bicameral Legislature p. 141
Cloture p. 150
Cue-Taking p. 156
Filibuster p. 150
Gridlock p. 149
House Majority Leader (U.S.) p. 156
House Minority Leader (U.S.) p. 156
House of Commons (British) p. 163
House of Councilors (Japanese) p. 166
House of Lords (British) p. 163
House of Representatives (Japanese) p. 166
Jacksonian Democracy p. 149
Logrolling p. 156
Lower House p. 163
Majority–Minority Concentrated District p. 153
Multiparty Parliamentary Democracy p. 167
National Diet p. 166
Omnibus Legislation p. 159
Partisan Gerrymandering p. 155
Pocket Veto p. 160
Parliamentary System p. 162
Presidential System p. 162
Quorum p. 155
Senate Majority Leader (U.S.) p. 156
Senate Minority Leader (U.S.) p. 156
Speaker of the House (U.S.) p. 156
Supermajority Vote p. 159
Unicameral Legislature p. 163
Upper House p. 163
Whip p. 156

7 Comparing Democratic Executives

Image 7.1 Pictured here are the presidents and prime ministers of the G-7 countries in Hiroshima, Japan on May 20, 2023. Kyodo News/Kyodo News/Getty Images

Chapter Outline

Introduction: Executives: Presidents and Prime Ministers 178
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Debating the Executive: Rule by Individual or Executive Council 180
The Constitution and the Powers of the American President 182
The Prime Minister: First Among Equals 186
Looking Ahead: Newer Democracies in Comparative Context 191

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What are the pros and cons of having a president or prime minister?
2. What are the formal powers of the U.S. president?
3. What is the relationship between the British prime minister and the minority party in the House of Commons?
4. What is the electoral method for choosing the president of the United States? India?
5. Why are presidential systems rarely chosen when forming a new democracy?

Introduction: Executives: Presidents and Prime Ministers

If someone were to ask you what constitutes the *executive* branch of government, you would probably respond by saying, "the president of the United States." Although that answer is true, or at least "truer" in a course that focuses exclusively on American politics, in an introductory course designed to provide you with an overview of the field of political science, it is only *partly* true. For purposes of this course and this book, the term *executive* applies to the branch of government that is most associated with individuals who serve as the independently elected head of government (president) or those who serve as the leader of their respective party and overall government in the national legislature (prime minister).

In this chapter, we will look at several different types of democratic executives and place them within the context of comparative politics. We will begin with a brief section on the pros and cons of presidential systems, immediately followed by the executive model that is probably most familiar to you, the American presidency. Following the section on the American president, we will look at some of the pros and cons of the parliamentary system's executive, the prime minister. In doing so, we will try to show you some of the distinctions between presidents and prime ministers.

Presidents: The Pros and Cons of Independent Executives

According to Steiner and Crepaz,[1] there are three primary advantages to having an independent executive (president) as follows:

1. Legislative terms are fixed.
2. The executive is popularly elected.

3. Presidential government is "limited," due to a constitutionally designed separation of powers.

In a presidential system, the people come to expect elections and understand that they take place at specifically provided times. American presidential elections, for example, occur every four years. Similarly, elections in the lower house, the U.S. House of Representative, take place for all members every two years, and U.S. senators serve for six-year terms. These regularly scheduled elections allow the sitting president to set an agenda (policy initiatives) and determine a budget (money allocated to different departments and programs) according to a fixed calendar. This sense of stability, it has been argued, allows both the executive and the people who indirectly elect the president to understand that policy choices are determined at a set time and place. Because executives in presidential systems are not members of legislatures that have the ability to pass **votes of no confidence**, the tool periodically issued in parliamentary systems to remove a prime minister and call for new elections, they possess a spirit of independence of action. Thus, the powers of the president are determined by finite rules within a finite process that voters and other national legislators learn to accept. This makes the president's agenda both independent of legislative initiatives and subject to certain legislative demands.

Vote of No Confidence: A feature of parliamentary systems in which members of the legislature deem the sitting executive as unfit to rule. No-confidence votes can result in a call for national elections.

Still, not everyone sees the aforementioned characteristics as advantageous to a democratic system. Some see, "for instance the fixed legislative terms as . . . leading to 'temporal rigidity,' meaning incapacity of the legislature to impose changes on executive authority."[2] For example, what if a president is determined to be incapable after a few months in office? Because a vote of no confidence does not exist in presidential systems, executives can only be removed through the process of presidential **impeachment**. In the United States, no American president as yet has been impeached and removed from office through the impeachment process.

Impeachment: The first stage of a process by which a head of state (or occasionally a member of a legislature) is removed for illegal activity. In countries where it is found, it is usually voted on by one or both legislative houses.

Another perceived disadvantage of presidential systems is the nature of the president's independence and level of visibility. In countries that have opted for an independently elected, independent head of government, the stakes are sometimes too high to maintain. New democracies, for example—those that lack a historical record of protecting civil liberties and individual freedoms or those that lack a robust (or potentially robust) economy—worry about the potential of a powerful president. Why? Well, what if tragedy strikes? Is an independent executive too strong? What if the president decides to destroy that same democracy that brought the president to power? Will the president allow for peaceable transfers of power after election results vote them out? These are obviously important questions for democracies and are seen as disadvantages of the presidential system as a whole.

Now that you know some of the pros and cons of presidential systems, let us look at the oldest presidential system, that of the United States, and the ways the Framers of the U.S. Constitution debated its pros and cons. Many of the fears we just mentioned were, in fact, present during the 1787 Constitutional Convention.

Debating the Executive: Rule by Individual or Executive Council

James Madison, the principal author of the U.S. Constitution, expressed his uncertainty about the formation of the executive branch in a letter to a fellow delegate to the Constitutional Convention, Edmund Randolph. Madison revealed that he had yet to form his own opinion on either "the manner in which the executive ought to be constituted or of the authorities with which it ought to be clothed."[3] In other words, Madison was uncertain as to whether the executive branch should take the form of an individual executive or an executive council and was unsure of the types of powers the office should be granted. The chief problem was that neither political theorists nor history provided any desirable executive models from which to draw. Blackstone's influential *Commentaries on the Laws of England (1765–69)*, which advocated for supreme executive powers, was largely viewed with contempt by most delegates at the American Constitutional Convention. One of the greatest critics of the individual executive was George Clinton, the governor of New York, who argued that over time, the presidency could come to resemble the British monarch if proper restraints were not enacted. Those who opposed the creation of an independent executive largely did so on the grounds that it resembled rulers of the past who had little regard for the people whom they, in a democracy, should represent.

During the Constitutional Convention, the delegates raised a variety of ideas on how the executive branch should function. The Virginia Plan (brought forth by the delegation from Virginia) called for an executive branch to be created, but it was silent on whether it should take the form of an individual or a council. The New Jersey Plan called for a two-person executive council. The delegate who had the greatest impact on the design of the individual executive was Pennsylvania delegate James Wilson. Wilson argued for a strong individual executive because he believed that it would bring the "most energy, dispatch, and responsibility to the office." Virginia delegates George Mason and Edmund Randolph argued against an individual executive, believing the office would degenerate into a monarchy.[4] The delegates at the Constitutional Convention were thus largely split on how the executive branch should be structured and in the amount of power the office should be granted. Connecticut delegate Roger Sherman advocated for a weak executive council that would be selected by Congress and granted the mere authority to execute the will of Congress. Alexander Hamilton (who was a delegate from New York), on the other hand, made

a five-hour speech at the Convention on June 18, 1787, where he called for a strong individual executive.

Hamilton advocated for a life term and extraordinary executive powers.[5] He called for a British-style government (one that at the time had a monarch and a relatively weak legislature) and argued that the president should be equipped with war powers, appointment powers, an absolute veto power, and executive pardon powers. It is debatable as to whether Hamilton truly advocated imperial executive powers or whether his speech was an attempt to shift the parameters of the debate away from the weak presidential models offered by the Virginia and New Jersey Plans. In an attempt to break the impasse, James Madison proposed suspending the debate on whether the office should consist of an individual executive or an executive council to first clarify the powers of the office. He reasoned that delegates might be in a better position to advocate for either an individual executive or an executive council once the body came to an agreement on the purpose of the office.

UPI/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 7.2 U.S. President Joe Biden takes the oath of office from Chief Justice John Roberts at the ceremonial swearing in at the U.S. Capitol during the 59th presidential inauguration in Washington, D.C. on January 20, 2021.

After Madison's suggestion, it became clear that the body believed that the president needed to play a large role in foreign affairs. Because threats usually require immediate action and quite often require *reaction*, the delegates decided that it would be in the best interest of the new nation to have an individual executive. The Framers' brilliance came not only in this decision but also in the ways that powers are separated in the U.S. Constitution. The president might have a great many war powers, but the legislature is equipped with the power of the purse (the ability to spend money) and the power to declare war. The decision to have an individual who is constrained by a separation of powers and system of checks and balances serve as president instead of an executive council was therefore a compromise between those who favored a strong independent executive and those who feared the emergence of an American monarch. Nevertheless, the U.S. Constitution did grant a number of powers to the president, and these powers have expanded over time. We will now look at these powers.

The Constitution and the Powers of the American President

The executive branch of government was certainly created in part to "execute" laws passed by the legislature. The president was viewed as the chief executive officer of the nation by the American Framers. This point is reinforced in Article II, Section 3 of the U.S. Constitution, where it reads that the president "shall take care that laws be faithfully executed." Executive departments were created to help the executive branch carry out these laws. There are now approximately three million civilian federal employees, and the president serves as the chief executive over the duties of all federal employees. President Harry Truman famously placed a placard on his desk in the Oval Office declaring that "the buck stops here" as a reminder that his desk was the final destination for all executive decisions.

Theory and Practice

The Role of Super PACs in American Elections

The way political money is raised and spent in American elections has changed dramatically since the creation of super PACs in 2010. Leading up to the 2024 American presidential election, 2,476 super PACs have raised approximately $2.7 billion geared toward influencing the outcomes of U.S. elections.[6] Super PACs were brought about by two court cases, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* (2010) and *SpeechNow.org v. Federal Election Commission* (2010). The American campaign finance system makes distinctions between hard money contributed directly to federal candidates and money contributed to parties (soft money) as well as independent expenditures. Over the last 100 years, Congress and the courts have wrestled over the competing goals of limiting the outsized influence of large donors against the First Amendment free speech rights of Americans to express political preferences in U.S. elections.

Campaign contributions went mostly unregulated in the United States in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The first major attempt to limit the influence of large political donors occurred when President Theodore Roosevelt signed the Tillman Act of 1907, which banned corporations from contributing to federal candidates. Later the Smith-Connally Act of 1943 prohibited labor unions from using union dues to contribute to federal candidates. These two bans are still in place today. However, in 1943, corporations and labor unions found a creative loophole around these contribution bans by creating political action committees (PACs), where funds were instead given to independent organizations (and not federal candidates) for the purpose of influencing U.S. elections on their behalf.

After the Watergate scandal led to the resignation of former President Richard Nixon in 1974, Congress passed federal election campaign laws that placed $1,000 individual contribution limits (now $2,900) and $5,000 contribution limits (now $5,600) on PACs. In *Buckley v. Valeo* (1976), the Supreme Court upheld Congress's right to place these limits on campaign contributions. Naturally, the purpose of contribution limits is to prevent wealthy donors from having too much influence over the policy choices of the President and Congress. However, in *Citizens United*, the Supreme Court held that corporations are permitted to use corporate profits to contribute to independent organizations (but not federal candidates), and shortly thereafter, judges in *SpeechNow* struck down

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

contribution limits to independent political organization.[7] These two court cases created super PACs by allowing corporations (and individuals) to contribute unlimited amounts of money to independent political groups as long as they do not coordinate spending with federal candidates. Striking down contribution limits to outside organizations created the legal loophole that enables wealthy megadonors to have a larger voice in American elections. For example, leading up to the 2022 midterm congressional election, one donor contributed $1.65 billion to a super PAC named the Marble Freedom Trust, which was far and away the largest political contribution in American history.[8]

Think It Through

How do you think campaign finance ought to be regulated, if at all? Is money speech?

Although the U.S. Constitution did not explicitly create presidential cabinets, Article II, Section 2 states that the president may require "the opinion, in writing of the principal officer in each of the executive departments," which signals that the delegates expected the president to lead executive departments. Congress created executive departments in its first session in 1789 when it created the Departments of Treasury, State, and War.[9] These three departments were initially responsible for all federal business. The Department of Homeland Security became the fifteenth executive department in 2003 when it was created in response to the al-Qaeda terrorist attacks on New York City, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania on September 11, 2001.

The president's cabinet includes the secretaries of each of these fifteen executive departments. President Warren Harding expanded the president's cabinet to include his vice president, Calvin Coolidge, in 1921, and subsequent presidents have assigned a "cabinet rank"—a special "status not recognized in law"—to other federal officials.[10] Each of the fifteen department secretaries is confirmed by a majority vote in the U.S. Senate, once again underlining the constitutional decree of a separation of powers.

Commander-in-Chief Power

Article II, Section 2 asserts that the "President Shall be Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States." It is here where the Framers invite a struggle between the executive branch and the legislature by asking both branches of government to share similar powers.[11] The president's commander-in-chief powers are substantially checked by Congress's authority to "declare war," "regulate commerce with foreign nations," "raise and support armies," and punish "Felonies on the high Seas." While most constitutional scholars agree that most of the constitutional war-making power rests with Congress, modern presidents have assumed much greater role in this area since the end of World War II in 1945.

Treaty Powers

Article II, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution also confers on the American president the power to make treaties with foreign nations. It is clear from this provision that the Framers wanted the chief executive to play a particularly important role in foreign policy. It is in part because the delegates wanted the nation to speak with one voice that they ultimately structured the office to consist of a single executive. The Framers were careful, however, to check presidential treaty-making powers by mandating a two-thirds Senate ratification vote.

Pardon Powers

Article II, Section 2 also gives the president the "Power to grant Reprieves and Pardons for Offenses against the United States, except in cases of Impeachment." Most governors of the original thirteen states possessed the pardon power during the time of the Articles of Confederation, the first constitution of the United States.[12] Pardon powers for the American president were officially offered at the Constitutional Convention on May 29, 1787, by South Carolina delegate Charles Pinckney. Alexander Hamilton discussed pardon power in *Federalist Paper* No. 74, asserting their usefulness in "seasons of insurrections or rebellions." Hamilton stressed there are "critical moments when a well-timed offer of pardon to the insurgents or rebels may restore the tranquility of the commonwealth." The pardon power permits the president to grant immunity from punishment to someone convicted of a crime.

The Appointment Power

The Constitution also authorizes the president to appoint "Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, judges of the Supreme Court, and all other Officers of the United States, whose appointments are not herein otherwise provided for, and which shall be established by Law."The presidential appointment power requires a majority-vote approval in the U.S. Senate. Presidential appointments of federal justices and the tradition of senatorial courtesy are discussed in Chapter 7. The president makes approximately 4000 appointments to federal government positions, and roughly 1,200 of these appointments require a confirmation vote in the Senate.[13]

The Veto Power

Finally, we come to the veto power, which gives the president the power to veto legislation. The veto power is limited because Congress can override a presidential veto with a two-thirds vote in both houses in the legislature. To date there have been more than 2,500 presidential vetoes, with only 4 percent overridden by Congress.

President Franklin Delano Roosevelt vetoed 635 bills during his tenure, which is the highest number of vetoes of any president. After his third year in office, President Joe Biden has only vetoed eight bills.[14] In 1996, Congress for the first time granted President Bill Clinton the power to use line-item vetoes. The line-item veto authorizes the executive to veto only certain provisions of a bill while signing into law other provisions. Today, forty-three of fifty governors in the United States are empowered with the line-item veto. However, the U.S. Supreme Court in *Clinton v. New York* (1998) struck down the line-item veto as unconstitutional on the grounds that it violated the Constitution's presentment clause, which requires the President to approve or veto legislation as *presented* by Congress.

Presidential Prerogative Powers

Some speculate that the enumerated executive power that is "vested" in the executive branch might also authorize the president to exercise a wider range of executive powers. John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*, for instance, advocated allowing executives to use prerogative powers when leaders in times of crisis are compelled "to do things of their own free choice, where the law was silent, or sometimes, too, against the direct letter of the law, for the public good, and their acquiescing in it when so done."[15] In Chapter 4, we highlighted how President Abraham Lincoln asserted these types of prerogative powers by suspending habeas corpus during the U.S. Civil War, claiming the American Framers did not intend for the Constitution to serve as a "national suicide pact." Some U.S. constitutional scholars believe that presidents possess prerogative powers to take extreme and sometimes illegal action if faced with a national crisis. However, prerogative powers are controversial, and many critics claim that prerogative powers are sometimes inappropriately asserted in an attempt to mask abuses of power in the executive branch.

The American Executive in Comparative Politics

Although the United States is a relatively new country, it is now the world's oldest democracy. Therefore much of the debate that had emerged within the United States at the end of eighteenth century still serves as fodder for debates elsewhere. The preceding section on the American executive and its powers was designed to allow you to see some of the arguments for an independent executive operating within a two-party, federal system. Although Americans are continuously frustrated with their political leaders, including their presidents, they rarely make arguments that suggest changing the presidential style. It is, however, important as students of political science to consider other forms of rule. This is the backbone of comparative politics.

The Prime Minister: First Among Equals

Having concluded our section on the American presidency, it is now time to turn our attention to the most common type of executive: the prime minister. When we introduced parliamentary rule in the last chapter, we stated that the British model of parliamentary rule was the most commonly used model around the world. Although this is true, it now needs some greater clarification. This section will attempt to provide such clarification. We will begin by looking at some of the pros and cons of parliamentary executives.

Prime Ministers: The Pros and Cons of Parliamentary Executives

Because parliamentary systems are designed to fuse executives with legislatures, many feel that the advantages are little to no gridlock, clear accountability, and high efficiency in policymaking. Prime ministers are, literally, the first among equals. Before gaining the leadership of their political party, each member of the national legislature represents one particular district/region. Thus, when one is named the prime minister, after the party wins more seats in the legislature, this person is the head of government. However, prime ministers are never independent of the body that chose them. This means that prime ministers will have a much greater ability to influence legislation compared to presidents. Because a prime minister's party has the most votes in the legislature, there is little to no gridlock.

Second, the prime minister operates according to the party platform. This means that the prime minister is accountable for the demands that the government makes. Although independent executives (presidents) may say that they are the leader of their respective political party, prime ministers really are. There is no running away from a particular issue or from a legislature that is not aiding one's policy initiatives. Prime ministers are legislators. Thus, as the third advantage indicates, they are highly efficient policy makers.[16]

So what could possibly be a disadvantage to having a prime minister serving as head of government? One word: power. Many scholars who like the notion of limited government and limited power fear the fusion that exists between the prime minister and their respective political party.[17] Theoretically, every policy initiative taken by the sitting prime minister will be approved by the legislature. According to the concept of **party discipline**, members of the prime minister's party will vote for the prime minister's agenda. Although this concept may seem peculiar to students of American politics, it is quite common around the world. In the United States, politicians are free to vote on a particular measure; in a parliamentary system, most politicians most of the time are not free to choose. They are expected to vote along party lines. This aspect makes prime ministers even more

Party Discipline: Political parties that follow the lead of the prime minister/president. They are usually found within parliamentary systems.

powerful than presidents, especially those in two-party, *majoritarian* systems like the United Kingdom.

Yet there is also one more disadvantage: the vote of no confidence. As you have already learned, parliamentary systems provide their legislatures with the ability to pass a vote of no confidence. No-confidence votes allow legislatures (and in particular opposition parties) to essentially "walk out" on destructive legislation and give the public a perception that there is instability in government. In countries that have many political parties, this is always a reality.

The Model of Parliamentary Systems: The United Kingdom

To understand parliamentary systems, one needs to first understand the place from which many of these ideas emerged. Just as the United States sets the basis for many of the features of presidential systems, so too does the United Kingdom for parliamentary ones. But while the American debate came on the heels of a revolutionary war, the British debate came out of the traditional dispute between monarch and parliament.

In the United Kingdom, history has determined that there are two heads: the monarch (head of state) and the prime minister (head of government). This duality serves as a historical reminder of the relationship between ceremony and policy. Currently, the King of England is merely a figurehead—a head of state without any real governmental power. However, he (and the entire royal family) still serves a public service. The humbled monarch is testament to the power of democracy and the stability of the British state. (This "dual executive" is also quite common in many parliamentary systems.)

The institutional roots of British democracy can be found in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. In 1715 (eight years after the creation of the British parliament), Sir Robert Walpole became the first British Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, a position that signaled his importance in balancing budgets and prioritizing spending plans. Walpole would remain in that position until 1742 and serve under the direction of two monarchs who, at the time, had control of the government of the United Kingdom.[18]

It was not until the political (and mental) downfall of King George III (the king during the American Revolution) that the people and political parties of the United Kingdom began to demand more direct power. In the last years of the eighteenth century, the world had witnessed an explosion in democratic rhetoric and, more importantly, action. It is important to remember that events do not occur in a vacuum. Both the American and French Revolutions brought new regimes to power, but, more importantly, they sent clear signals to the masses that the only way for a government to preserve rights was through representation.

In the United Kingdom, political parties in the House of Commons (lower house) had been around for centuries, but they had never had the final word on policy initiatives; that was left to the aristocratic, royally appointed and approved House of Lords

(upper house). Thus, when measures were approved in the House of Commons that might have had a negative effect on some of the constituencies in the House of Lords (such as raising taxes on wealthier citizens), it could veto them (see Chapter 6).

The formal weakening of the monarch and the limiting of the House of Lords did not occur until the passage of the Parliament Acts of 1911 and 1949. These two acts successfully granted the House of Commons and the prime minister the authority to set agendas, develop budgets, and implement policy choices. By the early to middle twentieth century, an absolute monarch with unlimited power became unpopular with the British people. Western Europe's experience with fascism during World War II made it clear that representative democracy was the only viable way for countries to govern.

The British Prime Minister Today: Specific Powers and Duties

Mark Garnett and Philip Lynch have provided a basic job description (if one exists) for the British prime minister:

> The Prime Minister is head of the government, providing political leadership within the **Cabinet** system and the country at large. Specific tasks include the appointment and dismissal of government ministers, presiding over the Cabinet and its committees, advising the monarch on many civic and church appointments, deciding the date of general elections, and representing the United Kingdom in the international arena.[19]

Cabinet: The cabinet is composed of the appointed officials of the president or prime minister. Each official is charged with leading a particular department. For example, defense, state, health and human services, etc.

Aided with the power of a majoritarian parliamentary system that requires a majority of seats to go to the winning party in its legislature, the British prime minister is the most powerful voice in British politics. Because the British prime minister is elected by the majority party in the House of Commons, the prime minister is part of both the legislative and the executive branches. This connection allows the British prime minister to have the ability to be actively engaged in the day-to-day policy-making and negotiation process that takes place in the House of Commons—a function that presidents are legally unable to perform.

Theory and Practice

An Independent Prime Minister?

Certain scholars have criticized the position of British prime minister for becoming "too presidential" and, therefore, in the eyes of such critics, "too powerful." According to B. Guy Peters, there are several reasons for this perception (or reality, if you prefer). "First, is that parliamentary campaigns have become directed increasing toward electing a particular prime minister rather than toward the selection of a political party to govern."[20] Instead of voters casting ballots for their own representatives (or would-be representative), people are now looking to see who

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

each political party is positioning as its leader. This creates the potential for voters to look beyond their particular interests and to vote for a party based on its leadership, thus undermining—or at least confusing—the idea of what a majoritarian parliamentary system is.

Another feature of the "presidentialization" of the position of prime minister has to do with how the prime minister's staff is organized. Margaret Thatcher, who served as Prime Minister from 1979–90, changed the role of her staff. "Thatcher's placement of several special assistants in departments, especially in the Treasury, constituted an early move to extend the authority of the prime minster substantially beyond its traditional role of 'first among equals.'"[21] These "special assistants" allowed Thatcher to have greater control over budgets and spending priorities and acted as independent agents in a civil service not accustomed to such measures. Before the Thatcher administration, the civil service was exclusively a public enterprise, a direct arm of the federal government. Thatcher's reforms created greater efficiency in managing budgets and directing public policy through its connections with the private sector.

Tony Blair, prime minister from 1997 to 2007, added a "chief of staff" who could help organize the day-to-day calendar of the prime minister as well as "the integration of the formerly separate Cabinet Secretariat and Office of Public Service into a single cabinet secretary."[22] Blair's close ties to American presidents Clinton and Bush could possibly be one of the reasons as to why he initiated such measures.

The four most recent prime ministers (David Cameron, Theresa May, Boris Johnson, and Rishi Sunak) have continued these trends and have further privatized what at one time was considered a social democratic system. The removal of the United Kingdom from the European Union (EU) (Brexit 2016) as well as a more market-based approach to governing has made these prime ministers appear more "presidential."

But then again, it might not have anything to do with the American influence. It may simply have to do with the nature of political parties and the way officials in the United Kingdom are elected. For example, a system that has two dominant political parties (Labour and Conservative) that recently have begun to proclaim their potential leaders well in advance of the election is signaling a move away from the traditional role of the prime minister. Will the position of British prime minister continue to gain in power and independence? Only time will tell. At the moment, it appears that the fusion that is so emblematic of a parliamentary system is waning to some degree.

Think It Through

1. **Should prime ministers have the ultimate authority in changing the relationship between the powers of their office and the House of Commons?**
2. **Are parliamentary systems that only have two dominant parties good for democracy?**

So what exactly are the powers of the British prime minister? First, as we have already stated, the British prime minister is the leader of the majority party in the House of Commons.[23] This means that the prime minister of the United Kingdom has an immense amount of power at their disposal. Because the power of the office of prime minister is fused to the power of the majority party in the House of Commons (legislature), it appears that the prime minister's agenda will become law. The only real check on this authority comes from the opposing party and its leader and their ability to skillfully debate the reasons for their opposition to a pending bill. Although the U.K. opposition party can issue a vote of no confidence (as in all parliamentary systems), this option is rarely used.

Executive and Legislative Fusion: The ways in which power is controlled by the office of the prime minister as both head of the legislature and head of the executive.

Another important power of the British prime minister comes from an ability to assemble a strong team in the form of the cabinet. Cabinet officials in the United Kingdom (like those of the American president) serve as leaders over a variety of policy initiatives and as the "hands-on" advisors to the prime minister. Initiatives ranging from foreign policy to health care are overseen by skilled and trusted members of the prime minister's cabinet. Unlike in American cabinets, however, U.K. cabinet officials are almost exclusively members of the House of Commons, thus furthering the concept of **executive and legislative fusion**.

In his seminal work on the functioning of the British political system, *Cabinet Government*, Ivor Jennings states,

> The Cabinet is the core of the British constitutional system. It is the supreme directing authority. It integrates what would otherwise be a heterogeneous collection of authorities exercising a vast variety of functions. It provides unity to the British system of government. If, therefore, a constituent assembly were to set out in a written document the present British Constitution, as it actually operated, the Cabinet would be provided for in a prominent place. In the Cabinet and, still more, out of it, the most important person in the Prime Minister.[24]

Thus, the prime minister's cabinet is, to a certain degree, the model of an executive council that American Framer James Madison and others had discussed. This is an important feature of the parliamentary system. Although scholars have discussed the recent "presidentialism" of the office of the prime minister (see Theory and Practice), it is still much more of an executive by committee than the office of the president in the American system.

Terms of Office and the Power of Performance

Parliamentary systems are defined by their *indefinite* terms, but what does this mean for the British prime minister? It means that an effective prime minister can stay in office for a much longer time than an American president. In the United Kingdom, terms are not predetermined. When a new prime minister comes to power, there is five years before a new election is called for. When five years expires, a new election date is determined and all seats in the House of Commons are up for grabs.

So how does this influence the *power* of the British prime minister? To see how elections can enhance political influence in British politics, we will look at the tenure of former prime minister Margaret Thatcher. Thatcher emerged as the leader of the Conservative Party in 1975 and served as the opposition party leader until 1979. On May 4, 1979, Thatcher became prime minister and immediately began to change the focus of British monetary policy to fall in line with the Conservative Party's strict fiscal policy approach. The late 1970s and early

1980s witnessed a global economic recession. This fact, coinciding with Thatcher's fiscal policy of cutting public spending, made her unpopular with the British public. In fact, in 1980, after about eighteen months in office, Thatcher's approval rating was at around 30 percent.[25]

At the time, the British prime minister (like many other prime ministers) had the ability to call for new elections at any point during the five-year term. Thatcher needed something to increase her approval rating, so she could call for new elections and thus remain in power. In 1982, that opportunity came to fruition in the form of the Falklands War, a war fought between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

The Falklands War began when Argentina sent a military force to Islas Malvinas, a territory that Britain had controlled since the nineteenth century. For decades, Argentina had claimed the islands for itself, and few in Britain seemed concerned or hostile to the idea. Nevertheless, British forces were sent to protect the islands and a war was waged that lasted seventy-four days.[26] This war boosted Thatcher's strength not only within the Conservative Party but also among the population at large. Thatcher's reaction was to call for new elections, which she did, and she was rewarded with another five-year term (more or less). In all, Thatcher served from 1979 to 1990.

AP Images/PA

Image 7.3 Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher examining a minefield during her visit to the Falkland Islands, when the Royal Engineers took her on a tour of the Rookery Bay beach, a heavily mined area.

Looking Ahead: Newer Democracies in Comparative Context

Now you should have a good understanding of both the American president and the British prime minister—the roles they play and how much power comes with their respective offices. In addition, you should also be able to understand some of the positives and negatives of both parliamentary and presidential systems. Yet, we cannot stop here. To gain an even better understanding of some of the basics of different democracies, we will provide you with one more executive model, that of India.

Theory and Practice

Parliamentary or Presidential?

Since the end of World War II, the world has seen an increase in the number of democracies. Yet, what kind of democracies? Have the new countries opted for a model similar to that of the United States or, say, the United Kingdom? If you answered the United States, you would be wrong. Then again, if you answered the United Kingdom, you would only be partly correct. Most new democracies have opted for the parliamentary system, but one that is not dominated by two major parties. Why is this so? Why are countries so unwilling to create a presidential system? And why are they hesitant to have a majoritarian parliamentary system?

Democracies established since the end of World War II have gravitated toward multiparty parliamentary systems because of their multiparty approach and "built-in" institutional constraints. In other words, new(er) democracies (e.g., Germany, Italy, India) believe that independent executives are dangerous, and the voters should have a diverse set of political parties from which to choose that best reflect their policy positions. Although experts have suggested that this can lead to instability and inaction (e.g., Italy forms several new governments every year), it can also lead to the belief that everyone's voice is being heard.

Countries with a history of strong, independent rulers (dictators) are hesitant when it comes to installing a president who is free from legislative restraint (consider Germany after World War II or Tunisia following the Arab Spring) and have opted for federal systems that clearly divide the rule between both parliamentary sovereignty and states or provinces.

Think It Through

1. **What do you think of a system that has its executive fused with its legislature?**
2. **What about a system that gives real strength and equality to multiple smaller parties? Could this ever occur in the United States?**

The World's Largest Democracy: India

In 1947, India gained its independence from the United Kingdom and immediately embarked on its path toward self-rule. However, to assume that representative government in India happened overnight would be a misunderstanding. According to Paul R. Brass, it is best to think about the rise of democracy in India as an evolution of certain legislative acts that began during colonial times and gradually increased Indian participation in political affairs.[27] Beginning with the passage of the Indian Councils Act of 1861 and ending with the Government of India Act of 1935, by 1947, had seen the seeds of independence begin to grow and take root. When independence came in 1947, Indians were left with a system that resembled a British model of government in a country almost twenty times the size of its former colonial master. So what did the new constitution of India say about governance and, in particular, the powers of the new head of government, the prime minister? Was there a resemblance to the British system? What was new about the constitution?

Federalism, Parliamentary Government, and the Indian Constitution

The Indian Constitution, formally approved in 1949, created a "federal legislative system of government with three legislative lists of powers to be exercised exclusively by the Union (central government), exclusively by the states, or concurrently, and a combination of a considerable degree of provincial autonomy with extensive powers left to the Center (the seat of government in New Delhi), including emergency powers which made it possible to convert the federal system into a unitary one."[28] These powers were defined as measures that would ensure the stability of the state—there might be times when the states or provinces are best suited to decide on legislation, and other times when the federal government is best suited. So, while on the one hand the Indian constitution allows the states to have a number of powers, the federal government has the "ultimate power to control . . . to even take over the direct administration, of the states under certain circumstances."[29]

India is a federal country that leaves legislation up to the states while reserving the presence of a unitary state capable of handling situations it deems necessary. This suggests that although the British influence was and is still found in some of its parliamentary practices, the system in India does not serve as an exact replica. However, to completely divorce British influence from the Indian Constitution or practices of legislation would be incorrect. For example, the Indian Constitution "adopts in total the Westminster form of parliamentary government . . . [provides language] concerning fundamental rights . . . as well as adult suffrage."[30]

For India, as well as many former colonies, the challenge was not so much in approving a constitution after independence, but in dealing with certain economic, political, and social realities that could make governing more challenging. For example, consider India's caste system, which created limited opportunities for economic and social advancement for its lowest members. The Indian Constitution clearly prohibits such practices. However, remnants of social caste traditions, especially those that have been around for centuries, are still evolving in modern Indian society. Thus, India's approach to governing revolved around a more European-centered view toward social democracy—one that called for limits placed on private wealth. Thus, "the Constitution recognized the right to hold private property as a fundamental right, but also included directive principles of policy which stated that the material resources of the country must be distributed in such a way as to promote the common good and avoid excessive concentration of wealth."[31]

Such measures were designed to provide people with certain inalienable rights, but at the same time help ensure a certain level of support to go along with such rights. As U.N. Gupta has eloquently noted, "Until 1947, liberty meant freedom from foreign rule . . . [however] after independence it meant freedom against *government* arbitrariness, or positive assertions against social and economic inequalities."[32] Once the constitution went into effect in 1950, India had created a political system

that attempted to legally address economic and social inequalities by means of a parliamentary democracy. Its personal history and traditions were meshed into a constitution with the universally democratic values of equality and freedom. The following section will focus on India's parliamentary system and, in particular, its executive branch.

The Executive Branch: President of India

By now you should understand that each country has its own unique system of government. Although the American and British systems have served as models for the world's new democracies, each country's history and domestic political culture determines its exact form. In India, we see a parliamentary system that is similar to, but not exactly the same as, the system in the United Kingdom. We also, however, see a divided executive—one that has both a president and a prime minister. For American students, this may seem strange. But their dual presence has a function.

According to the Indian Constitution, all of the formal powers of the executive branch are given to the president. However, because India is a parliamentary system, the "real" power—that is, the governing power—resides within the office of the prime minister and the Council of Ministers. After an election takes place in the Lok Sabha (India's lower house of government), the majority party's leader is named the new prime minister by the sitting president. Once the prime minister's cabinet is formed, it is generally understood that the laws passed in parliament will be signed by the president.

Sipa USA/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 7.4 Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi ran for a third term as prime minister in June 2024.

The president also has a vice president who serves as president if the president is absent or has been removed because of death or impeachment. Interestingly enough, the Indian president is elected by means of an electoral college for five-year terms and may be reelected (see the Theory and Practice box for an explanation of India's electoral college).[33] "In the earliest years of the republic, men of great stature who might be considered above the political fray were chosen as president, but in recent decades the most important criterion has been the presidential candidate's acceptability to the prime minister."[34] This emergence further underlines the belief that the president of India is separate from the governing of the state but, for purposes of legislative action, must have a strong working relationship with the prime minister. In

many ways, this weak president serves a similar function to that of a monarch—the ceremonial function dictates the president's political behavior.

However, the president of India is given formal constitutional authority. In fact, Article 77 of the Indian Constitution states that "all executive actions of the government of India are expressed in the name of the president." But as in most parliamentary systems, much of this is theoretical power. So, although it is the president "who summons both houses of parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha) and dissolves the lower house when necessary; assents to legislation, appoints the governors of the states, the justices of the Supreme Court and state high courts, the attorney general, and the auditor general of India; is the commander in chief of the armed forces and also has the power of pardon," it is the prime minister and the Council of Ministers that provide the president with the advice on how to act.[35]

A brief constitutional crisis in the 1950s under the presidency of Rajendra Prasad demonstrated the potential for conflict between the president and prime minister over executive powers. Scholar Ellen Charlton describes the crisis in this way:

> As early as 1951, Prasad expressed the desire to act solely on his own judgment. Had Prasad's position prevailed, it would have undermined the conventions of cabinet government as they had developed in Britain and as had been intended by the Constituent Assembly. The British precedent limited action by the head of state to implementing the advice of the head of the government and cabinet ultimately prevailed.[36]

As a result of this potential crisis of governing, India passed the Forty-Second Amendment, which helped to clarify and better articulate the intention that the president is the member of the executive branch who "shall, in the exercise of his functions, act in accordance with the advice of the prime minister."[37] Thus, the independence of the president's role is deliberately weakened by the weight of British-style government. The wording of the amendment makes it quite clear that the president's duty is to carry out the will of the government and, more specifically, the agenda of the prime minister and Council of Ministers.

The Indian Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers

As in all parliamentary democracies, political parties serve both an ideological and pragmatic function. They are ideological because they serve as the repository of the economic, political, and social views of their members, who elect their leaders to bring forth those ideas within the confines of government. But political parties are also pragmatic, especially those with large numbers of members, because they are responsible for the formation of the government. In India, political parties usually form alliances with one another to not only broaden their platform and therefore voter support but also because if they win, they will have a greater chance of success in passing legislation.

Theory and Practice

Electing Presidents: The United States, India, and the Electoral College

Both the United States and India use a system for electing their presidents known as the electoral college. Although the powers of each country's president vary, both countries decided to use an electoral system to indirectly elect their presidents. We will begin with the United States and try to understand why this method was chosen and how it has worked since its founding.

United States

In the United States, it was the emergence of political parties that helped spark the democratization of the electoral college system. In the modern Electoral College, electors are appointed by political parties rather than state legislatures. The state of Iowa, for instance, currently has six electoral votes. This means that the Republican Party and the Democratic Party in Iowa each appoint six party loyalists to serve as members of the Electoral College in the event that their party's candidate wins the state. Iowa, like all states except Maine and Nebraska, adopts a winner-takes-all system, which means the candidate will receive all six electoral votes if that candidate wins the popular vote in the state.

There are now 538 possible electoral votes because the number of electors is determined by the number of members in the U.S. House of Representatives (435) and those in the Senate (100), plus the three electoral votes granted to the District of Columbia by the Twenty-Third Amendment (1961). Candidates need 270 electoral college votes to win the presidency because this number represents the majority of all possible electoral votes. Because the winner-takes-all system grants all of the states' electoral votes to the candidate who wins the popular vote of that state, it is now possible for a candidate to win the presidency by winning the popular vote in the eleven most populated states, even if that candidate did not receive even one vote in the other thirty-nine states.

One of the most controversial aspects of the American electoral college is that it is possible for a candidate to win the national popular vote and still lose the election. This can occur because the presidential selection process is not determined by a national popular vote but rather by winning the popular vote in enough individual states to amass the needed 270 electoral votes. In fact, there have been four times in American history where a candidate ascended to the presidency after losing the national popular vote: Rutherford B. Hayes (1876), Benjamin Harrison (1888), George W. Bush (2000), and Donald J. Trump (2016).

India

If you are under the impression that the American electoral college system is somewhat confusing, consider the process used in India to elect the somewhat ceremonial president. To begin with, the Indian electoral college is comprised of four different constituencies: the members of India's upper house (Rajya Sabha), the members of its lower house (Lok Sabha), elected members of each state's legislature, and elected members of each union territory that has an elected assembly. All of these numbers are then added together (776 members of both upper and lower houses and 120 members of the state/union assemblies) and later divided by the size of the representative constituency of each. Here is where it gets a little confusing.

Because India is technically a federal system that allows states to have a large voice in self-governing and each state varies in terms of population, the government of India decided to weigh the votes of its college members accordingly. "To calculate the numbers of votes each legislator represents, the total population of the state is divided by the number of legislatures and then divided by 1000."[38] This means that the *state* representatives who represent more people have a larger share of the vote. All members of parliament (Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha), however, have a fixed value, 708.

Think It Through

1. Which system do you prefer?
2. Why do you think the framers of each system decided on an indirect vote?
3. Should a popular vote be considered?

As noted earlier, India is a multiparty, parliamentary, federal state. For purposes of understanding political parties, governing, and the prime minister, this means that India has a combination of state and federal political parties. Some parties that operate at the state level have little national influence, and some parties that operate at the federal level have both strong state and national influence. For your current understanding, it is best to think of India as a country of diverse political views and parties that operate locally and nationally.

India has several national parties and many more state and regional parties. Because we are looking at the prime minister's role as head of government, it is best to examine how these parties function and how coalitions help form the government. The two most prominent national parties are the Indian National Congress Party and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP). Because their platforms diverge on the role of the federal government in a variety of issues, they have had to form coalitions with smaller parties in order to govern effectively. The Indian National Congress Party is considered a center-left party with a strong commitment to diversity and secularism, whereas the BJP is its nationalist, right-wing counterpart. During the 2019 election (which took five weeks), Narendra Modi's BJP-led National Democratic Alliance won 353 of the 542 seats in the Lok Sabha. This was a gain of twenty-one seats since the 2014 election and for many signaled a strong mandate to govern (see 2019 election results in Table 7.1 on next page).[39] The BJP-led National Democratic Alliance meant a major setback for the Indian National Congress Party and its leader Rahul Gandhi.

Initially elected in 2013, Modi, like all prime ministers, is considered the head of government with the ability to appoint/dismiss members of his cabinet as well as provide advice to the president. However, as we have already discussed, it is the prime minister, not the president, who has the real power in Indian politics. This power affords the Indian prime minister the ability to head not only his cabinet but the Council of Ministers as well. But who makes up this council?

The Council of Ministers has the following three categories of members:

1. *Cabinet ministers*: members of the prime minister's cabinet
2. *Ministers of state*: those who are not members of the cabinet but hold cabinet rank
3. *Deputy ministers*: members of the different executive ministries[40]

This powerful executive body, headed by the prime minister, serves as the link between the Lok Sabha (of which all ministers are members) and the president. If the Lok Sabha finds fault with the behavior of the Council of Ministers, it can call for a vote of no confidence, which could result in new parliamentary elections. In the 1990s, three Indian prime ministers received votes of no confidence. By contrast, in the United Kingdom, there were three votes of no confidence in the entire twentieth century!

In addition to powers of appointment and legislation, the Indian prime minister is directly in charge of certain government agencies deemed too important to be delegated to members of the cabinet. For example, the prime minister is directly in charge of the Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions; the Ministry of Planning; the Department of Atomic Energy and the Department of Space. All of the other ministries and departments are headed by those appointed by the prime minister.

Why do you think these last two departments are entrusted to the prime minister? Well, just as the first two ministries listed have to do with issues related to *public* accountability (an important factor in democratic legitimacy and job performance), the last two have to do with privacy and, in recent years, innovation and technology. Innovation and technology require a great deal of secrecy and protection. It is for this reason that, amazingly, the Indian Constitution requires the prime minister to take both an Oath of Secrecy as well as an Oath of Office.[41] Serving as the head of government in a state of well over a billion people requires a great deal of political skill. On the one hand, the prime minister needs to serve the interests of party and coalition, but on the other, the prime minister needs to keep in mind the diversity that has always defined the world's largest democracy.

Table 7.1 Breakdown of the 2024 Indian General Elections

Coalition	Total	Main Party/Parties*	Seats
National Dem Alliance	293	BJP	240
India Alliance (26 parties)	232	Indian National Congress	99

*The parties that are listed are those that received the highest totals within each coalition.[42]

Summary 7

Kyodo News/Kyodo News/Getty Images

This chapter demonstrated that executives come in all shapes and sizes. We would like you to see that there is no true model of executive rule. Although scholars have suggested that the American and British systems serve as the two main pillars of executive governance, they are by no means exactly replicated in other nations. New democracies need to examine their own histories to determine the model that would best serve their people. Scholars and policy makers often get sidelined by the promises that come with democracy and the universal beliefs that are proclaimed therein without properly assessing the realities on the ground. We hope that this chapter has opened up a broader discussion concerning the powers of different executives as well as the methods for conducting comparisons of such institutions.

We live in an age in which the stability of certain countries and regions is shaky at best. It is therefore important that you understand how the world perceives certain forms of rule. A president might serve the people of the United States quite well. However, the presidency as an institution might bring about great instability elsewhere. It is this global perspective that will help you best understand the relationship between the executive and legislative branches. In the next chapter, we will take a comparative look at the third branch of government, the judiciary.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What are the pros and cons of having a president or prime minister?

   Most democratic systems of government have presidents or prime ministers serving as chief executives. The advantage of presidential executives is they are popularly elected in national elections, and their power is checked in separation of powers systems. Prime ministers, on the other hand, attain executive leadership through a vote in the national parliament and can be more easily removed from office through a parliamentary vote of no confidence.

2. What are the formal powers of the U.S. president?

   Presidential powers are enumerated in Article II of the U.S. Constitution. The President enforces laws enacted by Congress, serves as the commander-in-chief over U.S. military forces, appoints federal officials and judges, and has pardon and treaty-making powers.

3. What is the relationship between the British prime minister and the minority party in the House of Commons?

   The prime minister is simultaneously the leader of the majority party and the head of government. This means that almost all legislation they desire will get passed. The minority party can simply object to the legislation and make a strong enough

argument to the people of the United Kingdom that the prime minister (and their party) are not capable of governing and must vote them out of office at the next election.

4. What is the electoral method for choosing the president of the United States? India?

The American president is selected through the Electoral College after a national election every four years. Each U.S. state gets Electoral College votes equal to the number of representatives and senators from that state. Most U.S. states use a winner-takes-all system in which the winner of the election in the state receives all of the Electoral College votes in that state. The candidates who receives the majority of Electoral College votes (i.e., 270 or more) becomes president. In Great Britain and India, the prime minister is selected from an election that occurs in the national parliament.

5. Why are presidential systems rarely chosen when forming a new democracy?

It has been argued that presidential systems can deteriorate more quickly into tyranny than parliamentary systems because they are the sole members of the executive branch. Parliamentary systems fuse the executive with the legislature, which adds to their stability.

Key Terms

Cabinet p. 188

Executive and Legislative Fusion p. 190

Impeachment p. 179

Party Discipline p. 186

Vote of No Confidence p. 179

8 Comparing Judicial Systems

Image 8.1 Aristotle said the law is reason unaffected by desire. Are some judicial systems more effective than others in carrying out justice? This chapter examines differences in how legal systems are administered in the United States and abroad. Neustockimages/iStock/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images

Chapter Outline

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▶ Questions to Consider

1. Why did Alexander Hamilton view the judiciary as the "least dangerous" branch of government?
2. Why do many consider the *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) case the most important Supreme Court decision ever rendered?
3. How did the U.S. Supreme Court interpret the interstate commerce clause to expand civil rights?
4. What is the difference between judicial review and legislative supremacy?
5. How do judicial activist/restraint approaches affect the role of the judiciary?

Introduction

We now come to the third branch of government: the judiciary. Judiciaries are essential to the functioning of democratic societies because, simply put, they are entrusted with the law. The courts interpret established laws or policies and attempt to determine whether or not they are in line with legal traditions. What makes comparing judicial systems a difficult endeavor is that each country has its own legal traditions, methods of interpretation, values and norms, and institutional power structure. Thus, this chapter will evaluate different "high courts" within the greater institutional structure of government. Because much of modern jurisprudence is based on the experiences of the U.S. Supreme Court, the first section will be dedicated to understanding how its system developed.

Judicial Review Versus Legislative Supremacy

Simply put, **judicial review** is the power granted to certain supreme courts (high courts) to declare acts and laws passed by legislatures and executives to be invalid if they are in conflict with the country's constitution. If a law is passed by the legislature and then challenged by parties negatively affected by such legislation, the United States and other countries vesting courts with judicial review powers allow their highest courts to strike it down as unconstitutional. Other countries, such as the United Kingdom, Israel, and Finland, use a legislative (or parliamentary) supremacy system, where laws passed by national legislatures can only be overturned by the legislatures themselves. One question that needs exploration has to do with the basic foundation of representative democracy. Generally speaking, democracies that subscribe to a separation of powers system of government are more likely to employ judicial review, and those that fuse power in a parliamentary system are more likely to favor a legislative supremacy system.

Judicial Review: The court's power to strike laws that violate the U.S. Constitution.

The judiciary is unique in the modern context because it is generally considered the *least* representative branch of government. Most supreme courts are not representative of various constituencies (like legislatures), and high court members have spent years as a part of an elite, legal intelligentsia (see photo of Japan's Supreme Court in image 8.2). Thus, the *practice* of judicial review is not necessarily determined by its presence in a country's constitution. Some countries value its presence as a necessary feature of democracy but choose to use it only in certain circumstances, whereas others use it as a means of bringing about economic and social justice.

Kyodo News/TOKYO Japan/Newscom

Image 8.2 The Supreme Court's grand bench in Tokyo, Japan, unanimously decided that Japan's lay judge system, introduced in May 2009, is constitutional in handing down its first judgment.

When it comes to the *practice* of judicial review, there tends to be two views concerning its usage: **judicial restraint** and **judicial activism**. Those who follow judicial restraint believe that the constitutionality of a particular issue is based exclusively on what is found in the country's constitution. Those who subscribe to this view believe that constitutionality must be determined according to "the original intent" of the Framers of the Constitution. For example, in *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. Bruen* (2022), the U.S. Supreme Court struck down a New York law requiring gun owners to show "proper cause" before receiving a license to carry weapons in public because it was common for gun owners to carry weapons outside of the home when the Second Amendment was ratified.[1]

Judicial Restraint: A judicial belief that justices should strictly construe the constitution and/or previous legal precedents when arriving at a judicial opinion.

Judicial Activism: A judicial belief that the politics of the day and the needs of the nation should influence judicial decisions.

Judicial activists, on the other hand, believe that "courts should go beyond that set of references and enforce norms that cannot be discovered within the four corners of the document (Constitution)."[2] A judicial activist approach may argue that certain issues and standards have drastically changed in the time since a particular constitution was drafted. A good example can be issues related to technology. Could the Framers of the U.S. Constitution have envisioned a time when the internet threatened national security? Or what about issues related to weapons technology that deal with the Second Amendment to the U.S. Constitution? Judicial activists argue that a state's constitution needs to be examined as a fluid or flexible document. Otherwise, its perceived relevancy will become antiquated.

These are just some of the issues related to the practice of judicial review. Throughout this chapter, we will try to provide you with a strong understanding of how and why certain countries have adopted the concept of judicial review, while others favor legislative supremacy. But before we get to any of those issues, we must ask a simple question: Where did the modern notion of judicial review come from? The answer, like so many having to do with issues related to representative democracy, is the United States.

Theory and Practice

Judicial Activism Versus Judicial Restraint

Since the nation's founding, judicial philosophy has been largely divided into the two distinct camps of "judicial activism" and "judicial restraint." Those advocating a judicial activist approach believe judicial decision making should play a role in the policy-making process, whereas justices subscribing to judicial restraint typically defer to the legislature in policy making and characteristically adopt a strict constructionist view of the U.S. Constitution. Strict constructionists believe justices should "strictly construe" the original intent of the wording put forth by the Framers in the U.S. Constitution when making decisions.

The term *judicial activist* was first coined by the famed political historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr., who labeled the judicial philosophy of Supreme Court justices as either "judicial activistic" or as "self-restrained" in 1947.[3] What makes the terms somewhat confounding is that they do not neatly align with conservative and/or liberal ideologies because judicial activism can take either form. For example, conservative justices today are more inclined to use judicial activism in overturning legal precedents (e.g., abortion rights), while in previous decades, conservative judges were more inclined to use judicial restraint by upholding legal precedent from previous cases. Opponents of judicial activism argue that rather than simply interpreting the law, judicial activists tend to make law from the bench and to base legal decisions on their own political viewpoints. Some cite the *Roe v. Wade* (1973) case as an example of judicial activism favoring the liberal perspective because, in that case, the Supreme Court not only extended a woman's right to privacy in prohibiting states from banning abortions, but it also set different legislative standards of governmental intrusion depending on how far along (i.e., which trimester) the woman was in the pregnancy. Others point to the decision in *U.S. v. Lopez* (1995) as an example of judicial activism favoring the conservative worldview. In this case, the Supreme Court ruled in favor of states' rights by striking down the federal Gun-Free School Zone Act, which banned the carrying of weapons in local school zones. The federal law was successfully challenged after a twelfth-grade student brought a concealed .38 caliber gun to school. Chief Justice Rehnquist wrote the majority opinion where the Court for the first time in decades asserted that the federal government went beyond its constitutional authority in applying the interstate commerce clause as a means to regulate state behavior. Opponents of judicial restraint argue that justices adopting this judicial philosophy are sometimes reactionary in their thinking and allow injustices to fester for too long in society.

Think It Through

Do you believe justices under certain conditions should use a judicial activist approach by legislating from the bench? Why or why not?

Judicial Review in the United States

In this section, we will examine how, through the power of judicial review, American courts came to play a critical role in the United States. The U.S. Supreme Court first gathered on February 1, 1790, in the Wall Street section of New York City, the nation's capital at the time. John Jay, one of the authors of the *Federalist Papers*, was appointed its first chief justice. The Court did not hear a case during its first year, and it was still unclear as to how exactly the Court would operate in a system of checks and balances. Some of the justices were critical of the "limited stature" of the Court and the hardships associated with having to "ride circuit" under "primitive travel conditions."[4] The Supreme Court only heard approximately fifty cases from 1790 to 1799, and it was not

originally viewed as the revered institution it is today. Chief Justice John Jay resigned from the position to run for governor of New York in 1795, and Robert H. Harrison declined his nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court during this period, opting instead to serve in the more prestigious state court system.[5]

During this period, there was still uncertainty as to where the authority of the state court ended and where the jurisdiction of the federal court began. In *Chisholm v. Georgia* (1793), a controversy erupted when the Supreme Court ruled that federal courts have jurisdiction when a citizen of one state brings a suit against another state. In this case, two citizens from South Carolina sued the state of Georgia in an attempt to recover property acquired by the state of Georgia during the Revolutionary War. The South Carolina residents filed suit in federal court because the U.S. Constitution granted jurisdiction to federal courts when controversies arise "between a state and citizens of another state."[6] The state of Georgia refused to appear in federal court and enacted legislation barring participation because they believed this "would effectively destroy the retained sovereignty of the states."[7] The Supreme Court ruled against the state of Georgia in a 4–1 vote and temporarily broadened the scope of the federal court's jurisdiction on state matters. This decision, however, galvanized states' rights advocates and inspired the **Eleventh Amendment** to the U.S. Constitution, which overturned the *Chisholm* decision by stipulating that federal courts are prohibited from hearing cases when a resident brings a suit against a state.

Eleventh Amendment: Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that has been interpreted to mean that a state cannot be sued in federal court by one of its own citizens, by a citizen of another state, or by a foreign country.

Chief Justice John Marshall is widely heralded as the nation's finest chief justice because it was during his thirty-four-year tenure (1801–35) that the Supreme Court became a coequal branch of government, and it is during this era that the Supreme Court came to define its role in our system of checks and balances. John Marshall was born in Virginia as the eldest of fifteen siblings. He fought in the Revolutionary War against Britain and, unlike his cousin Thomas Jefferson, generally favored a stronger national government. He also authored more than five hundred legal opinions over his career as chief justice, including such landmark decisions as *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), and *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824).

Marbury v. Madison (1803) was the most consequential decision for the U.S. system of government. This case transformed the role of the Supreme Court in the U.S. system of checks and balances by establishing the court's power of judicial review. (As we have already stated, the term *judicial review* refers to the judiciary's power to declare legislative and presidential acts unconstitutional.) It was initially unclear what role the Supreme Court would play in our system of government. The *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) case was a landmark decision because it represented the first time the Supreme Court asserted the power of judicial review. By striking down a congressional statute as unconstitutional, the Marshall Court defined the role the Supreme Court would come to play in our system of checks and balances. This decision established that the primary purpose of the U.S. Supreme Court is to verify that state and federal governmental behavior is consistent with the principles outlined in the U.S. Constitution.

Theory and Practice

Double Jeopardy—From Ancient Greece to Hollywood

Although all Americans have a right to appeal the lower court's decision, the U.S. Constitution's Fifth Amendment provision against double jeopardy prohibits federal prosecutors from charging the same person twice for the same crime. The concept of double jeopardy was used as a central theme in a Hollywood thriller starring Tommy Lee Jones and Ashley Judd in 1999. In the movie *Double Jeopardy*, a woman was wrongfully imprisoned for the murder of her husband. She later discovered that her husband was still alive. After researching the double jeopardy provision, the character played by Ashley Judd reasoned that she could kill her husband once paroled because the government would be constitutionally prohibited from charging her once again for the murder of her husband. Would the double jeopardy provision allow this character to get away with such a murder in real life?

The Fifth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution bars the federal government from prosecuting individuals more than once for the same crime. The Constitution reads that no person shall be "subject for the same offence to be twice put in Jeopardy of life or limb." The theory behind double jeopardy extends all the way back to the ancient Greek philosopher Demosthenes, who in 355 BCE stated that "laws forbid the same man to be tried twice on the same issue."[8] St. Jerome in 391 CE interpreted the Old Testament to read that not even God passes judgment on man twice for a single act, and Roman law codified double jeopardy in the Digest of Justinian in 533 CE. The concept of double jeopardy is also found in British common law, albeit more narrowly tailored to defendants acquitted of felony charges.

The theory behind double jeopardy is to impede the government from using its immense power to unjustly convict the innocent and to spare citizens the economic and emotional drain of never-ending prosecutions. In the United States, the concept of double jeopardy attaches to all criminal proceedings, both felonies and misdemeanors. The U.S. Supreme Court also expanded individual rights in its interpretation that double jeopardy should attach once a jury is convened, rather than once a defendant is acquitted. This means that prosecutors cannot charge a defendant for the same crime even if charges are dismissed before a verdict is rendered. Defendants, however, may be charged with the same crime when a mistrial is granted in instances when juries are unable to reach unanimous verdicts. In *Blockburger v. United States* (1932), the Supreme Court established that the government may "prosecute an individual for more than one offense stemming from a single course of conduct only when each offense requires proof of a fact the other does not."[9] In other words, double jeopardy does not attach if two separate criminal codes are violated in a single act. The courts have also established that because the state and federal governments are separately sovereign, double jeopardy does not attach to the federal government in state proceedings, and vice versa.

The movie *Double Jeopardy* received mixed reviews from film critics, but it was universally panned by legal scholars, who pointed out that double jeopardy only prevents prosecutors from bringing charges on the same set of facts twice. The double jeopardy provision would thus not attach in the scenario played out in this Hollywood movie.

Think It Through

How have movies or crime shows shaped your understanding of the legal system?

The facts of the *Marbury v. Madison* case have their roots in the infamous presidential election of 1800. This election was ultimately decided by the House of Representatives after Thomas Jefferson and his running mate Aaron Burr were deadlocked with seventy-three electoral votes, surpassing the vote totals of then-president John Adams and his running mate Charles Pinckney. In the original version of the Electoral College, candidates were not designated as presidential or vice-presidential candidates. Candidates with the majority of electoral votes became president, and the second-place vote-getter became vice president. This election prompted the **Twelfth Amendment**, which established that candidates must run on a ticket that designates the presidential and vice presidential candidate. The House of Representatives eventually broke the tie in Thomas Jefferson's favor after Delaware representative James A. Baynard switched his vote on the thirty-sixth ballot.

Twelfth Amendment: Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that changed the procedure set out for the election of the president and vice president by providing for separate ballots for president and vice president.

John Adams did not take losing the presidency well. He was so humiliated by the defeat to his long-time rival that he did not even attend Jefferson's presidential inauguration, opting instead to get an early start on his journey home to Braintree, Massachusetts. On the eve of Jefferson's inauguration, President Adams made a flurry of "midnight appointments" to the federal judiciary. This was a particularly provocative thing to do because Jefferson, as a states' rights advocate, campaigned against the growth of the federal court system. In what was perhaps a partisan act against Jeffersonian Republicans, Adams appointed sixteen federalist judges and forty-two federalist justices of the peace to the federal court system before leaving the White House. These appointments were all approved the following day in the U.S. Senate. The nominating commissions, however, needed to be delivered to the appointed justices to make the appointments official. The responsibility to deliver these commissions fell to Adams's secretary of state, who ironically happened to be none other than John Marshall, who carried on as Adams's secretary of state even after being appointed chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. In the haste to leave the White House, Marshall neglected to deliver some of the commissions to the newly appointed justices. It was wrongfully assumed that James Madison, as President Jefferson's new secretary of state, would deliver the remaining commissions upon entering office.

However, one of President Jefferson's first official acts was to order his staff not to deliver the remaining judicial commissions, which in his view rendered those judicial appointments null and void. William Marbury, an enthusiastic supporter of John Adams, was one of the justices denied his judgeship by President Jefferson. Marbury sued Jefferson's secretary of state James Madison, who was also the principal author of the U.S. Constitution. The drama reached a fever pitch when President Jefferson suggested that he might not follow through on Marbury's nomination even if ordered to do so by the court. This potential scenario concerned Chief Justice Marshall because it could create a constitutional crisis that might forever weaken the Supreme Court. What would happen, after all, if the president simply

ignored a Supreme Court ruling? In this one decision, Chief Justice Marshall managed to write an opinion that avoided a constitutional showdown with the executive branch, politically embarrassed his cousin President Jefferson, and elevated the stature of the Supreme Court to a coequal branch of government by establishing the power of judicial review.

Marshall decided the case by reasoning through three legal questions. The first was whether Marbury was legally entitled to the judgeship. Here, Marshall answered in the affirmative by declaring Marbury's appointment was valid because he was appointed by a sitting president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, thus meeting the judicial appointment standard outlined in the Constitution. The fact that Marbury's commission was never delivered (by Marshall) was a mere technicality that did not invalidate Marbury's appointment. The second question was whether the Supreme Court was equipped with a remedy to facilitate Marbury's appointment. On this point, the Court again answered in the affirmative. The Judiciary Act of 1789 granted the Court the authority to issue a writ of mandamus. The writ of mandamus authorizes the Court to order public officials to perform a particular act. Chief Justice Marshall thus reasoned that the Court is authorized to order President Jefferson to seat Marbury. The third and most critical question grappled with was whether asking the Supreme Court for a writ of mandamus was an acceptable legal remedy. It is on this question that Marshall found a legal loophole that enabled him to avoid a political showdown with Jefferson. The Court ruled that Section 13 of the Judiciary Act was invalid because it stipulated that petitioners requesting a writ of mandamus may bring the matter directly to the Supreme Court.

This was problematic for Marshall because Article III, Section 2 of the Constitution expressly stipulates that only cases "affecting Ambassadors, other public Ministers and Consuls, and those in which a State shall be a Party" may bring their case directly to the Supreme Court.[10] The Supreme Court hears all other cases on appeal after they have gone through several lower courts. Marshall contended that Congress was not authorized to stipulate that the Supreme Court will have original jurisdiction on cases involving a writ of mandamus because this would, in effect, amend the language in Article III, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution. And the only legal way to alter the language of the U.S. Constitution, he reasoned, is through a constitutional amendment. Marshall avoided the showdown with President Jefferson by declaring the original jurisdiction provision of the Judiciary Act unconstitutional. The Court's assertion of judicial review in this case was never seriously challenged, and it eventually became cemented into legal precedent. This is probably because Marshall did not assert the power of judicial review to challenge President Jefferson's executive authority but rather to avoid a confrontation with him. Marshall's decision was also masterful because judicial review was first used on an issue involving the judicial process rather than on a question involving the constitutional authority of one of the other two branches of government.[11] Marshall

did not use the power of judicial review to strike down any other congressional statute after Marbury. The Supreme Court did not exercise the power of judicial review to strike down a federal law again until the infamous Dred Scott (1857) case, which will be discussed later in this chapter. The Court did, however, use the power of judicial review to strike down state laws in the landmark cases of *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) and *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824).

Do you believe it was unethical for Chief Justice Marshall to rule in the case of *Marbury v. Madison* considering he was personally involved in the matter?

Why Politics Matters to You!

Judicial Review and Student Debt Cancellation: *Biden v. Nebraska* (2023)

The case of *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) established the doctrine of judicial review in the United States. Judicial review empowers courts to strike down laws enacted by state and federal governments that violate principles enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. In *Biden v. Nebraska* (2023), the U.S. Supreme Court struck down Biden's executive order to cancel $442 billion of student debt. When President Biden issued the executive order, approximately 44 million student loan borrowers owed $1.7 trillion in student debt. The average student loan borrower owes approximately $40,000.[12] Biden's 2022 executive order cancelled $20,000 for student loan borrowers who qualified for means-tested Pell Grants and eliminated $10,000 of student debt for non-Pell Grant recipients.

President Biden argued that he was legally empowered to cancel student debt unilaterally based on the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Student Act of 2003 (HEROES Act). The HEROES Act was enacted during President George W. Bush's administration in the aftermath of the September 11, 2011, attacks on the United States. The HEROES Act authorized the Secretary of Education to cancel student debt on borrowers adversely "affected by a war, other military operations, or national emergencies."[13] The Biden Administration argued that it was authorized by the HEROES Act to cancel debt since the order was issued during the national emergency brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Officials from six states opposing Biden's debt cancellation plan argued the executive order was unconstitutional since the order was not approved by Congress. They argued the HEROES Act only authorizes the Secretary of Education to cancel debt during a national emergency on a case-by-case basis and does not allow debt cancellation for virtually all borrowers. Opponents of Biden's debt cancellation plan pointed to the Supreme Court case in *West Virginia v. Environmental Protection Agency* (2022), which found executive agencies are not permitted to alter existing laws in ways that will have a major economic or political impact without congressional approval.[14]

In *Biden v. Nebraska* (2023), the Supreme Court used the power of judicial review to strike down Biden's executive order on student debt cancellation. Since the executive branch is not a lawmaking body, presidents are only permitted to issue executive orders if the order links to an enumerated presidential power or if Congress grants the executive branch autonomy to settle 'major questions' unilaterally through executive orders. In the majority opinion, Chief Justice Roberts said that while President Biden is authorized to waive student debt in some circumstances, he is not legally permitted to cancel debt that covers "98.5 percent of all student borrowers" without congressional approval.[15]

Think It Through

Do you agree with the decision in *Biden v. Nebraska* (2023)? Why or why not?

The American Judiciary and Federalism

In Chapter 4, we reviewed how federal powers were greatly enhanced because of the Marshall Court's decision in *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819). You might remember that it was this decision that established the power of the federal government to create a national banking system because the national government had "implied powers" (also known as the elastic clause) that went beyond the enumerated powers of the national government. The Marshall Court established that the national government has additional implied powers when these powers are "necessary and proper" to carry out the enumerated powers outlined in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. Marshall also angered states' rights advocates in *McCulloch* by ruling that state governments are not permitted to tax the federal government because the "power to tax involves the power to destroy." The Marshall Court expanded federal power once again in the landmark *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) decision. This case involved a dispute between the state of New York and the federal government. In this case, a steamboat operator named Aaron Ogden was issued a license to ferry passengers from New Jersey to New York City and back by the state of New York. Thomas Gibbons, one of Ogden's competitors in the ferry business, received a similar license from the U.S. Congress to operate his ferry along a similar route. The constitutional issue in this case revolved around whether New York's practice of issuing business permits to steamboat carriers conflicted with Congress's enumerated power to regulate interstate commerce. Marshall once again expanded federal power by ruling against the state of New York by asserting that the navigation of interstate waterways falls under the authority of the national government because it is expressly authorized to regulate interstate commerce in Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution. Similar to *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) and *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), Marshall's ruling in *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) was a transformative legal decision whose importance has grown with each passing decade.[16]

Olivier Douliery/AFP/Getty Images

Image 8.3 Members of the U.S. Supreme Court gather for a group portrait. Seated from left are: Associate Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Clarence Thomas, Chief Justice John Roberts, Samuel Alito, and Elena Kagan. (Standing from left to right) Associate Justices Amy Coney Barrett, Neil Gorsuch, Brett Kavanaugh and Ketanji Brown Jackson.

The American legal system operates within a dual court system that

includes a federal court system and fifty individual state court systems. The *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) case is useful because it brings to light legal issues and political nuances associated with the roles and responsibilities of state and federal courts today. You might remember from Chapter 4 that the U.S. Supreme Court is authorized to overturn state supreme court rulings on federal issues by the U.S. Constitution's **supremacy clause**, located in Article VI of the Constitution. The supremacy clause states:

Supremacy Clause: The provision of the U.S. Constitution that stipulates that the Constitution and the laws of the United States represent the supreme law of the nation.

> This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land; and the Judges in every State shall be bound thereby, any Thing in the Constitution or Laws of any State to the Contrary notwithstanding.

Differences Between Federal and State Courts

It is important to remember that no federal judiciary existed when the American states originally organized under the Articles of Confederation from 1781 to 1787. We learned in Chapter 4 that the ratification of the U.S. Constitution transformed our political system by dividing powers between the national and state governments and by creating a system of checks and balances within the federal government's legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government. Unlike the controversial executive branch, the judiciary was not hotly debated at the Constitutional Convention, probably because thirty-five of the fifty-five delegates were either legally trained or serving as practicing attorneys in their respective state court systems. Reflecting the strong comfort level with the judiciary, Alexander Hamilton in *Federalist* No. 78 asserted that the judiciary is the least dangerous branch of government because it possesses neither the presidential "sword" nor the congressional "purse," and must rely instead on its mere "judgment" to interpret legal disputes:

> The Judiciary . . . has no influence over either the sword or the purse; no direction either of the strength or of the wealth of society; and can take no active resolution whatever. It may truly be said to have neither force nor will, but merely judgment; and must ultimately depend upon the aid of the executive arm even for the efficacy of its judgments.[17]

There was widespread agreement at the Constitutional Convention on the need for a national judiciary. However, the Framers were split on the scope of federal judicial power. William Randolph of Virginia offered the first proposal for the judiciary by calling for a Supreme Court and additional lower federal courts. William Paterson of New Jersey opposed this plan and instead proposed only a single national Supreme Court.[18] Paterson's chief objection to Randolph's plan, also known as the Virginia Plan, was his inclusion of lower federal courts. States' rights

Original Jurisdiction: Courts that hear cases for the first time. These courts decide on guilt or innocence or resolve civil disputes on the merits of the facts of the case.

Appellate Jurisdiction: Courts that hear cases on appeal from a lower court. These courts primarily determine whether a legal mistake was made at trial.

advocates argued that state courts should play a dominant role on judicial matters by serving as courts of **original jurisdiction** and that the national Supreme Court should have only **appellate jurisdiction** on cases involving the U.S. Constitution or federal law.

The delegates at the Constitutional Convention were in agreement on the need for a national Supreme Court, but they disagreed on whether the federal court system should include lower federal district courts. This dispute was ultimately resolved by one of the many compromises made at the Constitutional Convention.[19] Article III, Section 1 of the Constitution stipulates that the judicial power of the United States "shall be vested in one Supreme Court and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish."[20] The Framers thus resolved the disagreement over whether to include lower federal courts by placing the controversy on the doorsteps of Congress. Congress later created our federal court system in the Judiciary Act of 1789, which was previously highlighted in our discussion of the *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) case.

Article III, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution specifies which types of court cases are heard in federal courts. Cases that involve the U.S. Constitution, laws of the United States, foreign policy, maritime jurisdiction, a state and citizen of another state (modified by Eleventh Amendment), and litigants from different states are almost always tried in federal courts. The structure of the modern federal court system is quite straightforward. It consists of a three-tiered system that includes ninety-four district courts, twelve regional courts of appeals and one Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, and one U.S. Supreme Court. Most federal cases originate at the district court level. Each state has at least one district court, and some larger states, such as California, Texas, and New York, have four district courts. These courts primarily hear cases that involve disputes over federal laws, issues emanating from the U.S. Constitution, or diversity of citizenship cases, where a resident of one state files suit against a resident of another on an issue worth more than $75,000. Rules granting federal jurisdiction over diversity of citizenship cases took shape during the Constitutional Convention, when most residents felt greater loyalty to their respective states than to the federal government. We provide a visual representation of the federal court structure and highlight the number of federal case filings in Figure 8.1 and Table 8.1. In Table 8.2, we highlight the difference between federal and state court systems in the United States.

Courts at the federal level are divided according to whether they are courts of original jurisdiction or courts of appellate jurisdiction. District courts serve as courts of original jurisdiction because this is where legal disputes are first heard. It is here where determinations of guilt or innocence are made, and it is in these courts that legal disputes of a civil nature are decided on the merits. There are currently twelve regional federal courts of appeals and one Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, whose primary purpose is to review decisions made at the district court level.

Figure 8.1 U.S. Federal Court System

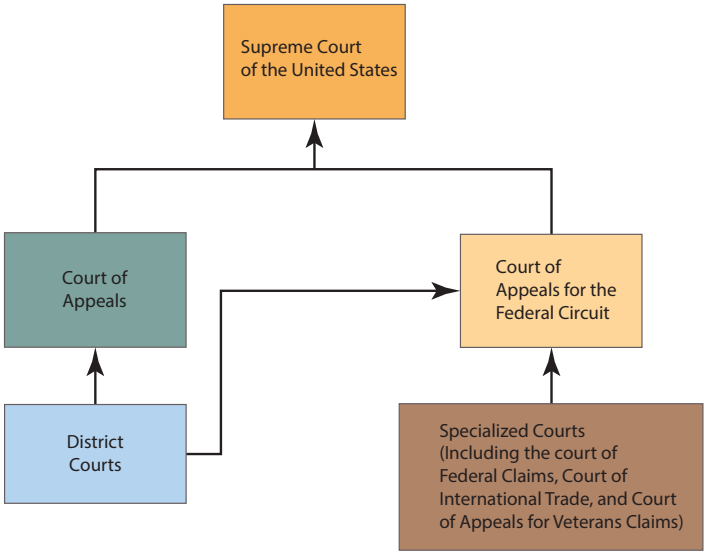

Table 8.1 Number of Civil and Criminal Cases Filed in U.S. District Courts[21]

Year	Criminal Cases Filed in Federal District Court	Civil Cases Filed in Federal District Court
2000	83,303	259,519
2008	91,866	267,257
2012	94,121	278,447
2018	81,553	277,010
2022	71,111	309,102

Source: See James C. Duff's "Judicial Facts and Figures: Multi-Year Statistical Compilations on the Federal Judiciary's Caseload Through Fiscal Year 2012" at United States Courts, available at http:www.iscourts.gov /home.aspx. The 2018 figures accessed online on July 19, 2019, at https://uscourts.gov/statistics-reports /federal-judicial-caseload-statistics-2018. The 2022 figures accessed online on September 28,2023, at https://www.uscourts.gov/statistics-reports/federal-judicial-caseload-statistics-2022

Table 8.2 Differences Between Federal and State Courts

	State Courts	Federal Courts
Court structure	Every state has its own court system. Some states have as many as fifty different types of courts. Most states have at least three courts, including a district court, a court of appeals, and a state supreme court.	Includes ninety-four district courts, twelve circuit courts of appeals, one court of appeals for the federal circuit, and one U.S. Supreme Court. It also includes bankruptcy courts, federal claims courts, and the Court of International Trade.
Types of cases	Jurisdiction includes all cases that fall under state law, including traffic violations, divorce and child custody, creditor–debtor disputes, personal injury cases, probate and inheritance matters, medical malpractice suits, and most criminal matters.	Jurisdiction includes cases involving the U.S. Constitution, federal laws, interstate disputes, issues involving foreign nations, or civil suits involving citizens from two different states when damages exceed $75,000.

The Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has countrywide jurisdiction and hears appeals in specialized cases involving intellectual property (e.g., patents), administrative law, claims against the federal government, or international trade. Most of these cases are heard by three-judge panels. The courts of appeals primarily serve two purposes. The first purpose is to correct any legal mistake made by judges and juries at the district court level to ensure that every American receives due process under the law. A district court judge, for instance, might incorrectly interpret a legal procedure at trial that might call into question the integrity of the verdict. Appellate courts were established in part because every American is afforded the due process right to appeal a decision made at the district court level. One study found that federal appellate courts uphold federal district court decisions 88 percent of the time when reviewing cases on merits.[22] The second purpose of the courts of appeals is to remove ambiguity and inconsistency in the way law is carried out. Decisions at the courts of appeals help to ensure that laws are applied in a similar manner across the nation.[23] Many appeals are not at all based on issues of due process but rather highlight disputes involving legislative statutes or rules guiding administrative agencies. Appellate courts thus frequently settle disputes and set the standard for future cases by interpreting and setting guidelines on vague statutes or ambiguous administrative rules. The U.S. Court of Appeals also serves as the court of last resort for the vast majority of federal cases that do not make it to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Almost all cases heard by the U.S. Supreme Court arrive on appeal from either the federal court of appeals or a state supreme court. The U.S. Supreme Court, however, will only hear an appeal from the state courts when a federal issue arises. A criminal defendant might appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court if they believe an existing state law violates a provision in the U.S. Constitution. There are currently nine justices on the U.S. Supreme Court as established by Congress in 1869.

The Supreme Court's Role in Expanding Civil Rights

Interstate Commerce Clause: A clause in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution that gives Congress the authority to regulate commerce between foreign nations, states, and Indian tribes.

Civil Rights Act of 1964: Landmark congressional legislation that outlawed discrimination in places of public accommodation against all racial and ethnic groups, religious minorities, and women.

The U.S. Supreme Court has used its power of judicial review to expand American civil and individual rights. An expansive interpretation of the **interstate commerce clause**, for example, was used to uphold sections of the **Civil Rights Act of 1964** when the Supreme Court found racially restrictive practices, such as barring Black Americans from hotels or restaurants, could be made illegal by Congress because a substantial number of potential customers could come from other states.[24] The *Gibbons* decision expanded federal power by broadening federal regulatory control over business transactions that cross state lines. The interstate commerce clause now serves as the rationale for federal regulatory control over the environment, the public airwaves, and major financial institutions.

Marshall's opinions in *Marbury v. Madison* (1803), *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819), and *Gibbons v. Ogden* (1824) significantly strengthened the power of the national government of the United States in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Some southern states strongly opposed Marshall's legacy of favoring the supremacy of the national government. John C. Calhoun, for instance, was a strong states' rights advocate who argued on behalf of the institution of slavery. Calhoun advocated for the "doctrine of nullification," arguing that states were empowered to veto any federal policy that they perceived to be unconstitutional. The nullification issue came to a head after the South Carolina legislature nullified a federal tariff that it found objectionable. President Andrew Jackson eventually persuaded South Carolina to refrain from pursuing its nullification strategy, but states' rights passions later instigated the U.S. Civil War that resulted in 600,000 American deaths.[25] During the Civil War era, states' rights advocates received a boost when Roger Taney ascended to chief justice in 1835. Taney chaired Andrew Jackson's presidential campaign in Maryland and went on to serve as Jackson's attorney general before becoming chief justice. Taney is most widely known for his role in the *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (1857) decision. This decision is frequently pointed to as the low point in the history of the U.S. Supreme Court because it lent legitimacy to the institution of slavery and played a role in polarizing North–South tensions.

UPI/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 8.4 Pictured here are demonstrators outside of the U.S. Supreme Court urging the Court to uphold President Biden's executive order to cancel $442 billion of student loan debt. In Biden v. Nebraska (2023), the Court struck down the debt cancellation plan as an overreach of presidential power.

Dred Scott was enslaved by Missouri army surgeon, Dr. John Emerson. Scott was taken by Emerson into the free Louisiana territory. Dred Scott filed suit, claiming that Emerson's wife "beat, bruised, and ill-treated him" and that he should no longer be considered "the property" of the Emerson's because they relocated to "free" territory.[26] In the suit, Scott and his national supporters claimed a "once free, always free" legal strategy by asserting Scott was legally a free man since he resided for seven years in "free" territory. The first question addressed by the Taney Court was whether Dred Scott had legal standing to bring a case to the Supreme Court. The Court ruled that Dred Scott did not have legal standing because as an enslaved person, he did not possess any of the rights associated with citizenship:

> They [African Americans] are not included, and were not intended to be included, under the word "citizens" in the Constitution, and can therefore claim none of the rights and privileges which that instrument provides for and secures to citizens of the United States. On the contrary, they were at that time [1787] considered as a subordinate and inferior class of beings, who had been subjugated by the dominant race, and, whether emancipated or not, yet remained subject to their authority, and had no rights or privileges but such as those who held the power and the Government might choose to grant them.[27]

The case should have concluded on the legal standing issue alone. The Taney Court, however, infuriated northern abolitionists by further declaring a portion of the **Missouri Compromise** (1820) unconstitutional. One of the provisions of the Missouri Compromise prohibited slave owners from bringing enslaved people into free territories. The Taney Court ruled that Congress did not have the constitutional authority to prohibit slave owners from bringing enslaved people into free territories. This decision enraged northern abolitionists who feared slavery would expand into western territories. The *Dred Scott* decision accelerated the forces that led to the Civil War and seriously damaged the reputation and stature of the Court. This decision was later made moot with the passage of the **Thirteenth Amendment**, which abolished the institution of slavery.

Missouri Compromise: A political compromise whereby Missouri was admitted into the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state. The remaining states in the Louisiana territory were divided into slave states in the South and free states in the North.

Thirteenth Amendment: An amendment to the U.S. Constitution that abolished the institution of slavery in the United States.

The Incorporation of the Bill of Rights into the States

The American Civil War resulted in the passage of three constitutional amendments that granted all rights of citizenship to African Americans. The Thirteenth Amendment (1865) outlawed slavery, the **Fourteenth Amendment** (1868) broadly prohibited states from denying rights of citizenship, and the **Fifteenth Amendment** (1870) made it illegal for states to deny voting rights on the basis of race. These amendments transformed federal–state relations because the Constitution for the first time stipulated parameters on how states are to treat their residents. It is important to remember that the Bill of Rights, highlighted in the first ten amendments of the U.S. Constitution, were ratified for the purpose of restricting only the behavior of the national government. In *Barron v. Baltimore* (1833), Chief Justice Marshall ruled that states were not bound by the just compensation provision of the **Fifth Amendment** because the Bill of Rights was written to limit the powers of the federal government, not limit the powers of the states. The Fourteenth Amendment modified this arrangement. The Fourteenth Amendment states that "no state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States, nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction

Fourteenth Amendment: The post-Civil War amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guaranteed all Americans the rights of due process of law, equal protection of law, and equal privileges and immunities.

Fifteenth Amendment: The amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made it illegal to deny voting rights on the basis of race.

Fifth Amendment: The U.S. constitutional amendment that deals with the rights of the accused by providing for due process of law, prohibiting double jeopardy, and by stating that people are not required to testify against themselves.

the equal protection of the laws."[28] Did this mean that states were now required to abide by the Bill of Rights? This was answered over the next few decades when the Court adopted the process of selective incorporation.

In *Gitlow v. New York* (1925), the Court ruled that the freedom of speech and the freedom of press provisions of the First Amendment can be applied to the states, thereby setting in motion the principle of selective incorporation. In the *Gitlow* case, the Supreme Court nationalized the rights associated with freedom of speech and freedom of the press because it ruled these rights were of a "fundamental value."[29] Selective incorporation meant that the Court would require the states to abide by any of the Bill of Rights that it perceived to be a "fundamental value." Later in the *Palko v. Connecticut* (1937) double jeopardy case, the term *fundamental value* is defined as any right that is vital for liberty to exist in the state.[30] In 2008, the Supreme Court nationalized the individual right to own and carry a gun by striking down gun control legislation in *D.C. v. Heller* (2008).

Why Politics Matters to You!

Federal–State Powers, the Interstate Commerce Clause, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990

The interstate commerce clause has been successfully used by the federal government to assert authority over the states in the realm of civil rights. Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution stipulates that the "Congress shall have Power . . . to regulate Commerce with foreign Nations, and among the several States." In the 1930s, constitutional law professor Edward S. Corwin stated that the "most important source of national power touching private conduct is, in ordinary times, the power of Congress to regulate commerce among the states."[31]

Although the Fourteenth Amendment prohibits states from denying residents the due process of law, the equal protection of the law, and privileges and immunities, it did not ban the private sector from discriminating on the basis of race, gender, or religion. It was not until the Civil Rights Act of 1964 that public and private businesses were forbidden from discriminating against targeted communities. Congress enacted the Civil Rights Act in 1964 on the premise that it was authorized to do so by the interstate commerce clause. The Civil Rights Act barred "private business owners from discriminating based on race, sex, or religion" on the premise that most businesses have customers who at least occasionally come from across state lines.[32] In *Katzenbach v. McClung* (1964), the Supreme Court upheld Congress's right to prohibit restaurants from denying food service on the basis of race. In *Heart of Atlanta Motel v. Atlanta* (1964), the Supreme Court used the same rationale to uphold laws prohibiting hotel owners from denying accommodations on the basis of race.

Congress also used the interstate commerce clause (and the Fourteenth Amendment) to extend the basic features of the Civil Rights Act to people with disabilities when it enacted the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. The Americans with Disabilities Act is one of the most significant pieces of legislation ever enacted into American law; it transformed American society by putting in place the necessary infrastructure that made it possible for people with disabilities to leave the confines of their homes and become full-fledged members of American society. The act affords extensive federal protection to people with disabilities in the

(Continued)

Why Politics Matters to You! (Continued)

workplace, in public restaurants, on public transportation, and in telecommunications.[33] Title I of the act prohibits employers from discriminating against qualified people with disabilities, who may or may not require reasonable accommodation, in private hiring or promotion practices. The Act defines people with disabilities as those who possess a "physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities."[34]

Title III of the ADA prohibits members of the public or private sector from discriminating against people with disabilities by denying them public accommodation in hotels, restaurants, theaters, schools, private offices, museums, parks, and other public and private facilities. This provision, among other things, required these facilities to build ramps and retrofit bathrooms to accommodate wheelchair access. In *Martin v. PGA Tour* (2001), the Supreme Court ruled that the ADA public accommodation requirement required the PGA Tour to make a reasonable accommodation to a disabled professional golfer by allowing him to use a golf cart on the PGA tour.

Think It Through

Do you believe the Supreme Court's interpretation of the interstate commerce clause in the area of civil rights has given the federal government too much authority over the states? Why or why not?

Civil Rights and the Warren Court

President Dwight Eisenhower appointed Earl Warren to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1953. Warren served as governor of the state of California after running for the vice presidency with presidential candidate Thomas Dewey in 1948. Dewey lost in a close election to Harry Truman that year. President Eisenhower was disappointed with Warren's liberal interpretations on the Court and later remarked that nominating Warren was "the biggest-damn-fool mistake I ever made."[35] Perhaps the most important decision rendered by the Warren Court was the *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) case, which was responsible for asserting federal power by desegregating public school systems across all states. In that case Linda Carol Brown, an eight-year-old African American girl from Topeka, Kansas, was denied access to a neighborhood school because of the color of her skin. The girl's father was a pastor in a local church in what was a mostly White neighborhood. Schools in Topeka were segregated by race at the time, which was permissible under Kansas law. The Brown family believed that the school designated for Black students was inferior to the all-White school. The all-Black school was also much farther from their home. The Brown family thus filed suit, challenging the school segregation policy as a violation of their daughter's rights guaranteed under the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment.[36]

To win the case, the Browns needed to overturn the long-standing "separate but equal" precedent established in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case of 1896. The *Plessy* case involved a Louisiana law that made it illegal for Black and White passengers to commingle in railroad cars. In the *Plessy* case, the Court ruled that segregating train

travel did not violate the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. This ruling established that segregation was permissible as long as the races had access to similar public facilities. It was because of the *Plessy* ruling that states were permitted to segregate restrooms, water fountains, schools, hospitals, restaurants, hotels, cemeteries, and other places of public accommodation.

The *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) decision overturned the legal precedent of separate but equal. Chief Justice Warren concluded in the *Brown* decision "that in the field of public education the doctrine of 'separate but equal' had no place."[37] The Court was particularly persuaded that public segregation was in fact not equal because one race was preventing another race access to superior public schools. This was psychologically damaging and harmful to the self-esteem of African American children who were brought up believing they were inferior to White children. The Warren Court expanded on the rationale of *Brown* in the *Loving v. Virginia* (1967) case by striking down a Virginia law that prohibited interracial marriages. It is now hard to imagine that these types of discriminatory laws were carried out in some states only a few short decades ago.

Theory and Practice

Federal–State Powers and the Regulation of Sexual Activity in the Twenty-First Century

Many states throughout American history restricted certain forms of sexual activity by enacting sodomy laws. The concept of sodomy originally arose in biblical descriptions associated with the perceived depraved behavior of the residents of Sodom and Gomorrah. Sodomy was initially defined as "anal intercourse between two men or a man and a woman," or sexual intercourse between a human and nonhuman.[38] Greek mythology prominently featured centaurs, creatures that were half-man and half-horse, and during the Middle Ages, some in the scientific community believed it was possible for humans to procreate with members of the animal kingdom. By 1900, thirteen states expanded their definition of sodomy to include fellatio, or oral sex.

The first federal privacy challenge against state sodomy laws did not occur until 1944. An Arizona man unsuccessfully argued that his privacy rights were violated after he was arrested for "consensual fellatio" with another man in his home. In *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), the Supreme Court for the first time recognized the right to privacy by striking down a Connecticut law that prohibited the distribution of contraceptives to married couples. This newly established constitutional right of privacy influenced approximately twenty states to repeal their sodomy laws during the 1970s. The momentum against sodomy laws continued into the early 1980s when New York, Pennsylvania, Alaska, and Wisconsin repealed sodomy laws.[39] However, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Georgia's sodomy law in the *Bowers v. Hardwick* case in 1986. Justice Byron White's majority opinion affirmed a previous standard that only recognized a right to "engage in procreative sexual activity" and argued that the Framers would not support a "right" to engage in sodomy. The Georgia sodomy law banned the practice of sodomy regardless of the sexes of those involved.

The Supreme Court heard another sodomy case almost twenty years later in *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003). In this case, John Geddes Lawrence and Tyrone Garner were arrested for engaging in consensual anal sex. Police

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

observed the sexual encounter when they entered the home after receiving a false report of a weapons disturbance. The Texas sodomy law differed from the Georgia sodomy law in that it targeted only same-sex couples. This was significant because it enabled Lawrence to argue that because the Texas law did not apply to heterosexual couples, the statute violated both his constitutional right to privacy and the equal protection clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Lawrence and struck down sodomy laws as unconstitutional, marking the first time same-sex behavior has been afforded constitutional protection by the U.S. Supreme Court. Twelve years later, in the *Obergfell v. Hodges* (2015) case, the Supreme Court ruled in a 5–4 decision that states were prohibited from denying marriage rights to same-sex couples.

Think It Through

How are sodomy laws different than laws against prostitution or incest?

Germany: A Good Model for Comparison

Now that you understand some of the roots of judicial review and its historical practice in the United States, it is time to evaluate it within a comparative perspective. Germany serves as an interesting model for comparison for a variety of reasons. First, like the United States, Germany is a federal state. The German states, known as lander, are constitutionally empowered to make many of their own laws. Following the end of World War II (and with it the end of Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party), the Allied Powers helped design a system that limited the potential for one person or party to gain too much authority. Thus, the German model reflects the American attitude toward decentralized authority.

Second, Germany instituted an inquisitorial judicial system. Understanding different approaches to the practice of law works well in a comparative analysis because it not only allows you to understand how different democracies employ justice but how *federal* democracies employ justice as well. In Germany, like most states in continental Europe, an inquisitorial system was established as another way of deciding legal cases. In the United States and Great Britain, where the adversarial system is employed, a tradition of **case law** exists that allows courts to look at previous rulings and past precedents in their decisions. Adversarial systems give attorneys more ability to shape the decisions of the courts. For example, adversarial systems allow attorneys to cross-examine witnesses during trials. They also see juries playing a significant role in the outcomes of certain cases. Inquisitorial systems, by contrast, do not allow attorneys the opportunity to cross-examine witnesses during trials. This means that the judges run most of the proceedings and examine the evidence that is provided for them by the attorneys. Because Germany's democratic tradition is relatively new (post-World War II), it has opted for a tradition that gives more authority to judges when deciding cases.

Case Law: Legal principles spelled out in previous judicial decisions.

Last, the German court system is one that has grown and changed since its inception. Most American legal scholars view the American court system and its design as one that has its roots in British common law. In other words, the American and British systems' roots provide it with a strong sense of tradition. Germany's court system, on the other hand, serves as a reminder that legislatures and executives not only come in all shapes and sizes, but so do legal systems. Germans typically look favorably upon their court system, and part of the reason is not only the system's independence from past precedence but also because of German citizens' active involvement in many policy decisions. It is this level of independence that will form the basis of the next section.

picture alliance/picture alliance/Getty Images

Image 8.5 Members of the Constitutional Court in Germany in Karlsruhe.

Starting at the Top: The German Federal Constitutional Court

The best way to understand the court system in any country is to start at its apex, its highest court. In Germany, the highest court is known as the Federal Constitutional Court. Established by constitutional decree in 1949 and formally introduced as an organ of government in 1951, the German Federal Constitutional Court stands as an interesting model of jurisprudence in the contemporary world. If compared to the U.S. Supreme Court, the German Federal Constitutional Court is larger, more accountable, and more popular among German citizens. Because so much of contemporary German jurisprudence and constitutionality is based on Germany's experience in World War II, the following section will look at the creation of the Federal Constitutional Court, its development over time, and some of the reasons it is considered an activist court—one that takes a large role in articulating and legislating policy measures.

In the wake of World War II and the horrific experience of the Holocaust, the German constitution (Basic Law) created a court that needed an equal dose of energy and limitation. The framers (who in large part were Americans with a strong legal background) decided that the greatest problem facing a country that had been devastated and had caused immeasurable devastation was to have a legal system that was able to address unconstitutional policies but not become so entrenched and powerful that it would become an impediment to its own success. Thus, the size and term limits of the Federal Constitutional Court became an interesting model for countries that had become democratic following extended violence.

The German Federal Constitutional Court is composed of two eight-member panels, half of which are elected by the German upper house, the Bundesrat, and half of which are elected by the German lower house, the Bundestag; in each case, a candidate must have at least a two-thirds majority.[40] In addition, judges on each panel are only allowed to serve one twelve-year term, with service having to end before the mandatory retirement age of 68.[41] These structures reflect the dual influence of both German and American legal history while differing from the structure of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Until the creation of the modern Federal Constitutional Court, Germany had lacked an independent judiciary capable of checking the authority of the federal legislature or resolving state issues. The only institution in Germany whose powers resembled anything like those of the Federal Constitutional Court was the Court of the Empire (dissolved in 1806) that handled conflicts that concerned the German Nations in the Holy Roman Empire.[42] Even when a State Court was established following World War I to handle issues between the national and state legislatures, the Weimar Constitution established at the end of World War I and subsequently destroyed by the Nazi Party "did not grant this court jurisdiction over fundamental individual rights."[43] So, when the Basic Law of 1949 was written, it created a high court that was literally writing a new chapter in German governance. This is perhaps the reason why Alfred Rinken has referred to the German Federal Constitutional Court as "the most striking and most exciting institution created by the German Basic Law."[44] Now that you know some of the history behind the court as well as its composition, let's examine at how it functions and some issues with which it has dealt.

Powers and Policy Implications

The design of the German Federal Constitutional Court is found in Articles 93 and 94 of the 1949 German Basic Law (constitution). Its real power, however, was established under the Federal Constitutional Court Act of 1951. It is within this act that its power of judicial review can be found as well as its expanded character to "include individual and collective complaints."[45] The established Federal Constitutional Court in 1951 "declared itself to be competent to control any act of the state as potentially violating basic rights."[46] Although much of its power came from the influence of the United States, Rinken has argued that:

> the guiding spirit (of judicial review in Germany) was the decision to give supremacy to the Constitution. Article 20 III of the Basic Law binds the legislature to the constitutional order; the executive and the judicature, to law and justice. In particular in relation to basic rights, Article 1 III of the Basic Law states that, "The following basic rights shall bind the legislature, the executive, and the judiciary as directly enforceable law." All participants in the constitutional system including the legislature were to abide by the constitution, which is supreme and acts as a yardstick for all actions. The Federal Constitutional Court was to provide institutional protection of this principle.[47]

German institutions were therefore established through an ultimate respect for the rule of law. This is not meant to overstate its importance in any country, but in Germany, the rule of law and a respect for rights has taken on a much larger role. By the end of World War II, most political analysts and scholars determined that it was not an erosion of democracy (understood here as voting rights, political parties, etc.) that destroyed the interwar government but an erosion of or complete disregard of the *law* as the guiding principle of the state. The establishment of an independent and powerful "high court" would ensure the constitutional order of the state moving forward.

Article 93 of the Basic Law states that there are "various competencies of the Federal Constitutional Court." Rinken has summarized them as follows:

1. *Constitutional review* of disputes between the highest bodies of the state. This category includes disputes between the Federation and federal states and disputes involving the highest federal bodies.
2. *Judicial review* can be undertaken as either a concrete norm control or preliminary ruling, that is, as a result of referral from a lower court, or as a so-called abstract judicial review or abstract norm control.
3. *Constitutional complaint* by citizens and others in cases of violation of basic rights.
4. *Indictment and similar procedures*, such as
   - impeachment of the federal president, Article 61 of the Basic Law;
   - impeachment of judges, Articles 91 II and V of the Basic Law;
   - forfeiture of basic rights, Article 18 of the Basic Law; and
   - the prohibition of political parties, Article 21 of the Basic Law.
5. *Election dispute procedures*, contained in Article 41 II of the Basic Law.[48]

Because we are interested in comparing judicial systems, and we have already introduced you to the notion of judicial review in the United States, we will spend the majority of our time here investigating constitutional and judicial review in Germany. This is not to say that the other areas just listed are not important to your understanding of Germany's high court; they are, but it is just more relevant to look at Germany's usage of constitutional and judicial review in comparison to the U.S. Supreme Court for the purposes of this introductory text.

Because Germany is a federal state, with states (lander) having a great deal of legislative authority, there have been instances in which the Federal Constitutional Court had to decide whether state laws were consistent with the Basic Law, and, conversely, whether or not certain federal laws erode or have the potential to erode a certain degree of state autonomy. The first example of the Court's authority came in the *Southwest State Case* (1951). Sometimes referred to as Germany's *Marbury v. Madison,* the *Southwest State Case*, as it has come to be known, demonstrated to the political classes that the Federal Constitutional Court had

wide-ranging authority to determine disputes between different organs of government.

The case was rather simple; the historical background, however, made it complex. The home of Germany's highest court is in the city of Karlsruhe, which was for a time the capital city of the Grand Duchy of Baden. After World War II, the American and French military forces occupied Baden as an official occupation zone. As the German constitution was being written and its new policy of federalism was being discussed, it was decided that Baden should be merged with its one-time rival state, Wuttemburg. For the founders of the German regime, this made administrative sense. It also, however, stirred up a great deal of tension among many in the regions who felt that the new "states" needed to be able to make their own legislative decisions and should not be forced to follow foreign decrees if it was to be a truly federal state.

Baden presented its argument to the Federal Constitutional Court that it should have the right to self-rule. Essentially, Baden asked: How can a federal government that has just created a system of federalism force this type of legislation on the leadership and people of a particular region? Good question. However, the Court's answer was not well received in either its capital, Karlsrhue, or by many in the leadership of Baden. The Court ruled that "it is the nature of things that people's right to self-determination in a state be restricted in the interest of the more comprehensive unit."[49] This thinking is parallel to the United States' supremacy clause, which states that the federal constitution is superior to lesser state constitutions and therefore has the authority to determine what is in the best interest of the entire country.

The ruling not only helped form the structure of modern Germany, but it also developed a precedent for its new Federal Constitutional Court. This was Article 93 in action. This was Germany's highest court interpreting its constitutional authority in a way that suggested it was much more than a sideline referee. This decision opened the door for the German court to use its authority in a much more active manner.

Petitioners: The party requesting, or petitioning, the court to intervene on a particular dispute.

It also, however, allowed other groups and individuals to gain a voice as potential **petitioners** to be heard at the highest level. Because the court is supposed to constitutionally review and take action on issues that arise between the states and the federal government, "the Court has recognized political parties as well as parliamentary factions of the Federal Parliament (and individuals) as petitioners . . . who are of the opinion that their constitutional status, in particular their right to equal opportunities, has been infringed, for example through unconstitutional electoral legislation."[50] Thus, the German Federal Constitutional Court is allowed to hear from (and must hear from) individuals and groups within the state and federal government that the U.S. Supreme Court is constitutionally prohibited from hearing.

Why Politics Matters to You!

The Power to Ban? Political Parties and the Germany Constitution

In Germany, the Basic Law states that groups claiming to be political parties have to pass a certain litmus test to be allowed to do the types of things that political parties are allowed to do. For example, Article 21 of the Basic Law provides certain qualifications that would-be political parties are expected to address:

1. Parties participate in the formation of the popular political will. They may be freely formed. Their internal organization must bespeak democratic principles. They must give a public accounting of their funds.
2. Parties by which their goals or through the acts of their adherents seek to impair or do away with the liberal democratic order, or to endanger the existence of the Federal Republic of Germany, are unconstitutional. *The Federal Constitutional Court shall determine the unconstitutionality of a party.*
3. This article shall be implemented by federal statutes.[51]

The Basic Law gives the Federal Constitutional Court the power to determine whether or not a group of individuals has the ability or right to call itself and behave like a political party. But has the Court ever used that power? Believe it or not, yes. The Federal Constitutional Court has prohibited two political parties: the Socialist Imperial Party (SRP) and the Communist Party of Germany. We will briefly go over the SRP case to see what you think about this type of court ruling.

In 1952, the Federal Constitutional Court determined that the SRP was not an original party but a front for the old Nazi Party. On these grounds, it was deemed ineligible.[52] However, this is not the most interesting feature of the case. What is more interesting (and more challenging, as it were) was that there were already members of the SRP elected to certain state legislatures. Thus, one of the main questions that emerged in the early years of the Court centered on what to do with office holders who also happen to be members of an outlawed political party. We realize that this sounds bizarre, but in a postwar country, it is an important issue and one that needs to be addressed. But who should determine this? The voters? The federal government? In Germany, it was seen as something that the Court should decide on.

According to Franz, "The Court, without reservation, held that the SRP's delegates must lose their seats, declaring:

> *When by a judgment of Constitutional Court a political party's ideas are found to fall short of prerequisites for participation in the formation of the popular political will, the mere dissolution of the party's organizational apparatus, which was meant to further these goals, cannot truly implement the Court's judgment. Rather, it is the intent of the Court's sentence to exclude the ideas themselves from the process of the formation of the political will.*[53]

Thus, the elected members lost their seats. New elections were held, and only acceptable political parties were entertained as appropriate contenders. This might surprise you because it seems like the Court is legislating "from the bench," a popular phrase among many critics of judicial overreach. But what do you think?

Think It Through

1. **Should supreme (or high) courts be allowed to interject opinions in the functioning or even outlawing of political parties? Is this democracy in action?**
2. **What does this imply for the definition of democracy?**

RAMON VAN FLYMEN/AFP/Getty Images

Image 8.6 Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) Karim Khan (middle) attends the Ukraine Accountability Conference in The Hague, Netherlands on July 14, 2022. In 2024, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill to sanction the ICC for requesting an arrest warrant against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on the charge of committing war crimes against Palestinians in Gaza.

The Federal Constitutional Court also weighs in on a variety of issues related to the day-to-day lives of German citizens. Because any citizen is allowed to bring an issue before the high court, and approximately 6000 do each year, the Federal Constitutional Court has made bold proclamations regarding everything from the admittance quotas of universities to the limiting of tax deductions allotted to political parties.[54] Such rulings have made the Court seem like "the third chamber of the legislature."[55]

Take, for example, the issue of free speech. We have already demonstrated (in our Why Politics Matters to You section) that the Court has prohibited certain political parties because of their inability to help advance democracy. However, the Court has also made denying the Holocaust and other similar types of "hate speech" criminal offenses. So, although it is agreed that these types of statements or beliefs are reprehensible and are clearly out of the mainstream, should a court, especially in a democracy, have the ability (and right) to make decisions on one's freedom of speech?

But these issues and policy rulings are not the only interesting features of the Federal Constitutional Court. The other interesting feature has to do with the idea of judicial secrecy. "Eighty-five percent of decisions not admitted are rejected without any reasoning, and the criteria applied remain secret."[56] In essence, when a claim is rejected by the Court, the petitioner and the petitioner's attorney are never told the reason why the case was thrown out. So Germany has created a very active Court that can operate at its own discretion and rule on issues that are rarely ruled upon elsewhere, while doing so behind a veil of secrecy, unlike the courts in most other democracies.

Summary 8

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It is perhaps somewhat ironic that the branch of government responsible for interpreting the U.S. Constitution is the least democratic of our three branches of government. The U.S. Supreme Court, after all, consists of nine unelected jurists with life terms who deliberate behind closed doors checked only by the threat of impeachment.[57] This is because the judiciary was viewed as the least controversial branch of government. States had in place deeply rooted court systems at the time of the Constitutional Convention in 1787, and nearly half of the Framers were well acquainted with legal systems, having previously been practicing attorneys in their respective states. The American Framers were thus far more at ease in creating the American judicial system than in creating our legislative and executive branches of government.[58] Accordingly, little attention was paid to the judiciary at the Constitutional Convention, which might explain why James Madison devoted only 369 words to this branch of government.

In this chapter, the American judiciary was reviewed through the prism of federalism by highlighting the creation of the federal judiciary, distinctions between state and federal court systems, and how the U.S. Supreme Court used the power of judicial review to expand both the supremacy of the national government and political and legal rights for all citizens. We then compared the power of judicial review in the United States to the role of judicial review in Germany. While the United States adopted an "adversarial" legal system, Germany and other democratic judiciaries use an "inquisitorial" legal system. The U.S. adversarial model mostly leaves the legal process to a prosecutor and defense team to make the strongest case possible and then a judge and jury determines the outcome. Inquisitorial systems usually include an independent prosecutor whose role is simply to determine the truth, or the facts of the case, regardless of whether it helps or hinders prosecution.

Although it appears that democratic judiciaries as a concept contain certain general characteristics, there is by no means a standard model of what is considered a democratic judiciary. Some court systems in such places as the United States and Germany grant their courts the power of judicial review, whereas other democratic systems of government have weaker judiciaries, relying instead on legislative supremacy. In the coming chapters on authoritarianism and international relations, we will highlight how all of our different political systems and cultures interact with one another in the international system. Having a strong understanding of different types of political systems will help explain why some nations fight wars and what we can do to try to prevent them.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. Why did Alexander Hamilton view the judiciary as the "least dangerous" branch of government?

   Alexander Hamilton viewed the U.S. Supreme Court as the least dangerous branch of government because the Court did not have the same types of enumerated powers as Congress or the president. Hamilton viewed the Supreme Court as relatively weak compared to the other branches in that Congress has the power to appropriate money (i.e., power of the purse) and the president has commander-in-chief powers (i.e., power of the sword).

2. Why do many consider the *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) case the most important Supreme Court decision ever rendered?

   Marbury v Madison (1803) is widely regarded as the most important Supreme Court case because it marked the first time the Supreme Court struck down a national law as unconstitutional. This decision established that the Supreme Court has the power of judicial review, which is the power to strike down laws enacted at the national or state level. The judiciary became a co-equal branch of government by exercising the power of judicial review.

3. How did the U.S. Supreme Court interpret the interstate commerce clause to expand civil rights?

   The interstate commerce clause is located in Article 1, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution. The Supreme Court's interpretation of the clause has significantly increased federal powers over the states. This clause gives the national government regulatory power over economic activity that crosses state lines. The clause was used by the Supreme Court to uphold the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited private businesses from discriminating against people based on race or sex because some of those customers could be coming from out of state.

4. What is the difference between judicial review and legislative supremacy?

   The United States and other presidential democratic systems use judicial review, which allows the courts to strike down laws passed at the federal or state level. Great Britain and other parliamentary systems instead use legislative supremacy, where only the legislative branch of government has the ultimate power in deciding national laws.

5. How do judicial activist/restraint approaches affect the role of the judiciary?

   Those who advocate for judicial activism believe courts should sometimes play a quasi-legislative role when deciding cases. Judicial activists hold a judicial philosophy that believes courts should consider the potential impacts of decisions on the community at large. Those who advocate for a judicial restraint philosophy believe judges should only rule based on the original intent of laws and not inject external considerations when deciding cases.

Key Terms

Appellate Jurisdiction p. 212
Case Law p. 220
Civil Rights Act of 1964 p. 214
Eleventh Amendment p. 205
Fifteenth Amendment p. 216
Fifth Amendment p. 216
Fourteenth Amendment p. 216
Interstate Commerce Clause p. 214
Judicial Activism p. 203
Judicial Restraint p. 203
Judicial Review p. 202
Missouri Compromise p. 216
Original Jurisdiction p. 212
Petitioners p. 224
Supremacy Clause p. 211
Thirteenth Amendment p. 216
Twelfth Amendment p. 207

Part III International Relations

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12 **Competing Visions for the Future of International Relations** 315

Marian/Moment/Getty images

"Power is the pivot on which everything hinges. He who has the power is always right; the weaker is always wrong."—Niccolo Machiavelli.

"The great challenge of our age to the United Nations Organization is to answer the question—given the interdependence of the nations of the world, what is it that we can and must do to ensure that democracy, peace and prosperity prevail everywhere."—Nelson Mandela

Now that you have gained an understanding of the differences in how states govern their peoples, it is now important that you understand how they interact. Part III is therefore concerned with the subfield of political science known as international relations. Since global affairs has evolved over the past 350 years into a system of competing nation-states and non-state actors it is important that Part III exposes you to how this evolution has occurred. Part III will trace the rise of the state as the most important actor in international relations and through an analysis of diplomatic history, help you make sense of the world today.

Secondly, Part III will address the various ideologies that have sought to explain international relations. These international relations theories—realism, idealism, liberalism, constructivism, and radicalism have attempted to determine why states go to war, the relationship between conflict and economics, and the role that power plays in a state's determination to cooperate or go to war.

Lastly, Part III will address contemporary international relations so that you are able to understand how power is distributed today. International relations today is best thought of as a world in which non-state actors, international institutions, and states vie for power and security. Part III will also allow you to see the interaction between corporations and states, terrorist organizations and states, and between international institutions and states. The state is still arguably the most important actor in International Relations, but its power has been challenged by a variety of other actors.

9 Authoritarian States

Image 9.1 Pictured here is North Korean leader Kim Jong Un reviewing troops. North Korea is one of the world's last totalitarian dictatorships. Its relationship with the international community is strained because of its nuclear weapons program. STR/AFP/Getty Images

Chapter Outline

Introduction: Authoritarianism, Power to the . . . Rulers! 232
Authoritarianism: Intellectual and Religious Justifications 232
Modern Justifications: Power and Security 235
General Characteristics of Authoritarian States 237
Contemporary Authoritarianism: Saudi Arabia, North Korea, and China 242

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What is authoritarianism, and how has it been justified?
2. What do Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes say about human nature in relation to authoritarianism?
3. Why is authoritarianism still present in the world today?
4. What are the similarities among the three authoritarian states mentioned in this chapter?
5. Does economic development in China mean more or less government intervention in the lives of its citizens?

Introduction: Authoritarianism, Power to the . . . Rulers!

Authoritarianism is a concept as old as humanity itself. Its endurance can be attributed to both simplicity and tradition, and its justification has been derived by both the sword and the pen. Until the middle of the twentieth century, **authoritarian states**, those states whose governance is not based on popular consent, had dominated world politics. Although authoritarian states have used different titles for their leaders (king, queen, caliph, sultan, czar, president) and different rationales to govern (tradition, religion, security), they all define their political power in absolute terms; justice is something the rulers define and something the people must follow.

This chapter will attempt to place the idea of authoritarianism within a historical perspective. It will begin with a brief look at some of the major arguments that have justified authoritarian rule as a method of governance. Although today, arguments of this nature are largely dismissed, they are still worthy of discussion considering that several states continue to base their authoritarian claims on similar conclusions. Following this predominantly theoretical and historical examination, the chapter will then focus on the development of contemporary authoritarian states—those states that are still ruled by monarchs, military leaders, and presidents—that continue to make headlines in today's world.

Authoritarian States: States that continue to lack principles such as due process of the law, free and open elections, legitimate political parties, human rights, and so forth.

Authoritarianism: Intellectual and Religious Justifications

Some of the strongest arguments in favor of authoritarianism can be found in some of the most famous works of political and theological literature, for example, the works of the Greek philosopher Plato, the medieval works of both Christian and Islamic scholars, and the modern writings of Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes.

As you may recall from Chapter 2, Plato's guardians were leaders willing to get rid of their personal wealth for the benefit of the community. This idea highlights some of the earliest understandings of the need for a system in which the best leaders rule on behalf of those unable and unwilling to do so. It was believed that leadership was a quality that only the most intelligent could understand. For Plato, the king had to be a philosopher, one who both understood the nuances of justice and was committed to its fair application. For the ancient Greeks, understanding justice was not a quality possessed by the masses. It required years of training in both academic and ethical pursuits. Although Plato in no way should be considered as someone who favored a malicious dictatorial type of rule, he did set an academic precedent for "enlightened or benevolent" monarchy.

Following Plato's assessment of the necessity of just rule were the Christian and Islamic scholars of the medieval period. Through the Christian scholars St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas and the Islamic scholars Al-Fārābī and Ibn Rushd, the classic Greek model of enlightened monarchy was translated into a new religious model. Both Christian and Islamic scholars argued that issues of governance were best decided by those with the capabilities to understand what is in the best interests of their people. For the Christian intellectuals, it was the pope's infallibility and his status as Jesus's representative on earth that dictated his authority over the masses. For the Islamic thinkers, the guardians (to use Plato's terms) also had to be religious leaders, those individuals capable of understanding and properly interpreting Islam's holy book, the Koran.

Although both ancient and medieval scholars decided that proper governance was only within the grasp of the few, religion has always played a major role in the history of authoritarianism. Prior to the intellectual justification of authoritarian rule, religiously defined legal documents such as Hammurabi's Code and the Ten Commandments had been relied on to create legal standards. The Epilogue to Hammurabi's Code, written by the emperor Hammurabi (1792–50 BCE) himself, suggested that the gods called on Hammurabi to lead the people:

> I, Hammurabi, the perfect king, was not careless (or) neglectful of the black headed (people), whom Enlil had presented to me, (and) whose shepherding Marduk had committed to me; I sought out peaceful regions for them; I overcame grievous difficulties; With the mighty weapon which Zababa and Inanna entrusted to me, with the insight Enki allotted to me, with the ability that Marduk gave me, I rooted out the enemy above and below; I made an end of war; I promoted the welfare of the land; I made the people rest in friendly habitations; . . . The great god called me, so I became the beneficent shepherd whose scepter is righteous. . . .[1]

Thus, Hammurabi's role was not only defined in human terms but also in divine terms. His authority emerged from the will of the gods, which obviously trumped the will of the people.

Religious justification has proven to be one of the strongest rationales for authoritarian leaders, whether they are referred to as emperors, queens, or caliphs. What we have witnessed is that this justification has been based on both the interpretation of religious texts and the understanding of the role of governments. In the ancient and medieval worlds, religion and politics provided a similar function: to create the best laws in order to create the greatest amount of order, which will, in turn, create the greatest level of happiness and virtue. Scholars of the ancient and medieval worlds decided that universal laws—those laws that apply to all humans—were out of humanity's reach because they were divine in origin.

Although we have categorized this justification as "ancient" and "medieval," religion continues to play a major role in contemporary authoritarian states. This is not to say that states that continue to define power in religious terms are ancient or medieval but that they have continued in and developed a tradition of authority that dates back several hundred years. We must remember that it is democracy, not authoritarianism, that has a brief history. Religion is as old as humanity itself. It has served societies for centuries and most likely will continue to serve it in the future. It is best to analyze the several states that continue to opt for the fusion of religion and politics with this perspective in mind.

Theory and Practice

Justice: In the Interest of the Stronger Party

As you learned in Chapter 2, Plato's *The Republic* is concerned with justice. He began from the individual perspective (what makes a just individual?) and then moved on to justice in the community (what makes a just community?). By the end of *The Republic,* Plato determined that those who have both the greatest capacity for knowledge and have the greatest desire to seek the truth are most fit to rule. Unfortunately, he never got around to explaining one of the strongest arguments of Book One of *The Republic*: the idea that "justice is only in the interest of the stronger party," or in other words, "justice is always defined by those groups in positions of power."

This argument (made by the character Thrasymachus) has resonated down through the ages and can still be considered one of the greatest philosophical dilemmas of modern politics because it eliminates the moral arguments that surround justice. For example, can you disagree about what is right and what is wrong? Yes. Can you change the law yourself? No. The law has been decided by a few people in positions of political power. Therefore, even if you believe that a law *is* justified (or good), you must also accept the fact that it is only justified because the people in power accept it as justified.

What distinguishes democratic states from authoritarian states is that democracies allow their citizens to argue over what they consider just and unjust. What unites them is that age-old issue addressed first by Plato, that at the end of the day, justice still remains in the interest of the stronger party.

Think It Through

1. **Is Plato's character Thrasymachus correct in his assumption that "justice is in the interest of the stronger party"?**
2. **What do you think are the best defenses against ruling parties creating unjust laws?**

Modern Justifications: Power and Security

Machiavelli and Hobbes

At the end of the medieval period, political science witnessed the beginning of a new rationale for authoritarianism, one that argued that security and power, on their own, are strong enough to provide justification to ruling parties. With the publication of *The Prince* by Niccolò Machiavelli (first introduced to you in Chapter 3), leaders were given a manual on how best to secure power for themselves and to create security for their people. Although students today may not consider the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as "modern," in the scheme of political thought, they are. *The Prince* articulated a major shift in how intellectuals viewed humanity. Machiavelli's firm insistence that "how men actually behave is so far removed from how we ought to behave" ended the dominant position that normative claims had over governance.[2]

As we discussed in Chapter 3, Machiavelli created the argument that ruthlessness and deceitfulness are essential ingredients in attaining and maintaining authority. Machiavelli argues that the best leaders are those who behave according to a calculus that defines virtue as effectiveness. Machiavelli's *Prince,* therefore, only needs to appear virtuous without ever having to actually be virtuous. This is a distinction that earlier scholars would never have dreamed of. In fact, it is a distinction that places the authoritarian state on a path of destruction.

Machiavelli's insistence on the use of "force and fraud" as a means of ensuring peace and security was grounded in two interrelated ideas: first, his unwavering belief in the immorality of human nature; and second, his desire to witness the unification of the competing Italian city-states under the rule of one strong leader. For Machiavelli and, later, Thomas Hobbes, competing interests are the sources of conflict and war. In the fifteenth century, Italy was a fragmented peninsula composed of city-states more interested in their own survival than the survival of all. *The Prince*, in many ways, is both a plea and a plan on how best to bring competing Italian interests together, a concept that reflects his overall negative view of humanity.[3]

Yet, just as Machiavelli's negative view yielded his belief in the installation of one powerful leader to provide both national unity and security, it was Thomas Hobbes who made the process a "natural" consequence. Hobbes's *Leviathan* argues that man's natural level of selfishness and greed perpetuated the desire for authoritarianism. Hobbes, in effect, argues that the reason authoritarian states exist is because the people allow them to exist.

Think back to Chapter 3 and the development of Hobbes's state of nature. Hobbes argued that authoritarian states are socially constructed for reasons of security and stability. Because humanity's existence in this time before government *w*as so bleak, at some point, its members decided that they must turn

complete authority over to a strong, central government—hence, the creation of the *Leviathan*. Authoritarian rule was therefore justified because it eliminated the death and destruction of the state of nature. For Hobbes, authoritarian rule eliminates absolute freedom and replaces it with a different type of freedom, one that stresses security and justice.

By basing their authoritarian claims on security rather than religion, Machiavelli and Hobbes reinterpreted the classic relationship between the governor and the governed. In this reinterpretation, security replaces salvation as the goal of the government. For both Hobbes and Machiavelli, leaders cannot be as concerned with the "good life." The "good life" is impossible to discover and therefore deemed irrelevant. "Good" leaders are those evaluated on the basis of their ability to maintain power and national security; in other words, they are those able to provide their subjects with a feeling of safety and power in relation to others in the international community.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Give Me Liberty or Give Me . . . More Security?

Are we self-seeking, self-motivated, selfish creatures? Most authoritarian leaders would say that Hobbes and Machiavelli are right when they argue that human nature is essentially self-serving. Machiavelli goes so far as to say that the effective leader will realize that people are more easily swayed by fear (or the threat of fear) than by love and exploit this quality. Was he right? Are we willing to give up personal freedom for heightened security?

Americans have been taught from a very early age that the United States stands for freedom and personal liberty and that nothing (especially no government we elect) can take that away. But what about the actions that were taken during the COVID-19 pandemic? The government felt that it was in the national interest (and in the interest of those with preexisting medical conditions as well as hospital personnel) to give up certain liberties until either a vaccine was developed or the number of cases had declined. Did the government have the "right" to take these extraordinary measures? Were they "authoritarian?" Or were they necessary in light of a new global health threat? Will it happen again? What will your response be? What are the political implications for those in power who created such restrictions?

Let's start over. Are you willing to give up some level of freedom for more security? Yes or no?

Answers to these questions are important because they are vital to discussions of authoritarianism and democracy. How far are Americans willing to go for the sake of security? Remember, authoritarian states do not have trouble making these types of determinations because they place security and the maintenance of political authority as their top priorities.

Think It Through

In light of the processes of globalization (refer to Chapter 12), health crises might become more deadly and widespread. How will democratic governments respond? Will they act in an authoritarian manner? Or will they continue to allow the level of freedom that people enjoyed during pre-pandemic times? These questions may come to define the remainder of this century and beyond.

General Characteristics of Authoritarian States

As political science students, it is important that you can identify some of the most common characteristics shared by authoritarian states. The following section will provide you with a brief overview of what authoritarian states look like.

Characteristic 1: Authoritarian Leaders are the Primary Source of Laws and Policy Choices Within Their State's Borders

Authoritarian states are designed to give all legislative priorities and policy choices to either one person (autocracy) or a small group of people (oligarchy). Depending on time, place, and tradition, autocrats have been referred to by several names: king, queen, caliph, pharaoh, and, more recently, president (Hosni Mubarak, the former head of Egypt, was referred to as the president of Egypt). The leader or leaders of an authoritarian state do not need the consent of their people. Whether the regime is considered a benevolent monarchy like that of Queen Elizabeth I or a tyrannical dictatorship like that of Joseph Stalin, the one feature that binds all authoritarian states is that they deny their citizens the right to freely participate. Although most authoritarian states promise to provide their citizens with rights and freedom, few ever deliver on these promises. Instead, citizens have few guarantees, and even under the most decent of rulers, the citizens still serve at the whims of the leader(s). Constitutional freedoms are not guaranteed and are, by definition, subject to the demands and expectations of each regime.

In some unique circumstances, autocratic regimes have been characterized as being totalitarian. Totalitarian states are defined as those that desire to maintain power (as all authoritarian states do) but, more important, to create a utopian society that is powerful enough to change the political mindset of its citizens. You are probably already familiar with some totalitarian states and their leaders. Can you think of any? The most common answer is probably Nazi Germany under the reign of Adolf Hitler or the Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin. But what others can you think of? Remember, these rulers did not only desire power for themselves but also an ideological change in the fabric of their citizens.

Totalitarian rulers, whether fascist (Adolf Hitler) or communist (Joseph Stalin), require a full mobilization of the people. While apathy is seen as an acceptable form of citizenship in most authoritarian states, it is entirely unacceptable in the totalitarian model. The typical, nontotalitarian authoritarian state is mainly concerned with maintaining political power. The totalitarian state, on the other hand, requires all of the political, economic, and social institutions of the state to create individuals who can reinforce the utopian vision.

The totalitarian state alone (and its leader and ideologically driven single political party) is defined as the only solution to the perceived problems of the political status quo. Thus, the actions of the state, whether they take the form of the construction of communes (China under Mao's Communist Party), nationalization of industrial output (Germany under Hitler's Nazi Party, Italy under Mussolini), and/or ethnic cleansing of those considered "undesirable" (Cambodia under Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge, Germany under Hitler's Nazi Party) are justified as necessary.

Characteristic 2: The Transition of Power in an Authoritarian State is Determined by Means Other Than Free and Open Elections

Because authoritarian states do not ask for the consent of the people, the transitioning of power from one ruler to the next can be a difficult undertaking. This is one of the most important and obvious differences between authoritarian and democratic states. Democratic states have what are known as constitutional guarantees protecting everything from fair and free elections to the right to free speech. This mechanism translates into trust. Citizens in a democracy have the trust of the government to transition from one regime to the next without fear of revolution or bloodshed. Those in a democracy might not always be pleased with the results of an election or the policy choices of those in office, but at least they are guaranteed that their system is guided by a process and a tradition of transition. Citizens in an authoritarian state do not have this guarantee.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Fascism by the Ballot Box

Although many of you are somewhat familiar with the atrocities committed by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini in the name of fascism, most of you probably did not know how popular fascism was in the United States during the same time. In fact, during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt, fascism was hailed as a possible solution to the economic woes brought on by the Great Depression. In his book *The Defining Moment: FDR's First Hundred Days and the Triumph of Hope*, journalist Jonathan Alter recounts just how close the American people were to embracing this ideology. Alter writes: "The famous broadcaster Lowell Thomas narrated a film called, *Mussolini Speaks* in 1933 that featured an ad campaign calling it 'A Hit' . . . because it appeals to all 'red-blooded Americans' because it might be the answer to America's needs."[4]

Even acclaimed aviator and pop-culture icon Charles Lindbergh was a devotee of fascism and committed to preventing American involvement in Western Europe. As Max Wallace noted:

> *On May 19, 1940, Charles Lindbergh took to the airwaves and delivered a national radio address urging America not to interfere with the internal*

(Continued)

Why Politics Matters to You! (Continued)

affairs of Western Europe. . . . The next day President Roosevelt was having lunch . . . with his most trusted Cabinet official and declared, "If I should die tomorrow I want you to know this. I am absolutely convinced that Charles Lindbergh is a Nazi."[5]

Yes, that's right. During the 1930s, fascism and its European leaders were hailed by certain members of the American establishment as heroes. Now why should this matter to you? Because it appears that many Americans view themselves and their government as exceptions to many political rules. Americans have a great tendency to view the political system as something constant and undoubtedly democratic. What few Americans realize is how precious and fragile *all* governments are. Not just those countries in parts of the developing world, rife with civil war and poverty, but countries everywhere.

When leaders speak negatively of immigrant communities or members of a particular racial, ethnic, or religious group get targeted for weakening a particular country, fascism is often called upon as its remedy. These are features that are present in every country, both authoritarian and democratic. So it is important for citizens to understand the risks involved with leaders and political parties who have solutions that might upend the rights of their societies' most vulnerable communities.

It might also be good to remember that following World War I, the Weimar Republic was established in Germany. At the time, the Weimar Republic was hailed as one of the most democratic societies on earth. It even provided women with the right to vote several years before the United States did. Why do we make mention of this? What does this mean to you? Well, after a series of harsh international agreements and a wave of economic recessions, Adolf Hitler assumed power *legally*. In other words, Hitler became dictator after the sitting German president was unable to assume his role as head of state. Thus, Hitler was constitutionally and legally given the leadership of Germany. If there is one thing, then, that you should never take for granted in any democracy, it is the possibility that it could degenerate into something authoritarian.

Think It Through

1. **What is significant about the fact that Adolf Hitler rose to power democratically?**
2. **Why do you think fascism was so popular in the United States before World War II?**
3. **Could it happen in the United States?**

Consider, for example, the present-day government of Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (official name) is a modern-day example of an absolutist monarchy. Saudi Arabia is governed by a royal family (Al Saud) with a king. When Saudi Arabia was founded, it was decided through law (the constitution of Saudi Arabia is known as the Basic Law) "that the throne shall remain in the hands of the sons and grandsons of the kingdom's founder."[6] Although we refer to the Basic Law of Saudi Arabia as its constitution, we must realize that its constitutional authority is solely based on the whims of the royal family. In an authoritarian state like Saudi Arabia, the citizens have to depend entirely on the attitudes and interests of the royal family to create change or answer public requests. This is not to say that the citizens of Saudi Arabia are unhappy or discontented with their government. It only means that their rights are interpreted and protected by the royal Saud family.

In other authoritarian states, governments have come to power by means of a coup d'etat (violent overthrow of the state). Usually instigated by members of the

military establishment, most coup d'etats resulted in what are commonly referred to as military dictatorships. At the most basic level, military dictatorships fuse the political institutions with those of the military. Just as democracies tend to separate the civilian government from that of the military and provide constitutional guarantees limiting domestic military initiatives, many authoritarian states consider the military as a means of dominating the entire political system and maintaining order.

Even though the era of the military dictatorship is slowly coming to an end, it is by no means a relic of the distant past. Military dictatorships were common in Latin America (where they are referred to as juntas) and Africa throughout most of what is referred to as the Cold War: the period from the end of World War II until the end of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s. During this time, the whims of the two superpowers perpetuated strict adherence to policy choices. Both the United States and the Soviet Union required their proxy states in Latin America, Africa, and Asia to adhere to their political objectives. For example, after the Soviet Union entered Afghanistan in 1979, the United States gave neighboring Pakistan billions of dollars as a means of supporting the anti-Soviet forces there.

Characteristic 3: Authoritarian States Limit Free Speech and Control the Press in an Attempt to Maintain Political Power

In authoritarian states, all forms of traditional media are controlled by the government in order to maintain control. For centuries, the traditional media (newspapers, magazines, books, plays, radio, and television) have served as a major source of political upheaval and change. From Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* to Vaclav Havel's *The Memorandum*, members of the literary and journalistic communities have been successful in promoting discussions that attack the practices of authoritarianism. Silencing opposition groups is, therefore, a major priority of most authoritarian regimes.

Since the French Revolution, the media have been referred to as the Fourth Estate: a pillar of society that projects its voice amid a chorus of government institutions and public demands. (Traditionally, the three other pillars of society were the clergy (religious authorities), the nobility, and the common people.) In authoritarian states, it has been common to imprison activists and journalists to suppress antigovernment speech. Take, for example, the actions of the elected Russian President Vladimir Putin. Since 2016, Putin has begun to crack down on internet freedoms under the guise of "security." Although there is widespread internet access in Russia, it is becoming clear that President Putin does not like the level of freedom that its citizens have to condemn him and his policies. Take, for example, a new set of censorship laws (2019). According to *CNN*, these laws "call for penalties of up to 15 days in administrative detention for those found guilty of posting information that shows 'disrespect for society, the state, and state symbols of the Russian

Federation'—including presumably, Putin himself."[7] From a legal standpoint, the main argument against such laws is that they are entirely arbitrary. In the absence of a truly independent judiciary, who gets to determine what is considered "disrespectful"? It is pretty clear that these laws are designed to stifle debate through fear but also through deliberate manipulation and control of what people are able to access online.

This type of behavior is commonplace in authoritarian states. To maintain political control, authoritarian regimes enact policies designed to stifle opposition. Although Putin's policies appear repressive, they are by no means uncommon. Similar tactics have been used by dictatorial regimes around the world for centuries.

Characteristic 4: Authoritarian States Lack Representative Political Parties

One of the defining features of democratic governments is the presence of a multitude of political parties. In democracies, political parties are useful in organizing viewpoints and electing individuals to public office. They provide democracies with differing opinions and viewpoints, and they offer citizens a variety of political choices. Although political parties have different levels of membership and platform appeal, they serve to add legitimacy to the system.

Authoritarian states, on the other hand, lack this diversity in organized political viewpoints. In fact, some authoritarian states have only one political party that serves to provide a veil of legitimacy to an otherwise illegitimate government. The Ba'ath Party of Iraq under Saddam Hussein serves as an important example.

In 1940, the Arab Socialist Ba'ath Party was founded in Damascus, Syria, by Michel Aflaq and Salah al-Bitar. Largely a political party founded on the popular postwar Arab beliefs of anticolonialism, socialism, and Arab nationalism, which had gained ideological momentum in response to the creation of the state of Israel (1948), Ba'athism would not gain major political momentum in Syria until the 1960s.

Because the Ba'ath Party was originally designed as a vehicle for Arab and thus regional unity, it was deemed by its advocates as the most powerful force for political change in the Middle East. However, this would not be the case. As the Ba'ath Party gained political power in nearby Iraq, its "regional" vision was replaced by an "Iraqi" vision by the new leadership there.[8] This changed the nature of its power in the region and allowed Iraq under the direction of Saddam Hussein to introduce measures that pertained exclusively to his own beliefs.

After taking control of the Ba'ath party in 1979, Hussein used it to eliminate opposing viewpoints and political opponents. Once widely regarded as a party of intellectuals calling for pan-Arab secularism, it degenerated into one of the harshest vehicles of repression in the Middle East. "In one display of his brutality, Saddam stood in front of an audience of party members where he named several high-ranking Ba'athists who were quickly ushered out of the auditorium and executed

for allegedly planning a coup. The infamous speech was videotaped and used to strike fear in anyone who dared consider challenging Saddam's authority."[9]

The Ba'ath Party, like all authoritarian single parties, concentrates political control in the hands of a few individuals whose positions ultimately depend on the whims of the individual in power. Differing political views and platforms are restricted in authoritarian states because they could lead to an undermining of political control. Therefore, legitimacy is defined by the ruling political party. If the one-party system determines legitimacy, membership in all other parties, by definition, is illegitimate.

Now that we have discussed some of the general characteristics of authoritarian states, you are better prepared to examine some authoritarian states in greater detail. Focusing on issues of human-rights abuses, media censorship, lack of due process, arbitrary arrests and seizure, and the lack of fair and open elections, we attempt to provide a basic framework from which to progress. Fortunately, in today's world there are only a few states that continue to behave in an undemocratic, authoritarian fashion. We have chosen three states that we believe best exemplify modern authoritarianism: the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, and the People's Republic of China. All three are classic examples of authoritarianism and will hopefully allow the reader the opportunity to understand how authoritarian states deny their people certain freedoms. The section will begin with Saudi Arabia, one of the wealthiest countries in the world and one of the last remaining monarchies.

Contemporary Authoritarianism: Saudi Arabia, North Korea, and China

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Situated in the heart of the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is a state of incredible contradictions. With an estimated gross domestic product (GDP) of $310 billion, an annual economic growth of 6.6 percent, and an economic sector dominated by its vast oil reserves, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is one of the wealthiest countries in the Middle East.[10] On the other hand, Saudi Arabia is also the birthplace of Islam, a religion known for its modesty and shunning of materialism. So how does Saudi Arabia balance the opulence of capitalism with the piety of Islam? The answer seems to lie with the configuration of its government and the application of its law.

Constitutional Provisions and Political Powers

Maintaining its role as the birthplace of Islam and the custodian of two of Islam's holiest sites, Mecca and Medina, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (shown in the accompanying map in Image 9.2) is governed by a traditional royal family committed to

the legal application and interpretation of **Wahhabism**, a variation of Sunni Islam known for its strict teachings and literal interpretations of the Koran. To suggest that Islam plays a large role in the establishment of Saudi law would be a gross understatement. The Saudi constitution, known as the Basic Law, is based entirely on three sources: the Koran (Islam's Holy Book), Shari'a Law (Islamic law), and the cultural traditions of the region.[11] In fact, Chapter 2, Article 6 of the Saudi constitution defines the role of the citizens as having "to pay allegiance to the King, in obedience to the Holy Koran, and in the tradition of the Prophet."[12] Islam, and in particular Wahhabism, is therefore much more than the state religion of Saudi Arabia. It is the source of all legal and social legitimacy. It serves as both the glue that binds Saudi society together and the wedge that drives it apart.

Wahhabism: A form of Sunni Islam established in the eighteenth century by Muhammad Ibn Abdul-abl-Wahhab. It is considered by most scholars to be one of the most conservative interpretations of the Muslim holy book, the Koran.

In much the same way that legal authority flows from Islam, *political* authority flows from the monarch. The king of Saudi Arabia and the appointed Council of Ministers, Shura Council, and Consultative Council determine all of the **constitutional provisions** and form the entire political system. As formally proclaimed in Chapter 2 of the Saudi constitution, "Rule passes to the sons of the founding king, Abd al-Aziz Bin Abd al-Rahman al-Faysal Al Sa'ud, and to their children's children. [In practice] the king chooses the heir apparent and relieves him of duties by Royal order."[13] Since its formal unification as a state in 1932, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been ruled by seven kings: the founder of the kingdom and his sons. The next king of Saudi Arabia will be the current Crown Prince, Mohammed bin Salman (MBS), the seventh son of the regime's founder.

Constitutional Provisions: The specific arrangement of the law in any particular country; exactly what protections individuals have and how the government is able to act.

Like other contemporary authoritarian states, a combination of economic development and urbanization has forced Saudi Arabia to create some semblance of a legislative system. In addition to the king, who serves as both head of state and head of government, there are three advisory bodies: the

Image 9.2 Surrounded by many states in North Africa and the Middle East, Saudi Arabia is home to two of Islam's holiest sites: Mecca and Medina.

aforementioned Council of Ministers, the Shura Council, and the Consultative Council. Although these institutions lack the electoral and legislative features of their democratic counterparts, they each perform certain functions. Because Wahhabi Islam is both the unifying legal and social feature, all potential political legislation must proceed through a process of religious justification. Since the early 1950s, the Council of Ministers and the Shura Council (Islamic council) have been given the authority to determine if potential legislation is in accordance with Shari'a law.[14] If the legislation is deemed appropriate, it is then passed on to the king for his final approval.

The most recently created legislative body, the Consultative Council, was established in 1993 as one of the late King Fahd's reform initiatives. Designed to provide the king with an understanding of issues at the local and provincial levels, the Consultative Council serves as a way of prioritizing issues before the Saudi bureaucracy.[15] In essence, the Consultative Council was created as an attempt to balance the streamlined federal monarchy with that of the thirteen provinces. Its 150 appointed members provide the people of Saudi Arabia with a sense that their local interests are being considered. Although it is a far cry from being a democratically elected legislative body, it seems to have given the citizens a greater level of transparency in the policy-making domain of their government.

Recently, the kingdom has seen a rise in the number of critics who claim that this move toward greater governmental transparency has been merely an attempt by the monarchs to stay in power. In 2004, international observers were shocked when the king announced that Saudi citizens would be allowed to vote for their local municipal councils. Although it appeared at the time to be a positive move, it turned out to be something quite different. According to Amr Hamzawy, a senior associate at the Carnegie Endowment and an expert in Middle Eastern politics, the 2005 municipal elections were merely a way of distracting international observers and continuing the king's authoritarian rule. Hamzawy stated:

> [The elections witnessed] the exclusion of women as [both] voters and candidates, low levels of citizens' participation, trivial competencies assigned to elected local councilors who were kept away from high politics and supposed to primarily discuss urban planning and street lighting and finally dominance of tribal loyalties and religious inclinations in determining voters' preferences.[16]

However, things began to change at the start of the second decade of the twenty-first century and against all odds, in December 2015, Saudi Arabia held its first municipal elections. These elections were important for a variety of reasons; however, the fact that women were allowed to vote and seek office as candidates made them historic. More than 950 females ran as candidates and more than 130,000 registered to vote.[17] Although only eighteen women were elected across the kingdom, it is a sign that some changes are underway.

MBS, Saudi Arabia's current leader, has continued to proclaim his willingness to relax some of the conditions facing the kingdom's women, such as allowing women

the right to drive a car (2018), however his regime is still considered authoritarian as one can understand by his treatment of those in the press. The most severe example of the kingdom's repressive ways was with the brutal murder of *Washington Post* journalist, Jamal Khashoggi, an outspoken critic of both MBS and the Saudi regime.[18] If one is unwilling to remain silent in the face of oppression and openly criticize the regime, they are running the risk that they will face serious consequences.

But why? Why is Saudi Arabia so far behind other countries when it comes to women's rights? Like elsewhere in the Middle East, Saudi society is defined by the twin pillars of **patriarchy** and Islam. The patriarchal arrangement that excludes women from even the most basic rights is reinforced by a misinterpretation of Islam that predominates all social life. Patriarchy is a system designed to keep power in the hands of the male population. It must be remembered that Islam, in its truest form, is not patriarchal.[19] Unfortunately, what has occurred in Saudi Arabia is that Islam, and in particular Wahhabism, has become an excuse for the royal family to maintain this patriarchal view of life.

Patriarchy: A concept that is used to define societies that place men in positions of power over women.

According to Islam's holy book, the Koran, women and men are supposed to be treated as equals. In fact, one famous passage condemns those who are unwilling to maintain this equality. Chapter 4, Verse 19 (which speaks specifically to men) states, "You are forbidden to inherit women against their will. Nor should you treat them with harshness . . . [and that you must] live with them on a footing of kindness and equity."[20] This passage and others like it reinforce the notion that Islam is a religion that values the equality of human life. Even the prophet Muhammad "often stated that, 'all people are equal . . . [and] that there is no merit of an Arab over a non-Arab, or of a white over a Black person, or of a male over a female.'"[21] Thus, what must be understood is that it is the application and not the beliefs of Islam that seem to perpetuate division. The Saudi regime has simply co-opted Islam as a way of maintaining its authority.

This response, however, has serious consequences. It has led to a treatment of women, non-Muslims, and foreigners that is unconscionable. (Think about it: women were not even allowed to hold office until 2015 or to drive cars!) These groups have few rights in Saudi Arabia and continue to be subjected to harsh treatment from religious police and other government agents. The misuse of Islam as a political weapon is at the heart of the debate, as is the rise in government-sanctioned Wahhabism.[22]

AP Images

Image 9.3 Saudi women and girls wear the black abaya, worn by some Muslim women, as they walk in public through the marketplace in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. The World Economic Forum 2023 Global Gender Gap Report ranks Saudi Arabia as 131 out of 146 countries for gender equality.

The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea

In many respects, it was former President George W. Bush who forced North Korea into the American consciousness. In 2002, in his State of the Union address, Bush labeled North Korea as

part of an "Axis of Evil," one of three authoritarian states "arming to threaten the peace of the world" by furthering the development of nuclear weapons.[23] However, North Korea's authoritarianism goes well beyond its nuclear ambitions and capabilities. It is a country that has been described as a massive prison, where many of its people, including its children, live in forced labor camps. Although the world has little concrete evidence of the policy-making apparatus and exact nature of "the hermit kingdom," one report estimates that between "150,000 and 200,000 political criminals are incarcerated in five large labor camps."[24] And what does it take to be labeled a "political criminal"? Apparently, not that much. According to *The Economist*, North Korea ranks the population based on its loyalty to its leader, and more than half of those incarcerated are labeled as "'wavering,' a term that suggests that their support is not as strong as it should be."[25] If this sounds absurd, it is not. It is a logical outcome of an authoritarian state that lacks independent institutions based on the rule of law. To best understand this system, we must understand its origins. The following section helps us do just that.

The origins of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea's official name) can be found amid the ruins of World War II. Following Japan's defeat in 1945, the Korean peninsula was divided into two parts: a communist north that was eventually propped up by the Soviet Union and a south that was placed under the protection of the United States. By 1948, Kim Il-Sung had risen to prominence within North Korea's Communist Party. By 1950, armed with Soviet military support, Kim's North Korean army invaded the South, making Korea the first battlefield of the Cold War.

AP Photo/KCNA

Image 9.4 Here is North Korean leader Kim Jong Un (right) with certain high-ranking officials touring a defense post near the border with South Korea. In North Korea, every act of leadership is militarized, and every photograph of Kim is designed to demonstrate leadership and concern for the people.

Although never formally recognized by the United States as a war, the Korean conflict encapsulated and formalized the essence of the Cold War. It proved to be a microcosm of the struggle between the Soviet Union and the United States, communism versus capitalism. When a cease-fire agreement was reached in July 1953, the division of the Korean peninsula became cemented. The 38th parallel, the land that divides North and South Korea, became the symbol of the ideological divide between the two superpowers. The South was placed

on the road to free-market capitalism as the North suffered under its leader Kim Il-Sung and the military abandonment of the Soviet Union, which viewed North Korea as a losing battle.

This sense of abandonment forced Kim to take on a new dimension of leadership: The anti-Japanese communist revolutionary had begun to transform the ideology according to his own visions of statecraft. Labeling this new form of governance juche (self-reliance), Kim began to deliberately isolate his country from all things associated with the West.

What resulted from this dual policy of isolationism and self-reliance was the creation of a centrally planned economy. Trade from Western countries dwindled, and private initiatives within North Korea disappeared. Kim's Public Distribution System (PDS), which rationed everything from rice to televisions, became the centerpiece of the North Korean bureaucracy. Determining the exact amount of food and other goods became one of the government's top priorities. In fact, the PDS took the rationing of grain to unbelievable heights. Different socioeconomic classes were given different amounts of foodstuffs. According to Andrei Lankov, an expert in North Korean politics:

> The largest amount, 900g daily, was reserved for workers engaged in hard manual labor: steelworkers, miners, loggers and others. A majority of the population was entitled to a daily ration of 700g. College and high-school students were given 600g and younger students received 300–400g, depending on their age. Retirees were also entitled to 300g of cereals. The North Koreans were given some other foodstuffs—cabbage, soy sauce and other products—but in terms of nutrition almost all calories in their diet came from rice and other cereals.[26]

Throughout most of the Cold War, this system of rationing worked pretty well. This success was partly because of traditional Korean eating habits and partly because of Kim's tightly controlled propaganda machine, which kept North Koreans from comparing their lifestyles with those of their neighbors.

Yet how is North Korea governed? This question is essential to an understanding of North Korea's current role in the world. Its answer, however, is based on its historical situation. North Korea (along with China, Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam) is considered a remnant of the communist world. However, in today's world, this designation is quite misleading. When one realizes that China's economy continues to be flooded

Image 9.5 Korean Peninsula

with private investors and that most of the people living in Cuba, Laos, and Vietnam have forgotten the reasons for their government's ideological views, it is safe to say that North Korea is an archaic reminder of a time gone by. This makes North Korea all the more interesting (and dangerous) because it still continues to act as a closed society, largely shut off from the rest of the world.

Political, Economic, and Social Structure

Politics

Today, the government of North Korea is best classified as a one-man dictatorship.[27] Although the actual structure of the government remains unclear, one thing *is* clear: all policies, domestic and foreign, emerge from Kim Jong Un, the grandson of North Korea's founder, Kim Il-Sung. In addition to being looked at as the personal embodiment of the state, Kim Jong Un is also considered the General Secretary of the Korean Workers Party (KWP), Supreme Commander of the People's Armed Forces, and Chairman of the National Defense Commission.[28] Because North Korea is still technically a centrally planned, communist state, the KWP remains the only official state party. This means that all government officials are required to be members of the KWP.

In addition to the executive branch, there is a unicameral legislature (Supreme People's Assembly) and a supreme court (Central Court). Unfortunately, both institutions lack any of the typical roles of their democratic counterparts. All of the representatives of the Supreme People's Assembly have to be members of the KWP and must vow their allegiance to Kim. As in many other authoritarian states, the democratic appearance of these institutions is designed to give the international community (and the North Korean people) the sense that Kim is a legitimate leader. However, Kim's combined practices of propaganda and forced allegiance tactics are the antithesis of an open and free society.

According to Kongdon Oh, a nonresident senior fellow at the Center for Northeast Asian Policy Studies, North Korean society has been divided into three categories of people based on loyalty to the regime: a loyal *core* class, a suspect *wavering* class, and a politically unreliable *hostile* class.[29] These designations were created by Kim Jong Un's father, Kim Jong Il, to distinguish political friends from political foes. "As of the most recent Party Congress . . . approximately 25 percent of the population fell into the *core* class, 50 percent fell into the *wavering* class, and the remaining unfortunate 25 percent were relegated to the *hostile* class."[30] Although the exact placement procedures are unknown, Oh has suggested that most people have been placed into one category or another because of their family history. For example, if one's parents were loyal party members, then they will most likely be placed in the *core* class. If, however, one's parents or grandparents were of a noble or upper class before Kim Il-Sung's consolidation of power, then that individual will likely never escape the confines of the hostile class—a class that has faced the worst kinds of criminal treatment over the past 60 years.

Economy

Today, in much the same way that North Korea's political power structure is unclear, and the treatment of its citizens arbitrary and harsh, so is its economy. According to the *CIA World Factbook*, "North Korea does not publish any reliable National Income Accounts."[31] Its estimated gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of $1,700 indicates that its people are living well below the poverty level (BPL). In fact, with a GDP per capita so low, it ranks 215 in the world (this is down eleven places between 2019 and 2023!). What accounts for such devastation? Continual food shortages, a tight grip on innovation, a security apparatus that forces people to limit any type of freedom, an aggressive nuclear program, a geography and climate that is not conducive to growth, and an undemocratic regime that is unwilling to trade or do business with any other country (with the exception of China). To this day, the North Korean economy still experiences major food shortages and is still dependent on the economic aid packages it receives from the World Food Programme, a privately funded organization that operates within the structure of the United Nations that is committed to the eradication of hunger in the poorest parts of the world.

But how can this kind of state continue in our interconnected, technologically driven era of globalization? In essence, how is a state like North Korea able to isolate itself and its people from the outside world? Unfortunately, the answer is all too simple. It appears that Kim Jong Un, much like his father and grandfather before him, has relied on the most basic, traditional, authoritarian measure: a tightly controlled media with a strong propensity toward propaganda. The most notable example of North Korean propaganda is its Korean Central News Agency, which is the only source for news about North Korea. This is as "globalized" as North Korea gets. Because this virtual newspaper is owned and operated by those loyal to "the leader," it is only allowed to print stories deemed acceptable. For example, readers will never find any editorials critical of the regime or the practices of his party members. Instead, one usually finds sensational stories depicting Kim as a demigod. One story went so far as to claim that during his first attempt at golf, Kim Jong Un's father, the recently deceased Kim Jong Il, produced eleven holes-in-one, a feat even the greatest golfers could never achieve.[32]

So what will happen to North Korea, and, more important, why does it matter to you? In addition to its long and brutal history of human-rights violations, labor camps, and food shortages, the government of North Korea possesses a nuclear weapons program. This fact makes North Korea a regional concern. However, what makes its nuclear weapons program even more dangerous and global in scope is the belief that it has been selling secrets to other authoritarian regimes. Numerous experts have suggested that North Korea played a major role in the recent production and sale of uranium hexafluoride—a necessary ingredient in the development of nuclear material.[33] It seems that being a nuclear power has given North Korea a level of international significance, much in the same way that oil has provided

Why Politics Matters to You!

What If Deterrence Does Not Apply?

The Democratic People's Republic of North Korea, which is neither democratic nor a republic, seems as if it is stuck in the past. You can almost think of North Korea as a relic of a previous era, one that is trapped by a maniacal leader and a vanquished ideology. However, it is still a member of the nuclear club, which gives it special status in the global community. But why should this matter to you? Because traditional threats and economic sanctions might not work on North Korea.

As we learned in the previous chapters, the United States had several benefits over most countries on earth. First of all, it possesses nuclear arms. The United States has the ability to launch a nuclear weapon and to deliver it to any place on earth. During the early years of the Cold War, this meant that the United States only had to worry about the nuclear arsenal of the Soviet Union, the only other member of the nuclear club. Second, and probably more important than the first reason, because the Soviets had their own nuclear arsenal, a policy known as deterrence emerged, which many have argued protected the world from a nuclear holocaust. What deterrence argued was that neither side had the will to launch a "first strike" because each side realized that retaliation would mean the end of the world. Therefore, deterrence created a type of logic that maintained the stability of the global order for almost fifty years.

The point of this story (which we will go into in greater detail in the next section) is that North Korea may not operate according to these standard "rules of engagement." If, in fact, the reports are true that Kim Jong Un is as brutal and unstable as his father, then what are his incentives for maintaining peace (or at the least, not launching a nuclear weapon)?[34] Was the logic of deterrence only useful to explain Cold War relations?

Think It Through

1. **Is the logic of deterrence still useful?**
2. **Is North Korea a unique case? If it is, does this mean it should be dealt with differently?**

power to several states in the Middle East. What makes North Korea even more dangerous, however, is the fact that its bargaining chip is nuclear, and its leader is determined to continue to ignore international pressure.

The People's Republic of China

On April 14, 1989, because of the death of former Communist Party general secretary Hu Yaobang, a number of Chinese activists, college students, and intellectuals took to Tiananmen Square in downtown Beijing to protest decades of nondemocratic rule. Over time, hundreds of thousands of individuals joined the protests and expanded it to other parts of the country. "On May 4, a student declaration was read in Tiananmen Square calling on the government to accelerate political and economic reform, guarantee constitutional freedoms, fight corruption, adopt a press law, and to allow the establishment of privately run newspapers."[35] One month later, on June 4, the military stepped in and violently put an end to the protest. Although the death toll remains unclear because of the Chinese government's refusal to take responsibility for its actions, Nicholas D. Kristof of the *New York Times*

stated, "It seems plausible that about a dozen soldiers and policemen were killed, along with 400 to 800 civilians."[36]

One of the protesters who survived the June 4 military crackdown was college professor Liu Xiaobo, who was so inspired by the events in Tiananmen Square that he dedicated his life to protesting China's human-rights violations. In 2008, Liu released a document titled "Charter 08" that called for a massive change in China's government policies. It was subsequently signed by hundreds of Chinese intellectuals. Unfortunately, this did not go over well with the Chinese authorities, who went to his house, placed him under arrest, and subsequently sentenced him to eleven years in prison.[37] On October 8, 2010, Liu Xiaobo was awarded the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize, an award that he was unable to receive. For many international observers and Chinese citizens, Liu's incarceration symbolized the authoritarian nature of the People's Republic of China. Unfortunately, Liu died on July 23, 2017, from liver cancer.

Today, China remains a paradox of power in the international arena. On the one hand, its repressive policies make it seem like other authoritarian states we have already discussed. On the other hand, it has emerged as one of the world's strongest powers with a vibrant and increasingly diversified economy. This paradox makes China's future unclear. Will it remain mired in authoritarianism? Or will it seek to grow into a more liberal democratic state? Although we cannot answer these questions, we can provide you with a look into the nature of Chinese politics today and some of the issues the country has to address.

Image 9.6 With a population of more than 1.3 billion and an ever-expanding economy, China will continue its dominance in the twenty-first century.

Executive and Legislative Institutions of the Communist Party

On October 1, 1949, Mao Zedong established the People's Republic of China (PRC). Mao was considered by many Chinese citizens at the time as a symbol of opposition and strength because of his commitment to the defeat of the Japanese in World War II and to the overthrow of the corrupt government of Chiang Kai-Shek. Mao developed a theory of governing that incorporated elements of Marxism-Leninism (refer to Chapter 10) into a largely

peasant-based society. Between 1949 and his death in 1976, Mao created a political system that transformed Chinese society into a totalitarian state that was driven by the power of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

In the first few lines of his *Little Red Book*, Mao stated, "The force at the core leading our cause is the Chinese Communist Party . . . [and that] without the efforts of the Chinese Communist Party . . . China can never achieve independence and liberation, or industrialization and the modernization of her agriculture."[38] In many ways, this attitude toward the CCP remains true to its leadership today. The CCP is still the dominant force in Chinese political life and maintains a membership of approximately 70 million members.[39]

According to William A. Joseph, "to fully understand governance and policy making in China, it is necessary to look at the structure of both the CCP and the government of the PRC (the 'state') and the relationship between the two."[40] This is the case because the PRC operates at the will of the CCP. Because both the PRC and the CCP have their own "constitutions" and elections that are not considered fair, free, or open, political mobility remains undefined. In essence, there is no definite path to the general secretary of the Communist Party, no electoral college, no winner-takes-all system, and so forth.

So how does one become general secretary of the Communist Party? Although most Chinese leaders have emerged from a lifetime of service to the Communist Party, rising to its highest offices (the Politburo and the Standing Committee), this is not always the case. Take, for example, Deng Xiaoping, who served as general secretary from 1978 to 1998. "The sources of Deng's immense power came from informal factors, such as his seniority as one of the founders of the regime, his guanxi (personnel connections) with key military and political leaders, and his long advocacy of now widely supported ideas about how China should develop into a strong and modern nation."[41] In many ways, the general secretary of the Communist Party with consultation with the Politburo and Standing Committee sets and enforces the agenda for Chinese politics, reinforcing the fact that political power in China is now and has always been a "behind-the-scenes" operation.

One of the most interesting aspects of the general secretary is how his power and reputation enhances his ability to stay in power. In the 1990s, China passed legislation that placed a two-term limit on all future presidents (general secretaries). This measure was designed to ensure that the leadership of the Communist Party was constantly being checked and that each president would serve for on average ten years. The current president, Xi Jinping however, changed all of that.

In 2017, Xi, the latest leader of the Communist Party, "consolidated his political power as the party voted to enshrine his name and political ideology in the party's constitution—elevating his status to the level of its founder, Chairman Mao."[42] Much of Xi's power comes from his international standing. Xi has been able to place China at the center of Asian affairs and develop its economy in extraordinary ways.

You may recall from Chapter 1 how China is currently engaged in business deals all over Africa. Much of this is because of President Xi. Since the two-term limit policy has been lifted, Xi can serve for life. This might be viewed as a power grab, but it can also be viewed as an attempt to demonstrate stability in the face of a changing economic environment. Remember, democracies have their leaders change every few years. The American president and Congress have to stand for elections. This can cause a major shift in ideology every few years. China has told the world that their leadership is more stable and, thus, more secure.

Although the president is clearly the most visible and powerful leader in China, there are several "legislative institutions" of varying levels of influence and power within the CCP. The two most important, the National Party Congress and the Central Committee, are representative in name only and really serve only to underline the policies already made by the party leadership. For example, the National Party Congress "meets for one week, every five years," is composed of "more than 2,100 members," and serves symbolically to demonstrate to China (and others around the world) its commitment to unity and its leadership.[43] The more representative Central Committee holds elections for its members from across China but in a tightly controlled manner. Only those members of the party who gain approval from the highest levels are allowed to have their names listed on political ballots.

Domestic Issues and Concerns: Media Censorship and Energy Consumption/Environmental Devastation

Because Chinese politics is controlled by an ideologically driven, authoritarian political party (CCP), life in China for the average citizen is quite demanding. Over the past few decades, however, in large part due to the Tiananmen Square protests and the rise of information technology, a number of domestic and international activists and scholars have attempted to shed light on China's human-rights violations. These revelations, coupled with China's rise as a financial superpower, have made Chinese society a unique paradox. Although there are countless issues affecting the livelihoods of the Chinese people, we will briefly address two that we believe best exemplify this modern authoritarian state as it attempts to wrestle with the new demands placed on it by its financial success: media censorship and environmental devastation.

Media Censorship and the Slow Crawl Toward Openness

Today, the biggest threat to the status quo power of the CCP is the ever-increasing influence of new forms of media. Over the past few years, China has attempted to maintain its tight grip on information in a number of authoritarian ways. In 2010, China went to "war" with Google by eliminating its people's access to the popular search engine, and in February 2011, in response to the uprisings that took place across parts of the Middle East and North Africa, it banned foreign journalists from certain parts of the country. In fact, after a number of Chinese citizens indicated

that they too wanted to openly protest their government's policies, "Foreign media who tried to take photos or shoot video on Beijing's Wangfujing shopping street . . . were told they needed special permission to work there."[44] The effects of such policies have allowed the Communist Party to maintain its dominance in the delivery of news and information.

More recently, China has begun to crackdown on social media users. In July 2022, the Chinese company, Sina Weibo issued a statement indicating that it would prohibit the use of certain phrases or terms that social media content creators have used as a way of protesting the government. Since criticism of the government is outlawed, many on social media have used certain expressions as code words that help to shield their true meanings.[45] As a result, the Chinese government has taken to censoring social media users.

In China, the media have always been directly controlled by the state and monitored by the Communist Party's Central Propaganda Department (CPD). This means that the state information agencies are only allowed to produce information that gains approval from the CPD. According to Isabella Bennett, a research associate on the Council on Foreign Relations, the Chinese government "revised its existing *Law on Guarding State Secrets* to tighten control over information flows . . . (which) extended requirements to Internet companies and telecommunications operators to cooperate with Chinese authorities in investigations into leaks of state secrets."[46] In China (like any country), the media are considered the avenues by which information is given to the public. However, unlike its democratic counterparts, the CCP views the media not as a source of freedom but as a threat to its security. Because policy making in China is couched in secrecy, the only acceptable vehicle of information is the Communist Party itself, which has developed a series of state-controlled agencies to control "acceptable" news sources.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Chinese government was particularly concerned with how it handled the outbreak. Scientists who had warned colleagues about the lethality of the virus and its transmissibility were silenced. As a result, the public was left to struggle with the death toll. One such scientist, Li Wenliang, had tried to alert the public to the virus but was censored. Unfortunately, Dr. Li contracted the virus and subsequently died. His death sent shockwaves through social media as many understood it as a reminder of how the silencing of the truth can have catastrophic consequences.[47]

Energy Use and Environmental Devastation

When the first edition of this textbook was published, we quoted the World Bank's assessment of urbanization in China and stated that its urban population was at 430 million people, or 37 percent of its entire population.[48] As of 2021 (the last year data were available) that number has climbed to 491 million people.[49] Because urban centers require greater energy usage than their rural counterparts and are valued as the primary sources of a nation's wealth, the Chinese government stated that it

must remain committed to acquiring fossil fuels at a reasonable rate. Therefore, it is no accident that China has scoured the globe to acquire oil.

This international campaign has made fossil fuel consumption in China skyrocket. In fact, over the past few years, fossil fuel consumption in China has hovered around 88 percent.[50] And it is not even near its economic growth potential. As its population centers continue to grow and its industries become more and more reliant on energy, its hunger for petroleum and coal will continue to expand. Either way, however, we must stop and think about what this is doing to the well-being of the planet. China might be emerging as one of the dominant states of the twenty-first century, but at what cost to the health and safety of its people?

Fossil fuels (which are coal, oil, and natural gas) take millions of years to form and are the byproducts of animal and plant remains.[51] They also must be burned to produce energy. This has led to what climate scientists refer to as the **greenhouse effect**. As fossil fuels are burned, they release carbon dioxide (CO_2) and water (H_2O), which are then trapped in the atmosphere. When sunlight shines through to the earth's surface, it reflects back through the atmosphere but is trapped by the accumulated carbon dioxide. Thus, it is the burning of large amounts of fossil fuels that many scientists suggest causes **climate change**. As the earth gets warmer, the weather becomes more erratic.

Fossil Fuels: Coal, oil, and natural gas.

Greenhouse Effect: The burning of fossil fuels that results in CO_2 and H_2O being trapped in the atmosphere.

Climate Change: The result of many years of burning high levels of fossil fuels, which has caused the earth to heat up.

Although climate change is a hotly debated topic in many political circles, to a rapidly expanding economy like China, it can often be overlooked. Why? Because such a debate over an issue like climate change has the potential to slow down China's massive industrial base. In simple terms, China believes that it needs to continue its industrial path even at the expense of its environment and the health of its citizens. According to its own Ministry of Health, "pollution has made cancer China's leading cause of death . . . [as] ambient air pollution alone is blamed for hundreds of thousands of deaths each year."[52] To put this in a better perspective, "only 1 percent of the country's 560 million city-dwellers breathe air considered safe by the European Union."[53] In fact, there are "industrial cities where people rarely see the sun; children [are] killed or sickened by lead poisoning or other types of local pollution; [and] a coastline so swamped by algal red tides that large sections of the ocean no longer sustain marine life."[54] One may ask why this is the case. But the answer appears to be simple: for the ability to compete in and dominate the global economy of the twenty-first century.

Frederic J. Brown/Afp/Getty Images

Image 9.7 City dwellers in China's new urban centers battle unprecedented levels of air pollution.

However, if China continues to pollute on such an elaborate scale, its economic power will have to be used to correct domestic

environmental problems. In fact, it is this assessment that was recently mentioned by both China's Ministry of Environmental Protection and its premier Li Keqiang. Zhou Shengxian, China's chief environmental minister, said that "if China meant to quadruple the size of its economy over 20 years without more damage, it would have to become more efficient in resource use."[55] Zhou continued by saying that "the depletion, deterioration, and exhaustion of resources and the deterioration of the environment have become serious bottlenecks constraining economic and social development."[56]

To put a financial total on such "bottlenecks" makes their statements even more devastating. According to the World Bank, water pollution in the form of "acid rain costs 30 billion yuan in crop damage and 7 billion in material damage annually."[57] In 2003, overall "water pollution in China was 362 billion yuan, or about 2.68 percent of GDP for that same year."[58] Currently, that number had more than doubled, reaching 6 percent of GDP.[59] These figures highlight the true cost of development and argue that unless China (and the United States, for that matter) is serious about placing limits on its energy consumption, it will be fueling its own demise.

9 Summary

STR/AFP/Getty Images

Although many have argued that the end of World War II brought an end to the traditional authoritarian state, some authoritarian states and authoritarian policies continue to play an active role in world politics. Saudi Arabia continues to dictate international oil prices, North Korea continues to develop its nuclear program, and China continues to expand its economy at the expense of its population. Authoritarian states, therefore, pose an interesting dilemma to the international community. Their continued denial of their own people's rights places them at philosophical odds with their democratic counterparts, but their power (economic or military) keeps them at the bargaining table.

In the next decade of the twenty-first century, it will be interesting to note how long authoritarian states can last. Has the era of authoritarianism ended? Or will such states continue to find justifications for their power? In a world that is constantly changing with the development of new forms of technology, those states that suppress information will face much greater pressure than those that do not.

The next part of the text attempts to answer some of these questions from the international perspective. As we have looked at the domestic realm of both democracies and authoritarian states, it is now necessary to look at the ways in which these states interact in the world.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What is authoritarianism, and how has it been justified?

   Authoritarian states seek to control the freedoms of their citizens. Citizens in authoritarian states have limited ability to protest and select their representatives. Authoritarianism has long been justified as an appropriate answer to democracies that allow citizens to engage in fair, free, and open elections, which can result in anarchy and chaos.

2. What do Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes say about human nature in relation to authoritarianism?

   Machiavelli and Hobbes both agreed that human beings are motivated by self-interest, greed, and a sense of superiority. If a leader is not absolute, then chaos and descension will occur. The only way to ensure the development of civil society is to have an absolute ruler. Without absolute rule, there is little chance for development.

3. Why is authoritarianism still present in the world today?

   Authoritarianism is still found in the world today because of the ability of authoritarian leaders to keep power for themselves. Whether their power stems from religion or patriarchy, contemporary authoritarians use any measure, including the military, to keep power in their hands.

4. What are the similarities among the three authoritarian states mentioned in this chapter?

   Saudi Arabia, North Korea, and China share several traits. First, their governments are not elected. Thus, they are controlled either by a family or a dominant political party that are unwilling to stand for elections. Second, they censor all opposing or critical viewpoints. Third, they are willing to use propaganda to remain in power.

5. Does economic development in China mean more or less government intervention in the lives of its citizens?

   Economic development has typically resulted in greater levels of property ownership and therefore a greater call for openness and democracy. China has continued its assault on dissent and on how dissent is articulated. But only time will tell. Technology might be the tool by which the citizens free themselves from the rule of the government.

Key Terms

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10 Understanding International Relations: Terms and Theories

Image 10.1 According to the United Nations, the international system consists of approximately 193 nation-states. Artisticphoto/Shutterstock.com

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From Classic Realism to Structural Realism: Morgenthau to Waltz 268
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▶ Questions to Consider

1. What is power? What is the difference between hard power and soft power?
2. What are the three main assumptions of classical realism?
3. How can the three levels of analysis be useful to understanding issues of international conflict?
4. What are the main arguments of Marx pertaining to the inequalities of the international system? How have the neo-Marxists elevated the arguments to explain globalization?
5. What is dependency theory? Does it accurately explain poverty in certain parts of the world?

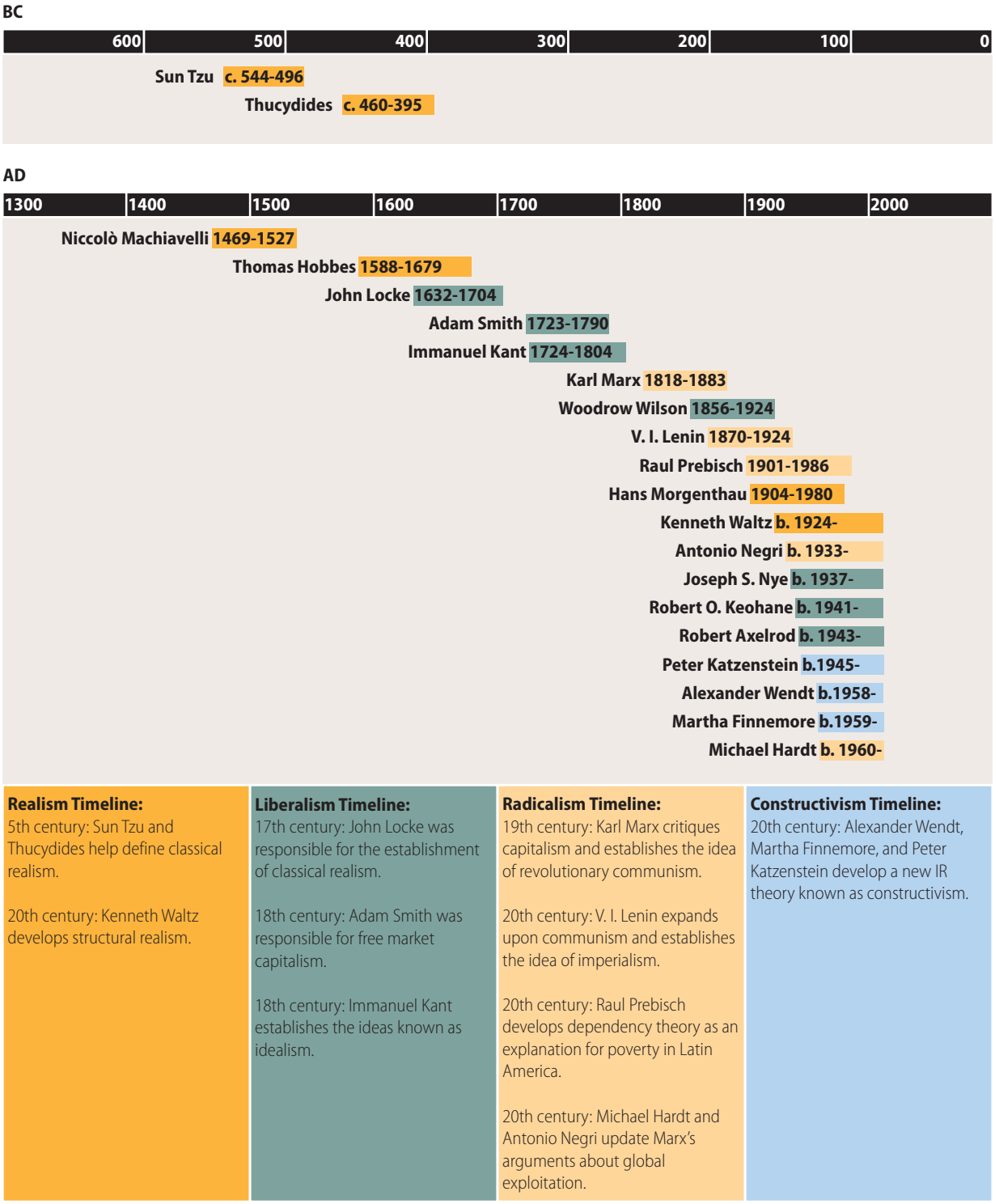
Introduction: International Relations

For more than 3000 years, scholars have attempted to explain international relations. Although the *state* as a governing unit is a relatively modern creation, investigations into the cross-border activities of political units is not. Since at least the fifth century BCE, scholars have attempted to understand what drives people to war and what makes them seek diplomatic or peaceful solutions. In the process, numerous theories have been developed that attempt to provide society with a better understanding of human nature as it relates to issues of war and peace.

Beginning with some of the classic schools of thought—realism, liberalism, radicalism, and constructivism—this chapter will introduce you to the different theories and concepts that have been developed to evaluate the subfield known as international relations (IR). In this chapter, we seek to explain some of the reasons that states at certain times opt for violence and, at other times, opt for cooperation. Because subsequent chapters are designed to provide you with an appropriate background on the evolution of the international system, this chapter is designed to provide you with an array of appropriate theoretical perspectives. It must be remembered that the international system is a multifaceted domain in which a wide array of actors (both governmental and nongovernmental) operate with one another. Sometimes the actors' intentions conflict; sometimes they do not. The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how the different schools of thought have developed to evaluate international behavior.

In addition to the different schools of thought, this chapter will also introduce you to the three levels of analysis as an approach developed by esteemed IR scholar Kenneth Waltz. The three levels of analysis are a useful tool when explaining international behavior within the realist framework because it lends itself to a more complete understanding of state behavior. According to Waltz, international activity is

Figure 10.1 Timeline of International Relations Theory



best explained by an examination of three levels of actors: individuals within states whose personalities dictate cross-border behavior; domestic pressure groups within states whose influence or interaction motivates international events; and the

international system itself, whose structure may change as a result of a refiguring of the balance of power. To bring this approach to light, we will be investigating the ongoing war in Ukraine. The three levels of analysis approach allows us to examine international relations through domestic and international prisms, realizing that the complexity of the system is so vast that it requires complex explanations.

Classic Realism: Power in International Relations

Power: The ability to make others do something that they would otherwise not have done.

As you'll recall from Chapter 3, realism flows from the ideas of those scholars who saw politics as the ability to achieve and secure power. Therefore, at the heart of realism lies **power** and the ways in which states gain and maintain it. Therefore, to best understand realism, you first must have a basic understanding of the term *power* itself. Here, we can define power as one's ability to make others (persons or states) do something they would not have otherwise done on their own. Sometimes it may take the form of force, that is, an act of violence. Other times it might be the *threat* of force coming from one who is recognized as having both the ability and the will to back up such statements. For example, "If you do not do *x*, then we will resort to the use of force." Nevertheless, power is a major theme in the school of thought known as realism. As we will learn, for realists, power is the primary determinant of political behavior and, therefore, the only measure by which international relations should be evaluated.

In discussions of international relations, two types of power have emerged: hard power and soft power. Hard power refers to the type of power we have just defined. When one state either directly uses or at least threatens force (military or economic), scholars in international relations refer to it as hard power. Soft power, on the other hand, is best defined by those agents in the international system that bring about change through the use of diplomacy or ideology. Coined by IR scholar Joseph Nye in his book *Bound to Lead: The Changing Nature of American Power*, Nye argued that American interests are best served in a post-Cold War world through diplomacy and perception.[1] For Nye, the power of the United States will be enhanced if the United States behaves in ways that increase its positive standing in the eyes of the international community. Instead of using the "carrot-and-stick" approach (rewards versus punishment), Nye argued for a third way that American foreign policy can be perceived. In other words, it is in the best interest of the United States to behave in a manner that makes it look good to other states and peoples.

According to Nye, soft power "arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals and policies."[2] Because attractiveness, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder, soft power is based on perception. Thus, "sometimes we can get the outcomes we want by affecting behavior without commanding it. If you believe that my objectives are legitimate, I may be able to persuade you to do something for me without using threats or inducements."[3] This in many ways is much more common than you may think.

Theory and Practice

Is Power Always Violent?

Force is one of the most obvious understandings of power. Simply put, force is the physical expression of power. It was force that was employed when you got in a fight with your brother over what television show to watch, and force that was used by the U.S. military to punish the Taliban for supporting al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. But does force have to be violent?

For Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, force was an effective tool against an oppressor, but it was one that did not require violence. Although Gandhi understood that persuasion (another form of power) was the most preferred choice of conflict resolution, he also understood that sometimes rational arguments are willfully ignored. Thus, he created a policy called satyagraha (from Sanskrit, meaning "truth" and "insistence") to achieve desired demands (Indian independence from Great Britain). Satyagraha is based on the assumption that those who are being oppressed have a right to be free and that the only justifiable way of achieving freedom is through nonviolent means. In doing so, the oppressed oppose those in power, but they do so in a way that elevates their moral position while forcing the oppressor to resort to violence, solidifying the oppressor's reputation as an unjust entity.

Gandhi's policy of satyagraha led to Indian independence in 1947 and inspired Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s nonviolent, civil disobedience campaign against racial injustice in the United States. King's method of satyagraha was best understood in his efforts to ensure that Black Americans received equal treatment and equal access in the segregated southern part of the United States. As Black Americans were told to leave "Whites only" restaurants, they refused to do so. This had the intended effect of having the business owners either resort to violence themselves or call the police, who then attempted to remove the protesters by force. The result was that the force used to effect change was in the form of non-violence.

Think It Through

1. Have you ever considered nonviolence as a way of achieving political goals?
2. Do you think that the policy makers in the United States consider it as a viable alternative?
3. If not, why not? Are American policy makers realists?

Take, for example, the simple issue of one's view of morality (the notion of what is right or what is wrong) in relation to action. What motivated Russian President Vladimir Putin to invade Ukraine in 2022? What motivates terrorists? For Nye, it is "not because of payments or threats (hard power) but because they believe … [the] views are legitimate."[4] Numerous terrorist attacks occur in which neither money nor threats of retribution are employed. The Ku Klux Klan, Al-Qaeda, ISIS, and others have been successful using persuasion when recruiting potential terrorists. Radical Islamic fundamentalists wanted to act for bin Laden because they believed his views were legitimate. American White supremacists feel that they are superior to people of color and that this belief is natural and ordained by God. The same applies for traditional state actors (like Russian President Putin) who can successfully persuade their citizens that war is the only viable option and that their motives are for the best interest of their countries.

Therefore, power, whether hard or soft, is necessary in any discussion of realism because it defines states in the most simplistic way: governmental actors who act for

their own self-interest. We briefly discussed the war in Ukraine in Chapter 1, but take, for example, the current rise of the BRIC countries: Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Their power comes from their potential to influence international affairs and shape the power distribution around the world. What type of power will they likely employ over the next few decades as they seek to enhance their influence and maintain their security?

If one looks at the economic growth rates of BRICs over the past thirty years, one can understand that these four economies possess the greatest ability to influence international relations in the twenty-first century. Why? Because they are heavily populated countries that have experienced a massive amount of development over the past decade. This means that the BRICs are attempting to maintain or increase their growth trajectories by altering the framework of the international system.

According to Harold James, the greatest threats to the current international system are the ways in which the BRICs handle internal domestic pressures. His brief analysis follows:

1. Highly populous countries must integrate their most impoverished (in China and India, mostly rural) as they engage with world markets.
2. China and Russia have financial systems that lack transparency, and Brazil and India are financially underdeveloped, putting further integration in the world economy at risk and increasing prospects for a financial crisis.
3. Russia is already facing massive demographic decline and an aging and sickening population; China faces the near certainty of a declining population from the 2040s onward, a belated legacy of its one-child policy.

The potential result is as follows: Flawed geopolitical giants have in the past been a source of instability (Germany before World War I), and there are good reasons to consider them presenting an increased risk in the twenty-first century. (Look at what Russia is doing to its neighbors directly and what it is doing to the entire system indirectly.) The result is that BRICs will look for compensating power and military prestige as a way to solve internal problems.[5] This is at least partly the rationale that Putin chose in pursuing land in neighboring Ukraine.

So here is the question: How will the BRICs attempt to change the international system? Will they use military and economic might (hard power), or will they attempt to influence the behavior of the international community by crafting a system that gives them high regard in their region (soft power), such as a new commitment to the environment (China) or the export and development of technology to the developing world (India)? Only time will tell.

It is this concept of **national interest** that best defines the overall understanding and development of realism as a school of thought. The following section will provide you with some of the core assumptions of **classic realism**. Be aware, however, that little attention, if any, is paid to moral determinations of foreign policy. If anything can be said of the classic realists, it is that they tend to be amoral beings—those who understand international affairs exclusively through power relationships.

National Interest: For realists, states (countries) will always behave in ways that expand their security and protect what they deem as essential to their well-being.

Classic Realism: The school of thought in international relations that considers power as the main goal of each state. In addition, classic realists claim that the state is the main actor in international relations, that it is to be thought of as a unitary actor, and that international politics is inherently chaotic.

Core Assumptions of Classic Realism

Because of this understanding of power relations, classic realists have argued that the international system is based on three core assumptions. First, classic realists have maintained that the state is the dominant actor in international affairs. The evolution of the international system has given states the primary task of conducting international affairs. Why? Because states have sovereignty, the ability to collect taxes, and the ability to wage war. Other actors in the international system do not. It is from this initial premise that classic realism flows.

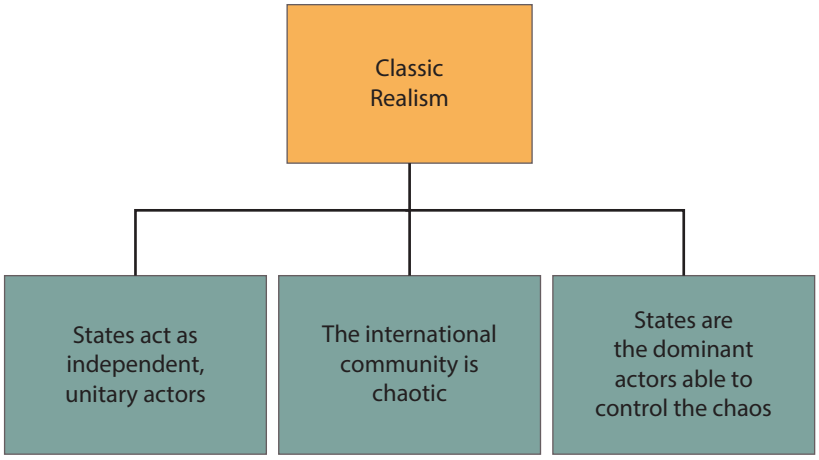
Are classic realists correct in their assessment of the international system? Is it always best to assume that states are acting in their own self-interest?

Second, classic realists assert that states are rational, unitary actors. This means that states are assumed to behave like rational individuals with the ability to evaluate certain strengths and weaknesses as they relate to their own security. For instance, when a particular state determines that it must go to war, it does so as a unitary actor. Thus, when scholars evaluate international relations and say that the United States invaded Iraq, they are evaluating the action as if both were rational individuals. States, like individuals perform a cost-benefit analysis and determine what is in their best interest. If an invasion is considered as being in the best interest of one's power in relation to others and there is a strong chance of success, then it is a risk that one is willing to take.

Finally, classic realists claim that the international system is anarchical and chaotic. This determination is based on the fact that the international system does not have a world government capable of stifling conflict and war. It is this absence that has placed the state as the only legitimate actor capable of creating stability on an international level. International institutions have helped to avoid certain international conflicts, but their ultimate successes or failures are determined by the distribution of power. In a world of powerful and less powerful states, the powerful make the rules, and the less powerful follow. This may translate into inequalities, but classic realists assert that it also creates a **balance of power** capable of preventing gross instability.

Balance of Power: A term that has historically referred to the ways in which great political powers have attempted to maintain security and avoid international conflicts. The concept originated in Europe during the early part of the nineteenth century when five great powers (Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia) dominated international politics and were committed to avoiding war and maintaining each state's position as a dominant power.

Figure 10.2 Classic realism asserts that these components are best suited to explain international relations.



Classic Realists: The Thinkers

Realism's roots can be found within both the Eastern and Western traditions. In fact, one of the first books ever written on state behavior in warfare was written in China in the fifth century BCE. Sun Tzu's *The Art of War* is considered one of the earliest accounts of classic realism.[6] Arguing that individual state power is the only reliable indicator of international behavior, Sun Tzu used his book as a manual for future leaders in the art of trickery and deception. We will find that Sun Tzu's placement of morality as secondary to national security is one of the cornerstones of realist thought.

Writing in the Western tradition at roughly the same time as Sun Tzu was the Athenian historian Thucydides. Although his *History of the Peloponnesian War* is credited as one of the first written histories, Thucydides's discussions on "power politics" bring to light his unique contribution to the field of international relations. In one of the most famous scenes in the *History*, the reader is presented with "The Melian Dialogue," a debate between representatives from the powerful Athenian delegation and the tiny, much-weaker island of Melos.

The Melian Dialogue is a demonstration of classical realism in action. Read how the Athenians provide the tiny island of Melos with the ultimatum of choosing either death or slavery. This is a classic example of how "might makes right" and that the powerful will do what is in their interest and the weak can only accept the consequences.

Athenians: "For ourselves, we shall not trouble you with specious pretenses—either of how we have a right to our empire because we overthrew the Mede, or are now attacking you because of wrong that you have done us—and make a long speech which would not be believed; and in return we hope that you, instead of thinking to influence us by saying that you did not join the Lacedaemonians, although their colonists, or that you have done us no wrong, will aim at what is feasible, holding in view the real sentiments of us both; since you know as well as we do that right, as the world goes, is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must."

Melians: "As we think, at any rate, it is expedient—we speak as we are obliged, since you enjoin us to let right alone and talk only of interest—that you should not destroy what is our common protection, the privilege of being allowed in danger to invoke what is fair and right, and even to profit by arguments not strictly valid if they can be got to pass current. And you are as much interested in this as any, as your fall would be a signal for the heaviest vengeance and an example for the world to meditate upon."

Athenians: "The end of our empire, if end it should, does not frighten us: a rival empire like Lacedaemon, even if Lacedaemon was our real antagonist, is not so terrible to the vanquished as subjects who by themselves attack and overpower their rulers. This, however, is a risk that we are content to take. We will now proceed to show you that we come here in the interest of our empire, and that we shall say what we are now going to say, for the preservation of your country; as we would fain exercise that empire over you without trouble, and see you preserved for the good of us both."

Melians: "And how, pray, could it turn out as good for us to serve as for you to rule?"

Athenians: "Because you would have the advantage of submitting before suffering the worst, and we should gain by not destroying you."

Melians: "So that you would not consent to our being neutral, friends instead of enemies, but allies of neither side."

Athenians: "No; for your hostility cannot so much hurt us as your friendship will be an argument to our subjects of our weakness, and your enmity of our power."

Melians: "Is that your subjects' idea of equity, to put those who have nothing to do with you in the same category with peoples that are most of them your own colonists, and some conquered rebels?"

Athenians: "As far as right goes they think one has as much of it as the other, and that if any maintain their independence it is because they are strong, and that if we do not molest them it is because we are afraid; so that besides extending our empire we should gain in security by your subjection; the fact that you are islanders and weaker than others rendering it all the more important that you should not succeed in baffling the masters of the sea."[7]

In this scene, the Athenians provided the Melians with a bleak ultimatum: choose death or choose slavery. In other words, if the Melians made the decision to fight the much stronger Athenian military, they would die. However, if the Melians chose submission, they would be spared but face enslavement. Although this is hardly a fair choice (as the Melian delegation provides), Thucydides's depiction conveys one of the major tenets of classic realism, that "might makes right." In essence, the powerful (those who are in charge) make the laws that the weak must follow.

Following in this tradition are two theorists you have already encountered: Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes. Although their works were written two centuries apart, both began with similar premises and conclusions about order

and power in the international system. For Machiavelli, the greatest impediment to effective rule is morality. Writing at a time when the Italian city-states were competing with one another instead of unifying their collective efforts, Machiavelli argued that the survival of the Italian state as a whole was dependent on the willingness of the many city-states to create effective policies, rather than those considered moral, ideological, or religious. The worldview that Machiavelli created was solidified by Thomas Hobbes. Previously introduced as one of the social contract theorists, Hobbes's distinction within classic realism has more to do with his negative understanding of human nature than his powerful, all-enforcing government. For Hobbes, human nature is selfish and, ultimately, self-destructive—a condition that in the "state of nature" creates an environment where everyone is involved in war with one another, that is, a "war of all against all." As you may recall, for Hobbes, chaos ensued until a social contract was designed to empower a strong centralized government. It is with Hobbes that we are presented with the third component of classic realism: Without a strong, powerful government, the world will continue to be determined by anarchy and chaos.

From Classic Realism to Structural Realism: Morgenthau to Waltz

In the aftermath of World War II, many scholars reevaluated their attitudes toward international relations. The Wilsonian idealism of the previous era was regarded as not only naïve but also as a reckless response to a more practical understanding of international affairs. Scholars and policy makers alike viewed idealism as one of the root causes of the appeasement policy that had led to the outbreak of World War II. Idealists were likened to ostriches, tending to value

Why Politics Matters to You!

Hard or Soft Power? The United States and Defense Spending

How do you think the United States is handling international relations in this post-9/11 world? Is it continuing to rely on traditional hard-power tactics such economic sanctions (monetary punishments) and/or military force (or threats), or is it trying more of a soft-power approach when facing its adversaries in the twenty-first century?

Here is a statistic that might help you to answer this question. Consider this: The defense budget request of the United States for fiscal year 2023 (the amount of federal dollars that goes to defense-oriented projects and personnel) was just over 813 billion![8] Yes, that staggering number is correct. To put this in perspective, the United States spends

(Continued)

Why Politics Matters to You! (Continued)

more money on defense programs, projects, and personnel than almost all other countries in the world spend on defense combined! The United States, therefore, does not simply spend more on defense than the next country; it spends more on defense than almost the remainder of the list put together. So, do you think the United States is trying to use hard power or soft power?

Why does this matter to you? Because governments demonstrate their priorities through their budgets, and if you pay taxes or are a citizen of a country, you should be aware of the programs on which your country is spending money and exactly how much of your taxes they are using to finance them. Remember, always follow the money. When people say they care about a particular project, don't believe them until they show you how much money they are willing to budget for it. In the United States, national defense is a top priority. If people around you disagree, show them the money.

Mike Booth/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 10.2 Drones, or remote-controlled planes, have changed the nature of war by removing the proximity of the pilot to their target.

Think It Through

Why do you think the United States spends a higher percentage of its budget on military defense than other countries?

isolation and appeasement to preemptive aggression aimed at combating a real threat.

Hans Morgenthau: Classical Realism for the Modern Era

One of the first scholars to employ a reactionary understanding of postwar power politics was the classical realist Hans Morgenthau. In his book *Politics Among Nations*, Morgenthau transformed one of the major assumptions concerning the nature of power in classic realism. For centuries, classic realists had argued that power itself was the desired goal and, therefore, the sole determinant of state behavior. Morgenthau, on the other hand, asserted that power was not the goal but simply a means of achieving the dual objectives of national security and survival. According to this repositioning, it could be argued that Hitler did not invade his neighbors for the sake of political power but for the sake of acquiring greater security and influence within the international system, an attempt to lessen the fear that the German people had felt since the end of World War I.

Maintaining the core principles of classic realism, Morgenthau argued that there is little room for morality or legality in issues of war and peace and that there

has been a great deal of misunderstanding when it comes to the essential claims of realism's arguments. As Morgenthau wrote:

> Intellectually, the political realist maintains the autonomy of the political sphere, as the economist, the lawyer, the moralist maintain theirs. He thinks in terms of interest defined as power, as the economist thinks in terms of interest defined as wealth; the lawyer, of the conformity of action with legal rules; the moralist, of the conformity of action with moral principles. The economist asks: "How does this policy affect the wealth of society, or a segment of it?" The lawyer asks: "Is this policy in accord with the rules of law?" The moralist asks: "Is this policy in accord with moral principles?" And the political realist asks: "How does this policy affect the power of the nation?" (Or of the federal government, of Congress, of the party, of agriculture, as the case may be.)
>
> The political realist is not unaware of the existence and relevance of standards of thought other than political ones. As a political realist, he cannot but subordinate these other standards to those of politics. And he parts company with other schools when they impose standards of thought appropriate to other spheres upon the political sphere. It is here that political realism takes issue with the "legalistic-moralistic approach" to international politics. That this issue is not, as has been contended, a mere figment of the imagination, but goes to the very core of the controversy, can be shown from many historical examples.[9]

As far as Morgenthau was concerned, realism is the ideology best suited for the explanation of international behavior. Although he is not asserting that the fields of economics, law, or morality are useless, Morgenthau is asserting that they are hampered by idealistic principles of behavior, rather than the real issues of national security aimed primarily at state survival.

Kenneth Waltz: Structural Realism

Following Morgenthau in the realist tradition was Kenneth Waltz, a pioneer in international relations theory who created a new school of thought that reinterpreted some of classic realism's core beliefs. Waltz, in his famous book *Man, the State, and War*, expanded the scope of classic realism by arguing that although power politics helps to determine state behavior, it is the structure of the international system that best determines it. Agreeing with the primary assumptions of classic realism in that the international system is anarchic and unstable because it lacks a global sovereign, Waltz added that it is the system itself that needs to be understood when explaining or predicting state behavior. For Waltz and other structural realists (or neorealists), it is the international system that determines the level of power within each state, not the states themselves. In short, Waltz concluded that although states matter, it is the system that matters more.

For neorealists, state power is determined by the prospect of the balance of power within the international system. Sometimes the balance of power within

the international system motivates states to pursue aggressive policies; sometimes it stifles them. Because all realists assert that states will pursue what is in their own national interests, structural realists argue that it is only plausible to assume that certain states have limited potential within the existing international system. We must remember that **structural realism** is not an attack on classic realism; it is just an addition or specification of it. The following section will highlight Kenneth Waltz's three levels of analysis and the role of this framework in explaining international relations.

AP images/HWG

Image 10.3 Hans Morgenthau was one of the first scholars following World War II to restate some of the major features of classic realism.

Three Levels of Analysis

According to Kenneth Waltz in his book *Man, the State, and War,* there are three ways of investigating the causes of war.[10] A first level examines the certain personality traits of leaders involved in conflict, a second level examines the internal composition of the states, and a third level examines the structures that exist at the international level. Through this investigation, you may be able to perform a more thorough study of a particular conflict. For example, suppose you would like to examine the causes of World War II. Where would you begin? By using the **three levels of analysis**, you can examine the outbreak of World War II from three different perspectives.

Level One: The Individual

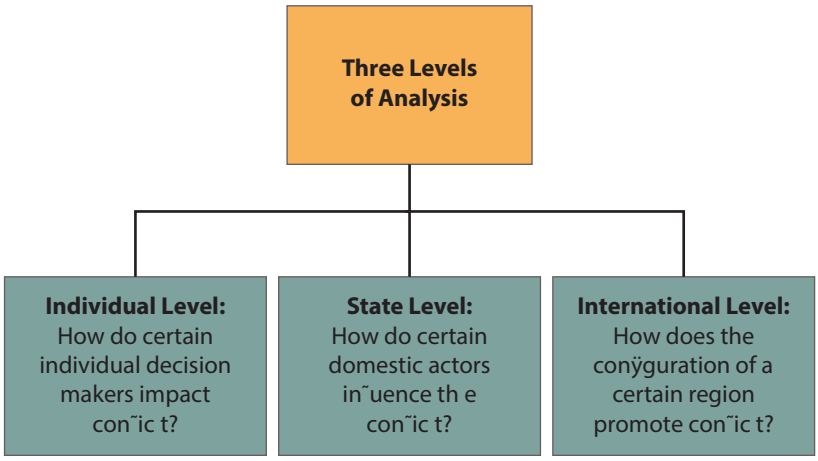
At the first level, Waltz suggested that scholars should try to understand the relationship between leaders and their roles in perpetuating war. For example, you may ask, "What are some of the psychological forces that shape presidential decision making in terms of foreign policy?" Or "Can a leader's personal obsession(s) be translated into rallying cries for war?" Are there certain leadership traits that make some leaders more likely to seek violent confrontations? The individual level seeks to establish some of the personal dynamics that go into international decision making.

Let's stay with the example of World War II for the time being. Who were the important leaders in this conflict? Obviously, there is Adolf Hitler. But what about the prime minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill, and the American President, Franklin D. Roosevelt? Did Adolf Hitler's hatred of Jews and foreigners translate into an aggressive array of policy choices? Did the personal relationship between Churchill and Roosevelt make the American president more likely to engage in war? The individual level of analysis seeks answers to these questions and argues that personal traits strongly affect policy choices.

Structural Realism: The international system that determines the level of power within each state. State power is determined by the prospect of the balance of power within the international system. Sometimes the balance of power within the international system motivates states to pursue aggressive policies; sometimes it stifles them.

Three Levels of Analysis: A framework developed by political scientist Kenneth Waltz as a way to better understand the reasons for conflict. The three level refers to three different actors involved in warfare: the individual (political leaders, terrorists, etc.), the state (domestic level actors such as interest groups, political parties, and ethnic or religious groups), and the international community (international tensions that spill over and cause conditions ripe for wars to occur).

Figure 10.3 The Three Levels of Analysis were designed by IR scholar Kenneth Waltz as a way of explaining the reasons why states go to war.



Level Two: The State

At the second level, Waltz examined those forces that exist within the state itself. How strong are lobbyists in calling for war? What about competitive ethnic or religious groups? How powerful are members of the business community in relation to the government in power? The second level seeks to examine certain *substate actors* that might contribute to violence. For example, what were the forces within Nazi Germany itself that led to, say, the Holocaust or the invasion of Poland? Were there groups that helped fuel the state's aggressive policies? The state level of analysis would try to determine whether there are pressure groups in certain societies that perpetuate international violence.

Level Three: The International Setting

At the third level, Waltz decided to examine the effect of the configuration of the international community on international violence. Does the configuration of a particular region make it more volatile? If state A begins to dominate the trade (and therefore the wealth) of state B and state C, does the region itself become unstable? Was Nazi Germany's position in Europe detrimental to the ways in which Europe had functioned for centuries? Did the weaknesses of the League of Nations prevent an international system from being strong enough to contain Germany? The international level of analysis attempts to look at particular regions and determine if the structure of the region makes it vulnerable to war.

Theory and Practice

Using the Three Levels of Analysis: The Case of the Russia-Ukraine War

Let's consider if we can use the three levels of analysis to better understand the complexity of the war in Ukraine.

In Chapter 1, we briefly described the roots of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, our analysis centered mainly on the roots of the conflict as well as the resultant damage and loss of life. What if we examined the war from three different levels?

First, let's begin at the individual level. For more than two decades, Russia has been directly and indirectly ruled by Vladimir Putin. Russian power is reflected in Putin himself. (Any protestors are perceived as threats to Putin's authority and interpreted as security threats to the state.) Since Putin does not want to lose power, he will take every measure (and has taken every measure) to ensure that he keeps his control over the affairs of the state. For example, in 2008, Putin stepped down as President of the Russian Federation but remained as the country's Prime Minister. The newly installed Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who Putin chose as his successor, carried on Putin's agenda and continued to crack down on personal freedom and attempted to exert Russian power.

In 2012 and again in 2018, Putin was elected as President of Russia, thus solidifying his role as the embodiment of Russian power. In an interview in 2022, Putin claimed that he views himself as a modern Peter the Great; the one who can bring together an historic empire of Ukraine, Belarus, and Russia.[11]

The Russian invasion of Ukraine in the spring of 2022 is Putin's most severe power grab, but it is one that is fully in line with his personality. Overestimating the hesitancy of the leaders of NATO as well as European Union (EU) involvement in the conflict, Putin sent the Russian military into Ukraine to expand Russian power and provide it with greater security. The war, which began in February 2022, has caused population resettlements, damaged infrastructure, and caused mass emigration out of Ukraine and losses of life. Although Putin has had a number of military challenges, none have been strong enough to drive the Russian military out of Ukraine and end the war.

If one were to use the first level of analysis to explain the war in Ukraine, one would understand that it was and is motivated by Vladimir Putin. He considers himself to be the representation of the Russian people and the one most responsible for Russia's status in the world.

Second, there is the analysis that can be conducted at the state or domestic level. This level asks: What domestic pressure groups or institutions are involved that have helped perpetuate the conflict? In a democracy, the media play a large role in the shaping of public opinion. Members of the media are supposed to keep elected officials accountable and help shed light on corruption and other illegal behavior. However, in Russia under Putin, we witness a press that acts as a mouthpiece for Russian propaganda. For example, in March 2022, Putin signed a law that "effectively criminalizes any public opposition to or independent news reporting about the war against Ukraine."[12] Since the media is one of the most powerful state-level actors because of its ability to shape attitudes, it is a major source of Russian strength in Ukraine. According to Natasha Yefimova-Trilling, the former editor and reporter for *The Moscow Times*, the Russian people believe "that the West is out to hurt Russia," and that "the West would find any reason to impose new sanctions no matter what Russia does."[13] Since the largest number of Russians still receive their information from television and the internet (which Putin has also cracked down on), they are led to believe that the war in Ukraine is either vital to their position in the world or not as destructive (to Russia) as it appears.

Another state actor that needs evaluating is the military. The military (in any country) is a powerful institution because it is designed to inflict legitimate violence. Unlike other actors in the state, the military is designed to maintain security through force, and since it is acting on behalf of a government that is deemed legitimate

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

(considered to be acceptable in the eyes of the global community), it has the authority to carry out operations. This is what makes the military such a pivotal actor in how foreign policy is conducted. The Russian military, which began its invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, has completely upended life in Ukraine. In April 2023, *Reuters* reported that the total loss of life amongst military combatants and civilians was more than 354,000.[14] And just as the Russian military is able to expand upon the wishes of Putin's government, it is also powerful enough to stop the war. When military leaders determine that a war is unwinnable or no longer fulfilling the mission, they have historically turned on government leaders and demonstrated that they, too, are a powerful domestic actor in the shaping of foreign policy. Will this happen in Russia? It is too early to tell.

Last, one may approach the Russia-Ukraine War from the international or global level of analysis. Since realists claim that power defines and governs state behavior, an examination of the Russia-Ukraine War at the international level might argue that power-seeking states are using Russia to enhance their own interests. China needs to enhance its power, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. It does so through its pursuit of cheaper fossil fuels in Africa and through a strong financial relationship with Russia. For example, after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the West imposed strong economic sanctions on Russia and its trade with the EU declined. "However, China's overall trade with Russia hit a record high level of $190 billion in 2022—a 30-percent increase from the year before."[15] China has also begun to purchase large amounts of oil from Russia since Russia has lost many of its consumers in the West as a result of its foreign policy.[16] Chinese foreign policy is thus slowly becoming tied to that of Russia. It can be understood as a strong trading partner and a potential sources of arms (China is now the world's fourth largest arms exporter).[17] These developments help to explain how the changes in the power structure in the world make the Russia-Ukraine War even more complex.

Think It Through

Which of the three levels of analysis do you believe best explains the Russia-Ukraine War?

Liberalism

Liberalism: The school of thought that is centered on the creation of international institutions designed to enhance the natural tendencies of cooperation found in human nature.

At the core of **liberalism** is the belief that human beings are generally good and that our ability to reason allows us to make economic, political, and social progress. For liberals, acts of war, terrorism, or genocide are not the result of human nature but are flaws in the social, economic, or political infrastructure at a particular time and place. Liberals argue that state cooperation is essential to our survival because it is only through cooperation that conflict is avoided.

For liberals, an institution that promotes individual freedom (and in particular the freedom to buy and sell goods in an open market and the freedom that allows individuals a voice in the political system) creates the best chance of reducing the instances of conflict. Therefore, liberals would argue that a democratically arranged international system would be the best way to limit international hostilities. If state A is democratic (in that it is representative of its people) and states B, C, D, and E are also democratic, they are less likely to engage in conflict.

In the eighteenth century, it was Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) who provided us with one of the earliest prescriptions for achieving this type of peace in the international system. According to Kant:

> A state of peace among men living together is not the same as a state of nature, which is rather a state of war. For even if it does not involve active hostilities, it involves a constant threat of their breaking out. Thus, the state of peace must be formally instituted, for a suspension of hostilities is not in itself a guarantor of peace. And unless one neighbor gives a guarantee to the other at his request (which can happen only in a lawful state), the latter might treat him as an enemy.[18]

For Kant, peace is only possible through the establishment of republican states that value the necessity of the *system* in equal proportion to the necessity of their own. In other words, although I may be a citizen and live in state A, I equally value the merits of the entire system to which my state belongs—thus creating the belief that my well-being is dependent on the state, the system, and the democratic laws upon which both rest. This model creates what Kant refers to as the perpetual *peace* theory because national legislation will become international law and will therefore not only have to protect domestic, civil rights but also those at the international level, namely, cosmopolitan or universal rights.[19]

It was this interpretation of liberalism that led to the development in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries of the theory of idealism. Idealism is best defined as an expansion of some of the core beliefs of liberalism. Personified by the American President Woodrow Wilson, idealism is based on the notion of ethical determinations in foreign policy and the spreading of democratic principles, including the rights of self-determination, free speech, and fair and free elections. Wilson's major contribution to the understanding of idealism is embodied in his famous Fourteen Points. A list of necessary principles written at the end of World War I, the Fourteen Points outlined Wilson's beliefs that through proper education, democratic governance, the promotion of equality, and, most importantly, an international relations agenda committed to **collective security**, peace was possible.

Collective Security: The idea that an attack on one particular state by another should be understood as an attack against all states.

In Chapter 11, we will be reminded of the failure of the League of Nations, Wilson's testament to collective security. Although many scholars have associated its problems with its reliance on the hopefulness of states to combat aggressors to peace, its failure was also related to its founders' lack of consensus and economic and political support. At the end of World War I, both the United States and the Soviet Union refused to join, placing an ever-increasing burden on states less suited to handle the challenges of the day, namely, the aggressive power politics of Adolf Hitler.

Neoliberalism: Cooperation May Come from Self-Interest

During the 1970s, liberalism received a scholarly revival and a repackaging. Political scientists Robert Axelrod, Robert O. Keohane, and Joseph S. Nye began to

reexamine the factors responsible for international cooperation.[20] They felt that the answers given by realist and neorealist scholars were not sufficient. These scholars, whose theories eventually became known as **neoliberalism** (or neoliberal institutionalism), decided that state cooperation is not always based on realist assumptions and that international cooperation is a highly complex enterprise. So they decided to seek out alternatives and discovered that cooperation sometimes occurs when states realize that it is in their own interests to cooperate within an established system. Still, how did they illustrate their views? One of the most basic ways was the prisoner's dilemma, a game that we introduced back in Chapter 3 that argues that rational decision making will force states (and in this case, prisoners) to cooperate with one another because it is in each state's self-interest to do so.

Neoliberalism: The school of thought that says because states are constantly interacting with each other, they value cooperation as part of their own self-interest.

Let's further explore the prisoner's dilemma. Suppose that two criminals are arrested for burglary. After they are booked, they are placed in two different jail cells with no means of communication. The detectives tell both prisoners that if one confesses to the crime and the other remains silent, the one who confesses will be released and the other will have a lengthy prison sentence, say ten years. However, if they both decide to confess to the crime, each will get a reduced sentence, say five years. If neither of the prisoners confesses, both will receive a light sentence, say six months because of a lack of evidence and testimony. So what will they do? They will both confess to the crime of burglary and therefore serve a five-year term.

Why didn't the prisoners cooperate with each other and keep quiet about the crime? The simplest answer is because the situation required a onetime choice. They are not given time to repeat the process. If they were, they would most likely cooperate with the other, keep quiet, and receive a short prison sentence. Keep in mind that if the prisoners had the ability to understand and familiarize themselves with the process, they would choose the optimal payoff in the given situation, which in this case would be to stay silent. The prisoner's dilemma argues that in certain circumstances, it is actually in the best interest of each person or state to cooperate. Since the actors involved lack good or perfect information, they do not understand the optimal payoff. Instead, they confess, assuming that confessing is their best gamble. The gamble is, therefore, based on their rational assessment that their information can never be certain, which leads them to a suboptimal result. It might not yield the best payoff, but it will not be the worst either.

In the international arena, there are certain factors that could emerge that would change the ways states view cooperation. This change may come as a result of a certain technological innovation or economic development. Over the next few decades, for example, China and India will most likely witness their cooperation grow with the United States on a number of foreign policy initiatives because of the ways the global economy has changed their statuses. They (and the United States) will realize that cooperation is be the best way of achieving long-term growth.

Figure 10.4 The Prisoner's Dilemma

		Prisoner A	
		Remain Silent (Cooperate)	**Confess (Defect)**
Prisoner B	**Remain Silent (Cooperate)**	Six months sentence/Six months sentence	Ten Years Sentence/ Released
	Confess (Defect)	Released/ Ten years sentence	Five Years Sentence/ Five Years Sentence

So, what distinguishes liberalism from neoliberalism is the reasons why states cooperate in an international system. For classic liberals, states cooperate in international institutions because they argue that humans are generally good natured and have the capacity to better the human experience by constantly reforming the ills of existing institutions. Neoliberals, on the other hand, argue that because states are constantly interacting with one another, they value cooperation as a part of their self-interest. So, why do you think states will cooperate with one another? Is it because states desire cooperation, or is it because states feel that cooperation is in their best interest? Are there examples in today's world where it appears that states are cooperating out of self-interest?

Theory and Practice

Which Vision Will Win? The United States, the European Union, or China?

Currently, the countries of the world are struggling to figure out which economic and political vision to take, as well as which state's model to follow. However, there is a great sense of confusion over what that direction will look like. To make it simple, here is what we mean. It appears that there are three ideas or visions that are competing for international dominance: an American view of international relations that is in a state of change; a European view of international relations that is in a state of change; and a Chinese/Russian view that seems to be gaining power but

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that appears unpalatable to many around the world, and in particular to the United States. Let's begin with the United States' view.

Since the end of World War II, the United States has defended liberal democracy as well as free trade. Sure, there were instances during the Cold War when the United States backed authoritarian states in an attempt to contain the Soviet Union, but overall, American foreign policy was designed to ensure that the countries of the world were free to do business with one another.

Another model of international relations is that of the European Union. We may call this the European model. Since its establishment in the early 1990s, the European Union (EU) has been a symbol of a liberal, regional trade regime whose commitment to the protection of rights was unsurpassed. During the 1990s and early 2000s, the EU sought to change the way international affairs were conducted. Its structure allowed for the free movement of goods, people, and services among its member states to enhance global stability. It even offered a common currency, the euro, to prevent currency problems. Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, this vision attracted the states of Central and Eastern Europe, who saw that membership in the EU provided them with the economic and political support that they had not experienced in their states' histories.

However, this view of the world has also recently been challenged. Just recall our discussion of populism from Chapter 5. The days of the EU might be coming to a close, and its vision of open borders and free movement might slowly be coming to an end. When the United Kingdom placed the issue of whether or not to remain in the EU before its voters in the form of a referendum in 2016, the world was stunned that a majority voted to leave. The relationship between the United Kingdom and the EU had never been as strong as in other parts of Europe because of its location and its currency preference (the British pound), and in 2016, the voters decided to leave. Brexit, as it was known, was the first example of a state in the EU who decided that its future lay not with decisionmakers in Brussels (the headquarters of many EU institutions) but with its own government in London.

Perhaps the EU's focus on commonalities and liberal democracy were only products of a world that lacked a Soviet threat. Now, as we enter the middle of the third decade of the twenty-first century, perhaps the supranational institutions of the EU seem to take too much power away from the governments themselves.

So, what does that leave us? It leaves us with a view of the world emerging from China and Russia. This is not to say that the Chinese or Russian governments are conspiring against the liberal democratic order. What it means is that both the Chinese and Russian governments are each challenging the worldview that placed liberal democracy at the core of economic and political stability. They have begun to exert a view of trade and economic power that has little to nothing to do with democracy or human rights. President Xi of China has declared himself president for life, and President Putin of Russia has made it clear that he is planning something similar. As we witnessed in Chapter 1, China is quickly expanding its reach across Africa, while it is greatly profiting from the consumer habits of the Americans and Europeans. This is a model that challenges the notion that economic growth must remain in the hands of states who provide a great array of rights to their citizens. This is also a view that seems to be gaining strength around the world.

Think It Through

1. **Can powerful democracies like the United States assert their power by creating trade regimes with other democracies?**
2. **Is there a connection between trade and democracy? Isn't trade more stable if it is between two countries who share in the democratic traditions?**

Radicalism: Marxism-Leninism, Dependency Theory, and Neo-Marxism

Marxism

For scholars in international relations, Karl Marx (1818–83) is the predominant force in what has become known as the radical perspective. Living at the dawn of the European Industrial Revolution, Marx created a unique model of understanding economic, political, and social life that opposed the existing order's understanding of capitalism and classical liberalism. This approach has been considered radical because of the ways it seeks to challenge the dominant views held by most. According to Marx, history is best understood as a constant and long-term class struggle between those who control the modes of production (bourgeoisie) and those who work within the confines of such a system (proletariat). The bourgeoisie consists of the wealthy owners, and the proletariat consists of the impoverished workers. The bourgeoisie own the factories; the proletariat work and are exploited in the factories. The bourgeoisie own the tenements and are the landlords, while the proletariat live in the tenements and are the tenants.

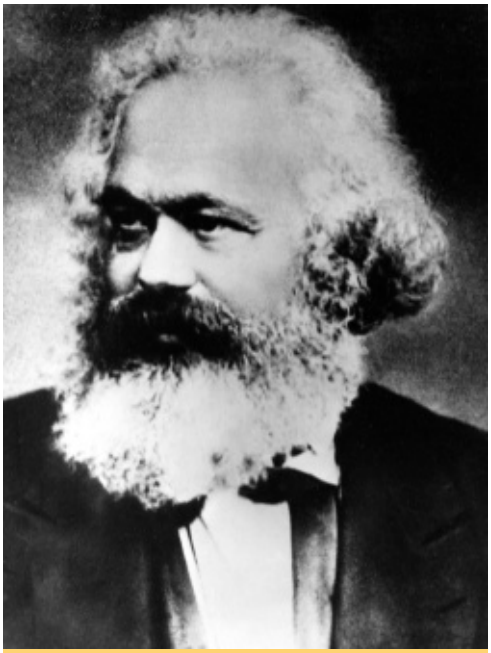
Basing much of his preliminary logic on the works of G. W. F. Hegel, Marx argued that history unfolded according to a logical progression. While Hegel argued that issues of morality or what is considered right and wrong (which Hegel called "spirit") was passed down from generation to generation based on the ability of the state to preserve such morality, for Marx, only the people themselves could protect such values and judgments. Humans have always realized that there are certain obstacles in life. For Hegel, it was the state that should and could eliminate such obstacles. For Marx, it was the state that *created* most of the obstacles. Still, Marx utilized Hegel's concept of spirit to argue that history flows according to a plan. However, in Marx's view, history was really a history of class struggle between those with wealth (private property) and those who work to ensure that the wealthy maintain their property. In essence, the wealthy from subsequent generations seemed to learn from previous generations about how best to control power and wealth. The Roman Empire witnessed a certain type of exploitation that had created categories of wealth, as did the medieval period. But what was unique about the nineteenth century for Marx was the intensity of the exploitation that had developed and the setting in which the exploitation took place.

It must be understood that the feudal period (the time before the emergence of capitalism), which had dominated economic, political, and social lives (and provided much of the framework for Marx's analysis), was largely based on a dependent relationship between a lord (who owned the land) and a serf (who worked and lived on the land). Although the lord had a great deal more political power than

the serfs, he still relied on the health and well-being of his workers. The landowners during the feudal era were, therefore, somewhat dependent on their workers. The workers' lives might not have been as pleasant as those of the lords, but at least they were provided shelter and food on the land. By the nineteenth century in Western Europe, the feudal era was largely dead, replaced by an economic system that relied more on factory than farm and a preference for specialization over craftsmanship.

In his greatest work, *Das Kapital* (*Capital*), Marx examined the economic system known as capitalism and argued that it perpetuates a negative environment based on the dual forces of efficiency and exploitation. Efficiency, which allowed factories to specialize in how goods are produced, led to a continued cycle of exploitation for the workers. A simple illustration will bring Marx's view of capitalism to light. Let's pretend that you are the owner of a shoe factory in the nineteenth century. How do you produce shoes that are at both a competitive price and good quality? We have at our disposal several options. Should we force each worker to make their own pair of shoes? Or should we force each worker to perform a simple and limited task in the creation of the shoes? In the name of efficiency, you would prefer the latter. Why? Because it is far more efficient to have each worker contribute to a small part in the production of the shoes. It saves time and, more important, money. Workers can produce hundreds of shoes collectively in the time it would take one skilled shoemaker to produce one pair of extremely expensive shoes. For Marx, it is this process that created the highest level of exploitation. To the factory owner, the workers are valued as parts of a production machine, but they are easily replaced and cheap.

Alienation of Labor: The concept developed by Karl Marx that explained the ways in which modern life removes the worker from the product they are creating.



Photos.com/Getty Images Plus/Getty Images

Image 10.4 Karl Marx is known as the father of revolutionary communism. His works directly inspired revolutions in Russia, China, Cuba, and other parts of the developing world during the twentieth century.

Within this context, factory workers are forced to sell their labor and are denied any gratification that comes from the production of the shoes. Why? Because each factory worker is unable to experience the joy of creation from start to finish. For Marx, it is the **alienation of labor** that allows the owners to continue to exploit the workforce. Because workers cannot experience the joy of creation and only the results of their labor, they also become commodities for the employer. As the tasks of the production grow in simplicity, the number of workers grows, and the wages for the number of potential workers decline. For Marx, this is why both wages and working conditions will continue to deteriorate.[21]

But why does the government allow such practices in the workplace? According to Marx, it is because the bourgeoisie (owners) and the government are one and the same. Because the government benefits from the wealth it can accumulate in the form of taxes, it refuses to pass laws that could possibly jeopardize economic growth. Thus, we understand in Marx a critique of not only the economic structure, but the political structure as well.

When one takes Marxism and applies it to the international community, his theory takes on another dimension. States that have succeeded in terms of economic development have done so through the exploitation of the developing world. For Marx, it was not an accident that Great Britain had the largest empire during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It was a simple fact born out of what it viewed as political necessity. The British government realized that it needed a constant supply of resources so it could remain one of Europe's dominant powers.

As the British Empire grew, so too did its wealth and security. For Marx, this was the pinnacle of capitalist exploitation: Once the capitalist government realized that it was unable to create the kinds of profits necessary for development, it searched out new lands in possession of natural resources and/or labor. After the original inhabitants (say in India) had been conquered, the British created a political system that kept the people from revolting, kept its resources growing, strengthened international laws that protected trade policies and routes, and, finally, brought colonial elites to London to be educated and then transferred them back to the colony. Therefore, the perpetuation and protection of private property is what drove **colonialism**.

Colonialism: A form of state domination in which one state controls the political system of another or several others for its own gain.

V. I. Lenin and Imperialism

It is within this context of exploitation that the radical perspective grew. Following Marx came V. I. Lenin, the person most responsible for the expansion of the idea of colonialism into the idea known as imperialism and the first leader of the Soviet Union.

Theory and Practice

The Rwandan Genocide from the Marxist Perspective

Between April and July 1994, the small African country of Rwanda experienced a genocide. To understand the Rwandan genocide is to understand its unique history, its ethnic groups, and its former status as a Belgian colony. As the Belgians gained control of Rwanda during World War I, they slowly instituted a class system that prioritized ethnic Tutsis over ethnic Hutus. Tutsis were given greater status and decision-making power within the Belgian colonial administration because they were believed to be "racially superior" to Hutus.

In the 1930s, the Belgian government issued identification cards as a way of distinguishing between the different ethnic communities. The issuing of ID cards institutionalized the discrimination felt in Rwanda and led to the establishment of a permanent class system that forced different ethnic groups into different political, social, and economic roles. Tutsis benefitted from their status, just as Hutus were weakened by theirs.

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

Following the end of World War II, the global colonial system began to fall apart. Hutus, who had been denied access to the benefits of their society, began an emancipation movement which would grant them the political power that they had never experienced. In 1959, a number of Tutsis killed a prominent Hutu and began the Rwandan Civil War, a war that would continue until the beginning of the 1994 genocide. Throughout the war, Tutsis fled the country, fearing for their lives. The Rwandan Patriotic Front, a Tutsi military group, launched attacks throughout the war as Rwanda witnessed a pattern of battles and skirmishes for more than thirty years.

Eventually, the United Nations had to get involved and by 1993 had crafted a multiparty peace agreement, the Arusha Accords (named after the city in Tanzania where it was signed), which called for the end of the war as well as the establishment of a new government that would give equal power to Tutsis and Hutus. The president at the time, a Hutu by the name of Juvénal Habyarimana, signed the peace agreement, much to the displeasure of many of his hardline Hutus, who felt that equal representation with Tutsis was unacceptable.

On April 6, 1994, President Juvénal Habyarimana's plane was shot down. As a result, the country was

Figure 10.5 The continent of Africa was largely colonized by the European powers in the nineteenth century. In addition, they drew the borders of African states to their liking, not taking into account preexisting borders or ethnic differences.

Theory and Practice (Continued)

forced into one of the darkest moments of the twentieth century, a killing spree that witnessed the organized slaughter of ethnic Tutsis. This genocide lasted only 100 days, but nearly one million people died. Eventually, a ceasefire was signed, but not before the world became witness, once again, to large-scale violence and human suffering.

Although this short synopsis only provides a brief overview of the Rwandan genocide, it should be enough for you to look at it through one of the dominant perspectives in international relations: Marxism. So, take a few moments and reflect on what you just read and try and understand how a Marxist might examine the genocide.

First, a Marxist would argue that the colonial structure that had placed Rwanda under the control of first the Germans and then the Belgians was designed to advance only the interests of the European state system. Because Rwandans were denied economic mobility and political representation, their labor was the only real commodity designed to impede development of any kind.

Second, Marxists would point to the deliberate destruction of Rwandan culture on the basis of race. As the map of Africa was drawn without any regard to tribal differences or existing boundaries, the Europeans transformed a continent from one that was poor and underdeveloped into one that was still poor but artificially fragmented as well. As the colonial period ended and the African states gained their freedoms, they attempted to enact policies designed to enhance their stability. But because the levels of poverty were so extreme, violence and warfare persisted. Marxists would suggest that the civil wars and genocides in Rwanda resulted from the inequalities that were developed during the colonial period and exacerbated during the postcolonial period.

Finally, Marxists would argue that the Rwandan genocide occurred because the powerful states of the world did not value a Rwandan's life as worthy of protection. Remember that for Marxists, laborers are defined as expendable commodities. Thus, the international community ignored the atrocities in Rwanda because Rwandans were seen as expendable and because their land did not provide the industrialized world with anything of monetary value.

Think It Through

1. **Would the international community have gotten involved to stop the civil war and genocide if Rwanda possessed oil?**
2. **Can genocides be stopped only when it is in the national interest of the world's powerful countries?**

For Lenin, **imperialism** was the highest stage of capitalism: the stage that witnessed the defense of the state (by capitalists), the monopolization of industrial production, and an international system based on exploitation. Imperialism was no longer to be understood as the practice by which Empire A conquered Colony A for the benefit of Empire A but as a practice that required a violent revolution of all workers committed to its destruction. In many ways, Lenin restated Marx's arguments about exploitation, but he emphasized the "irreconcilability of class antagonisms."[22] Imperialism was, therefore, the vehicle by which the exploited gained power and a greater understanding of the inequalities of the international system. It was also the agent for revolution and the violent overthrow of not only the state but also of the entire system of imperialism and the entire ideology of capitalism.

Imperialism: The highest stage of capitalism according to V. I. Lenin; the stage at which industrial growth and the banking system become monopolized by a wealthy group of state and industry leaders. For Lenin, it was the stage immediately before the worldwide communist revolution.

Is exploitation of the developing world by those in the industrialized world unavoidable? If so, does this mean that Marx and Lenin were correct?

Dependency Theory

Following the end of World War II, certain scholars attempted to explain economic development and global inequalities. What emerged were two competing schools of thought. On one hand were the **modernization (development) theorists**, who argued that economic development was based on an evolutionary pattern of growth and that **developing countries** (states defined as poor, largely agriculturally based, and former colonies of major European powers in parts of Latin American, South Asia, and sub-Saharan Africa, such as India, Rwanda, Kenya, and Uruguay) had the ability to become **developed countries** (the most industrialized states, such as the United States, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan) if they adhered to certain principles of growth, namely free market principles and capitalism.[23] On the other hand were the *dependency theorists* who argued that economic development was based on the exploitation of the poor by the wealthy—a relationship based on unfair trade policies that benefited the developed world at the expense of the developing world. At this point, you should have no problem determining which theoretical perspective is considered part of the radical perspective and why it is considered as such. The idea of a "Global North" and "Global South" is best suited to understanding the nature of the political economies of the world.

Modernization (Development) Theorists: The most famous is Walt Whitman Rostow, who argued that there is a formula for economic growth and development. Prosperity is based on the ability of certain states to assume an economic formula that will move them from "traditional life" to "mass consumption."[24]

Developing Countries: Countries in the world that are in the process of industrialization. They have economies that are largely based on farming or the cultivation of basic natural resources. They are defined as developing because their economies are not as strong as industrialized, developed countries.

Developed Countries: Countries that receive this distinction are the wealthiest, most industrialized states. The states in this category have the highest levels of wealth and middle classes, highest levels of technology, lowest infant mortality rates (number of children per 1,000 that die before age five), highest life expectancies, and the like.

The Global North refers to those states in North America and Western Europe that have historically defined the rules for global trade. It has also been used to describe the economies of Japan and Australia, whose economies have benefitted from similar patterns as those established in North America and Western Europe. The states in the Global North benefit from the resources found in what we can term the Global South, the countries that make up Asia, Africa, and South America.

Since the end of World War II and the expansion of the economic ideology known as capitalism, we have seen a manipulation of trade that places the countries in the Global South at a disadvantage to those in the Global North. This distinction between the Global North and South is what is commonly referred to as dependency. Instead of the states of the Global South being able to achieve economic growth and security, they are dependent on the terms of trade and economies of those in the Global North.

In 1948, world-renowned Argentine economist Raul Prebisch became director of the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA). Two years later, he published a study titled "The Economic Development of Latin America and Its Principal Problems." In the study, Prebisch proposed a radical understanding of the economic relationship between the world's wealthiest and poorest states. First, Prebisch stated that the world was best understood as one that was divided between "core" and "peripheral" states, the core referring to the wealthy states and the peripheral referring to the poorer states. Second, Prebisch stated that because peripheral states produced primary goods (agricultural goods that are easy to produce) for export to the core states and core states produced secondary goods (manufactured goods)

for export to the periphery, technology took off in the core but remained underdeveloped in the periphery. Third, the core states gained wealth because they were able to save their money through the development and expansion of trade unions and strong financial institutions. Fourth, because the peripheral states did not need technology to produce items for export, their goods remained cheap and uncompetitive, and their governments could not save money and grow wealth. Thus, the peripheral became dependent on the core states. In the 1960s and 1970s, Prebisch's thesis developed into the school of thought we now refer to as dependency theory.

Neo-Marxism: Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri

Following the end of the Cold War, many Marxists wondered where they had gone wrong. How could the socialist system implode so quickly and unexpectedly? And how could so many academics who had dedicated decades to research that pertained to the Soviet Union, centrally planned economics, and an interpretation of history as one of exploitation of owners and workers (bourgeoisie and proletariat) have not seen it coming? The answer to this question seemed to come in the form of a transformation: It was not that the Cold War had ended in the destruction of the communist ideology and system, but in the way Marxists viewed power. According to what Cynthia Weber has referred to as "a new myth for a new millennium," neo-Marxists developed a new case for opposition and, possibly, revolution by moving the center of exploitation.

In their book *Empire*, leading neo-Marxists Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri associated new developments in trade policies (that gave a significant increase of leverage to wealthy capitalist states) with the rise in what has been referred to as "the new world order." For neo-Marxists, the **new world order** refers to the ways in which large-scale multinational corporations (MNCs), in conjunction with the wealthiest states, have created a new type of imperialism that expands the wealth to the rich (themselves) while continually weakening the economic development of the poor. "By recasting the oppressor as Empire and the oppressed as the multitude, Hardt and Negri restore the basic binary upon which Marxism has long been based."[25] The result is that neo-Marxists have maintained Marxism's commitment to their understanding of history as one that is based on class conflict for a new era of scholars and policy makers and a commitment to active revolution. How? It is with this knowledge that neo-Marxists have been able to develop a clearer portrait of who the opposition is and how they might revolt against it. Because neo-Marxists are able to identify the actors involved in global exploitation, they have been successful in reshaping the narrative of imperialism. Large corporations, who have seen record profits, directly benefit from the exploitation of developing states. Since developing states need the revenue from corporations who decide to move their manufacturing plants there, they are limited in their ability to provide protection to their workers.

New World Order: For neo-Marxists, this is the way in which the exploitation of the wealthy over the poor will continue. It is best seen in the ways that large corporations have been successful in passing legislation that allows them to lower other poorer countries' tariffs and gain access to their markets, resources, and labor.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Why So Poor?

Many people tend to use the word *poverty* to describe a condition of extreme financial deprivation. But let's try to humanize this, okay? Many neo-Marxists will look at facts and figures from the developing world and attempt to provide a rationale for their argument. So here are some statistics that might shock you or, at least, make you begin to ask the very important question, why?

- Across the continent of Africa, life expectancy is 64.[26] The average life expectancy in Europe is 82 (79 for men and 84 for women). Access to medical facilities and medical personnel is limited across the continent of Africa, and many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa deal with diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria, which make life unstable. Could limited access to essential health care services and shorter life expectancy be the result of colonialism and exploitation?
- South Asia (Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka) has seen an increase in gross national income. As of 2023, the gross national income (the total amount of all residents' earnings) of South Asia was $2,278. This was up from a GINI of $2,074 from the previous year.[27] Although the countries of South Asia are diverse, as a region, there has been economic growth. Unfortunately, however, what has emerged is massive income inequalities, which affects everything from the ability to purchase goods and services to health care. For example, Pakistan still has the largest difference in terms of women seeking maternal/reproductive care. According to United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), "Pakistan has a 65.8 percent difference between the highest and the lowest wealth groups."[28] This means that middle income and wealthy women have a far greater chance of receiving obstetric care than their underprivileged counterparts. Inequality is obviously a global problem, but it is pronounced in South Asia.
- In 2023, the Latin American and the Caribbean regions have the highest gross national income (GNI) per capita income of all developing-country regions ($8,688) but a declining gross domestic product (GDP) since 2018.[29] This demonstrates that the average citizen has more disposable income than others in the developing world, but a declining GDP demonstrates that their economies are shrinking and their ability to trade has weakened.
- The Middle East has well-developed infrastructures. Over 75 percent of the population in this region has access to improved sanitation facilities and water sources. The region spends heavily on the military; its spending is the highest of any developing region.
- By contrast, the United States and China, are expected to account for $53.6 trillion in real GDP by 2026.[30] This amount of money has allowed these two economic giants to invest heavily in military power (the United States) and the development of trade routes (China). It is unlikely that either will witness their economic power decline.
- So what would a neo-Marxist say about such levels of poverty and wealth? These levels have been caused by the exploitation of wealthy multinational corporations working in conjunction with the wealthiest capitalist states.

Think It Through

Do Marxists and neo-Marxists have a valid point here? If so, on what grounds are they correct? If not, why are they incorrect?

Constructivism: We Shape Our Own Experiences About the World

In the 1980s and 1990s, another school of thought emerged in international relations to challenge the dominance of liberalism and realism (neorealism): **constructivism**. Constructivists such as Alexander Wendt and Martha Finnemore believe that realists and neorealists tend to place too much emphasis on the assumption that anarchy will lead to security and structure in the international system. Instead of assuming (like neorealists) that the international system is materially anarchical (that all states have similar goals toward gaining or protecting wealth) and thus will force states into cooperation, constructivists believe that identity formation based on the states' social practices is a more "realistic" way of analyzing international cooperation and disagreement.

Constructivism: A school of thought within international relations that examines the impact of values and norms on the behavior of states.

Constructivists tend to believe that the international system is anarchical but do not stress the assumptions about its outcomes. They tend to look at the goals of states, which quite often might not be caused by how they view their power in light of others. In a landmark appraisal of why states adopt certain policy measures, Finnemore argued that states view issues of justice, war and peace, poverty, disease, and other issues from a perspective of social interaction.[31] In other words, some individuals in the developing world will view issues of justice or the eradication of poverty differently than other individuals in the developing world and others in the industrialized world. To assume that all states operate according to a "natural" drive toward power, as it is understood by neorealists and liberals, is to deny a basic understanding of human nature: the ability of individuals to construct their own social realities.

Constructivists have, therefore, turned the discussion of international relations inside-out. Instead of assuming (like realists) that states acting in their own national interests determine international stability and create international norms and values, constructivists argue that it is the international community that perpetuates the development of norms *within* states. Thus, constructivists argue that norms emerge from the top (those in positions of authority within the international community) and flow downward into the domestic realm of the state.

Constructivist Peter Katzenstein wrote a book that detailed this idea. Katzenstein's *Cultural Norms and National Security* examined the political attitudes within Japan before and after the end of World War II and argued that the idea of "militarism" changed drastically.[32] Katzenstein demonstrated that before the attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, Japan had been considered an aggressive, expansionist military state. However, after its unconditional surrender to the United States and its allies, Japan emerged as a country that not only lacked the legal authority to possess a standing military but also the political will. For constructivists like Katzenstein, this demonstrates that the international community is not

merely a representation of a community of states, but an entity in and of itself able to change the fabric of domestic policies, ideas, identities, and norms. He therefore makes the claim that the best (and oftentimes most overlooked) prediction of how a state will behave is how its own political culture views the norms and values at stake.

10 Summary

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You now understand the ways in which international relations theory has progressed. Although those who subscribe to different schools of thought may claim to provide students with the best answers to the problems of war and poverty, you should still be aware that there are no perfect solutions. Realists have consistently argued that power and national security are the primary motivators when explaining international relations but have yet to challenge the popular belief that states have a moral responsibility to protect human rights. Idealists have consistently argued that human beings are naturally good and therefore form communities on the basis of morality but have yet to demonstrate why power and security still drive much of the operation of international politics.

This chapter has given you an understanding of the theoretical arguments that have been used in the field of international relations. Inasmuch as there are no standard and accepted "rules" of international politics, this chapter has provided you with the various schools of thought. You may discover that realism makes the most sense to you. Or conversely, you may feel that idealists have a more appropriate way of viewing international law. The value of a chapter like this is to be able to place all of the great debates that surround international relations in a given perspective. Now that you have these tools under your belt, let's look at some historic and current IR situations in Chapters 11 and 12.

► Questions to Consider

1. What is power? What is the difference between hard power and soft power?

   Power is the ability to make others do something they otherwise would not have done. Hard power involves force or the threat of force. In the field of international relations, it is either the threat of military force or economic sanctions, or actual military violence or economic sanctions. Soft power, on the other hand, is power used to influence the behavior of others without violence or the threat of violence. If the United States has an interest in a certain region of the world that is unfriendly to its beliefs, it can use soft power to influence those people to want what Americans want.

2. What are the three main assumptions of classical realism?

Classical realism understands that the state is the main actor in international relations because it has the ability to wage war, collect taxes, and make legitimate laws within its borders. Classical realism also understands that the state is therefore a unitary actor. The state acts with one voice in global affairs. Lastly, the state is the most important, rational, unitary actor because the international system is chaotic. Without a world government to enforce order, the system is in a condition of anarchy. Power distributed amongst states is the only way of understanding the entire system.

3. How can the three levels of analysis be useful in understanding issues of international conflict?

The three levels of analysis are useful when trying to understand international conflicts because they allow scholars to determine the behavior and motivations of states in the international system. At certain times, it might be useful to analyze the behavior of individuals, that is, leaders, revolutionaries, leaders of industry or the media, etc. At other times, it might be useful to understand state behavior by looking at the state or domestic level. For example, what is the influence of special interests, political parties, military pressure groups, etc. in the formulation of foreign policy? And lastly, it is sometimes interesting to look at international relations from the global or international level. Sometimes a change in the distribution of power in a certain part of the world might cause instability that could bring about civil unrest and/or wars.

4. What are the main arguments of Marx pertaining to the inequalities of the international system? How have the neo-Marxists elevated the arguments to explain globalization?

Marxists understand conflict in terms of class inequalities. The "have nots" have been victims of the "haves" in the capitalist system. Exploitation has led a few wealthy bourgeoisie to exploit the masses (proletariat). Neo-Marxists elevate the argument of class exploitation to that of the state system, which witnesses the outcomes of colonialism and imperialism in the form of global inequalities that prevent states from rising out of poverty.

5. What is dependency theory? Does it accurately explain poverty in certain parts of the world?

Dependency theorists seek to explain the world by using what is known as the core and periphery. The industrialized states have made trade rules that favor their economies at the expense of those in the developing states of the world. The core are those states in Western Europe and North America who have exploited those in the developing world, who remain at the periphery of international politics.

Key Terms

Alienation of Labor p. 280
Balance of Power p. 265
Classic Realism p. 264
Collective Security p. 275
Colonialism p. 281
Constructivism p. 287
Developed Countries p. 284
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11 War, Diplomacy, and the Beginning of International Relations

Image 11.1 The members of the Great Powers who met in Vienna in 1815 and created a system of international security that lasted one hundred years. North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo

Chapter Outline

Chapter Outline

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▶ Questions to Consider

1. How did the concept of the balance of power change from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century?
2. What is realpolitik? Does it accurately portray international relations?
3. Is a balance of power the most effective way of maintaining international security?
4. How did the victorious powers in Vienna (1815) and those that met in Paris (1915) differ?
5. What is the United Nations, and who makes up the membership of the Security Council? Is the Security Council's permanent membership still relevant in today's world?

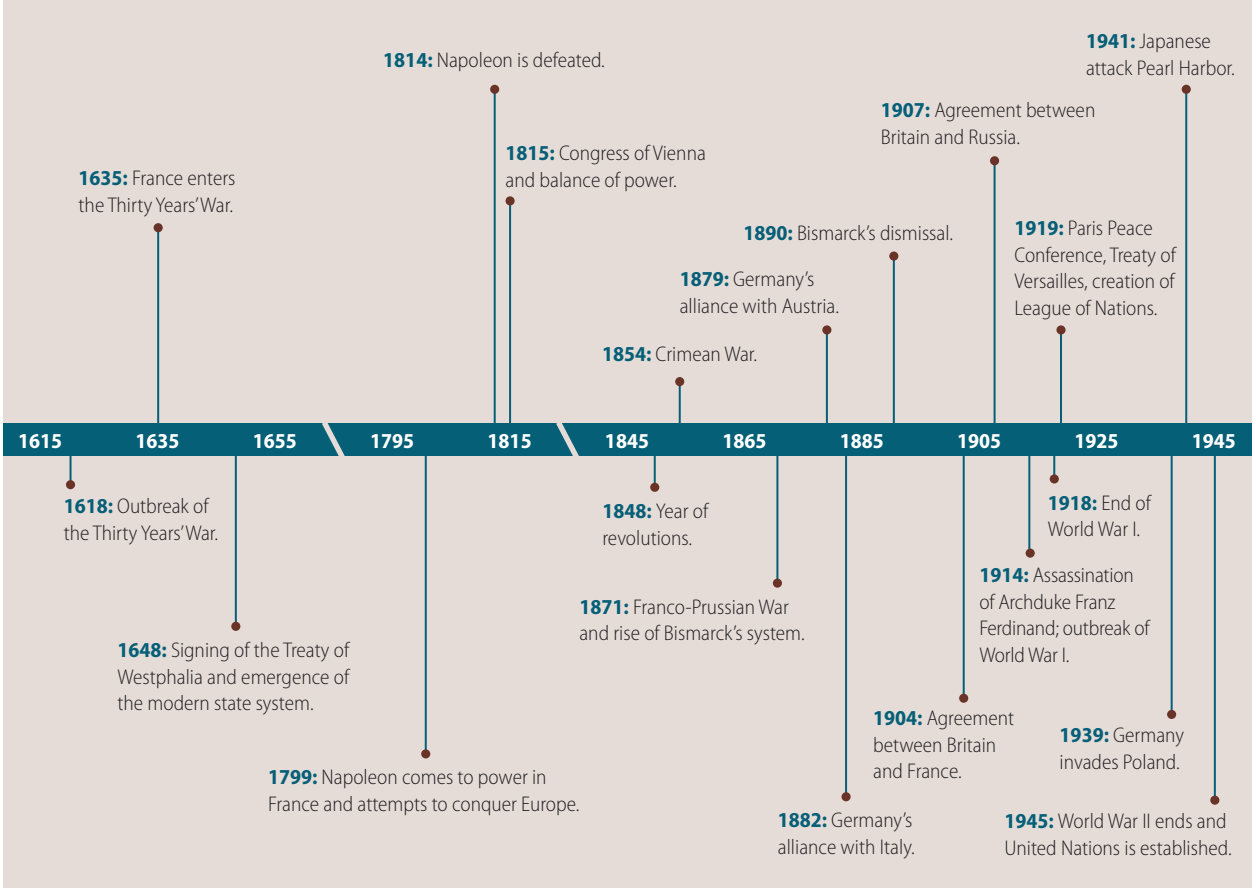
Introduction: Understanding the Past to Make Sense of the Present

This chapter seeks to explain the development of contemporary international relations from a historical perspective. In doing so, we hope to provide you with a fundamental understanding of the ways in which the modern international system has developed over the past several hundred years. Although it will not provide you with an exhaustively detailed history like that found in Paul Kennedy's *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* or Henry Kissinger's *Diplomacy*, it will offer you a basic framework from which you may better understand the contemporary global arrangement.

It must be remembered that the machinery of international relations—those agents involved in the functioning of foreign policies, such as heads of state, diplomats, civil servants, military personnel, and the like—neither emerged overnight nor in a vacuum. The world of states, or nation-states as they are sometimes called, is a relatively recent phenomenon. For most scholars, modern international relations began in the middle of the seventeenth century because of two major developments: the conclusion of the **Thirty Years' War** (1618–48) and the emergence of the **state** as the primary unit of governance and *sovereignty* as its primary principle of legitimacy.

Following a logical progression, this chapter will begin with an examination of the infancy of modern international relations, in other words, those events that occurred in the middle of the seventeenth century that inspired the justification of the state as the most legitimate form of rule. Following this preliminary section, the remainder of

Figure 11.1 Timeline of International Relations



the chapter will focus on each century's contributions to the development of international relations. By analyzing the actions of states in relation to one another, we hope to demonstrate that the global stage is just as important as its *actors*. The discussion will end in the middle of the twentieth century and the dawn of a new international order led by the emergence of the United States and the Soviet Union.

Why Europe? An Important Question to Begin

Although many political scientists criticize those who view the world through a Western or Eurocentric perspective, the fact is that the structure of modern international relations has been built on the European model of the *state*. Our contemporary perception of legitimate governance is based almost entirely on the interrelated concepts of **sovereignty** (the state as the sole source of authority within its borders) and **territorial integrity** (the state has the right to prevent any aggression within its boundaries), terms that arose in Europe in the middle of the seventeenth century (refer to Table 11.1). Before the seventeenth century, power was distributed

Thirty Years' War: A war fought in Europe during the period from 1618–48 that was begun by the Catholic states to bring the Protestant parts of Europe back to the "true" faith. Its conclusion resulted in the modern idea of the state as we know it today and the rise of international relations based on political rather than religious motives.

State: The primary actor in international relations. States (referred to by American students as "countries") have governments, bureaucracies, territory, and people. States are in possession of the ultimate source of authority within their borders and are therefore said to possess sovereignty.

Sovereignty: The idea that the government within a state is recognized (domestically and internationally) as the ultimate source of authority to create, implement, and enforce laws.

Territorial Integrity: The boundaries of any state are to be protected against any acts of aggression and are to be maintained.

Table 11.1 Three Beliefs of the Modern State

Sovereignty	The state is the sole source of authority within its borders.
Territorial integrity	The state has the right to prevent aggression on its borders.
Raison d'état	The national interest. The state places the strength of the state as its primary goal.

in a variety of ways. There was the imperial model, which witnessed one city or city-state rise to dominance and conquer neighboring territories. Empires can be found throughout most of human history.

At the other end of the governance scale is the city or city-state. It is the governance of a small political unit that has created boundaries that define its legitimacy and allow it to collect taxes, create laws, and perform all the necessary and desired goals of those in power. By the middle of the seventeenth century, a new form of government, the state, emerged to successfully challenge the historic dominance of both forms of rule.

As we will learn, the victors of the Thirty Years' War were considered successful because they placed their national interests before other competing loyalties, a notion that was unheard of during most of the medieval period. The following section will present you with an introduction to one of the most important principles of modern international relations, raison d'état.

Raison D'état: A New Understanding of International Relations

Secularism: The belief that religion should be separate from governmental authority and political power.

Raison d'état: Best understood by the modern expression "the national interest," where modern leaders put forth what is best for their own state above all other reasons.

Empire: A political arrangement in which one powerful government is in control of a vast territory and peoples of (possibly) different economic, ethnic, and religious groups than the powerful government itself. This configuration dominated the period right before the emergence of the modern state system.

Most scholars regard the year 1648 as the start of the modern era of international relations. The end of the Thirty Years' War (1648) culminated in the perpetuation of a new emphasis on **secularism** over religion. For centuries, the European continent had been controlled and secured by imperialism and religion. Empires such as the Habsburgs and Russian Czars and the Church in Rome were determined to control large amounts of land and people to secure stability. However, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, few regarded either the *empire* or the pope as legitimate forms of rule. The Protestant Reformation questioned papal authority, and the dawn of the Enlightenment created a sense of individualism that witnessed a new form of statecraft, the **raison d'état**, and the subsequent emergence of a new understanding of international stability, the balance of power.

Where previous centuries had been defined by the political arrangement of the **empire**, the seventeenth century was defined by a new arrangement, the state. The state's ascendance as the most viable instrument of governance emerged during the Thirty Years' War as France and its most important statesman, Cardinal Richelieu, employed a new strategy of understanding international relations. This new understanding of international relations based on raison d'état became the model of statecraft for the next century.

To best understand raison d'état, one must understand the causes and eventual outcomes of the Thirty Years' War. The Thirty Years' War began as a religious conflict fought in Central Europe between the Catholic and Protestant (German-speaking) parts of the Holy Roman Empire. The war ravaged the German territories and eventually involved all of the major European powers. When France entered the conflict in 1635, it did so under a new understanding of international relations. Under its foreign secretary, Cardinal Richelieu, French foreign policy determined its role in the war according to its own national interest rather than any religious one. As Henry Kissinger has pointed out, it was this sense of national interest over that of religious devotion that shattered the previous era and best defined the raison d'état. He wrote:

> As a prince of the Church, Richelieu ought to have welcomed Ferdinand's (Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire) drive to restore Catholic orthodoxy. But Richelieu put the French national interest above any religious goals. His vocation as Cardinal did not keep Richelieu from considering the Habsburg attempt to re-establish the Catholic religion as a geo-political threat to France's security. To him, it was not a religious act but a political maneuver by Austria (Holy Roman Empire was centered in Vienna) to achieve dominance in Central Europe and thereby to reduce France to second-class status.[1]

Richelieu understood that the future lay with France as a political and secular unit, not one bound by religion or the imperial ambitions of empires acting in the name of religion.

In 1648, the Treaty of Westphalia was signed, and the war, often cited as the last of the religious wars in Europe, was over. The Treaty of Westphalia, which was really the result of two peace settlements signed in the cities of Osnabrück and Münster, ushered in a new understanding of governance.[2] The Treaty of Westphalia created a system of rule that ended the dominance of imperial religion, that is, the sway that the Catholic or Protestant churches had over numerous principalities, and called for the breakup of most of the territory known as the Holy Roman Empire. Catholic territories in the Holy Roman Empire were allowed political and religious independence. This did not mean that the inhabitants of these newly created states were "free" to elect their representatives or voice public opinion, but it did mean that they were now ruled by local authorities who had to grant them protection to practice their faith. If we look at the map of Europe before and after the Thirty Years' War, we can understand how the treaty's agreements changed the landscape.

The end of the war created a general agreement that the French explanation of statecraft (the rationale that defined "the state" as the most capable and relevant actor in international relations) was most appropriate. By the late seventeenth century, the notion of raison d'état had placed France at the center of European affairs. According to historians Gordon A. Craig, Alexander A. George, and Paul Gordon Lauren, the late seventeenth century witnessed the ascendancy of French culture to incredible heights as its language, culture, and military spread throughout the continent

"threatening the independent development of other nations."[3] Although this expansion appeared as a natural result of French power, it also had its shortcomings. The model of effective governance that was in the process of being emulated by other European states challenged France and perpetuated the concept of another important idea in the evolution of modern international relations, the balance of power.

If there was one thing that this early understanding of European security fostered, it was the belief that a system of states could work together to prevent one state from gaining too much power. In the late seventeenth century, that state was France. Even though France was the dominant state in European affairs, it was not strong enough to dominate all others. Thus, we witness an early example of the balance of power model. Although it would gain greater visibility and a formal structure following the Congress of Vienna (1815), the seeds of what would become known as the balance of power model were sown much earlier.

Theory and Practice

What Drives Foreign Policy: *Church or State?*

The concept of raison d'état is usually not that difficult for students living in the twenty-first century to understand because it is based on a logic that students have grown up with—a logic that says that leaders will always act in their own state's interest when it comes to foreign policy and must not be influenced by other things such as personal animosity or religious beliefs. However, this was not always the case.

During the medieval period (fifth to fifteenth centuries), the papacy in Rome (the Roman Catholic Church) held sway over many of the kingdoms and principalities in Europe. This meant the pope had the ability to strongly influence foreign and domestic policy in places under the control of Catholic monarchs. Because Catholics believe that the pope is not only Christ's representative on earth but is also infallible, his political beliefs took on a much more important role than those of other political leaders. In fact, Ferdinand II, emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, who took up the cause of restoring Catholicism in Europe during the Thirty Years' War, did so on his belief that he was doing good for both the pope and God. Ferdinand II is a classic case of the medieval ruler: one who judged foreign policy decisions by his religious convictions rather than what would be practical for his own people.[4] This led to the eventual collapse of the Holy Roman Empire and the emergence of several weakly linked principalities around the larger states of Austria and Prussia. If Ferdinand II had chosen to enter battle according to Richelieu's understanding of the "national interest," then he would have saved thousands of lives and a great deal of territory. Then again, he would never have done so because it would have conflicted with his deep devotion to what he believed was God's will: the restoration at any cost of Catholicism in Europe.

Think It Through

1. **Do you think that religion plays a major role in foreign policy today?**
2. **Should foreign policy advisors always behave like Richelieu? Or is there a danger to that type of thinking?**

Image 11.2 Europe 1100: From the beginning of history until the middle of the seventeenth century, issues of war and peace were not decided by competing states but by large empires and small principalities. The world as you know it today simply did not exist.

Image 11.3 Europe in 1648: Following the Thirty Years' War, Europe was transformed by a revolution in how international relations were conducted. The ideas of "state" and "sovereignty" became the basis of success in the modern age. Can you notice the territorial differences between the two maps? Can you tell how wars can change the landscape of a continent?

Balance of Power and the Rise of the State System

The concept of the balance of power in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries came about as a *reaction* to the dominance of its most powerful state: France. However, it was not yet the intentional mechanism it would later become. As Kissinger pointed out:

> If the good of the state was the highest value, the duty of the ruler was the aggrandizement and promotion of his glory. The stronger would seek to dominate, and the weaker would resist by forming coalitions to augment their individual strengths. If the coalition was powerful enough to check the aggressor, a balance of power emerged; if not, some country would achieve hegemony. The outcome was not foreordained and was therefore tested by frequent wars. At its beginning, the outcome could as easily have been empire—French or German—as equilibrium. That is why it took over a hundred years to establish a European order based explicitly on the balance of power. At first, the balance was an almost incidental fact of life, not a goal of international politics.[5]

The balance of power model that emerged at the turn of the eighteenth century witnessed an evolution in international relations. States that at one time had joined one another in the pursuit of deterring France from gaining complete dominion over Europe had begun to view foreign affairs in a similarly aggressive manner. Those states with the ability to conquer weaker states did so, finding justification in the belief that it was in their own best interest.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the game of international warfare and territorial acquisition led to an acceptance of five recognized *great powers*: France, Great Britain, Russia, Prussia, and Austria. These five powers considered themselves (and consequently were considered) the bearers of stability on the continent. Although they were not tied to one another in any formal institution or treaty, they realized that their dominance was beneficial to both themselves and, more important, to the stability of Europe.

According to Craig and George, what developed during the eighteenth century were three principles shared by all the great powers of Europe. The first of these principles was "a general agreement that it was normal and right that there should be five great powers. The thought of one of them might disappear—that Prussia might be destroyed in the Seven Years War, for example—was resisted by all major powers."[6] This unwritten agreement was what many consider the glue that bound Europe together. It was predicated on the belief that if one of the members was destroyed, the ensuing vacuum would engulf all of Europe.

Second, "there was general agreement that although the powers might fight each other, the *way* in which they fought should be subject to some regulation."[7] Although there was not an agency (large scale international organization) to enforce the rules of war that had been established in the previous centuries, the great powers of Europe largely adhered to certain norms of military behavior. The destruction caused by the relentless fighting of the Thirty Years' War perpetuated a notion that warfare had limits and that certain military behavior was unacceptable. The writings of Hugo Grotius, in particular, *De jure belli ac pacis* (*On the Law of War and Peace*), published in 1625, analyzed the ways in which warfare was to be conducted. Grotius and others in the just war tradition set limits intended to protect civilians, private property, and the means to generate wealth. By the middle of the eighteenth century, these conditions had become part of the military vernacular.

Finally, Craig and George argue that

> there was a general recognition of the principle of the balance of power, which took two forms: first, there was a general wariness about anything that looked like an attempt at universal domination by a single power . . . and second, for the balance of power to work properly, a territorial gain effected in war by one power should be balanced by compensatory gains for other major powers.[8]

Examples of these factors can be found throughout most of the eighteenth century, with the two most relevant examples being Frederick II's (Prussia) attack on Selesia and the War of the Polish Succession.[9] Both conflicts were designed with limited ambitions in mind. Neither action was considered an act of continental domination because both Prussia and Russia (in the second case) agreed that just as there were five great powers, there were also weak ones, with the weak ones serving as the beneficiaries of military domination. Weaker states who ended up on the same side of a great power could benefit from having their interests protected. They could actually gain in security by understanding the nature of the balance of power system.

Therefore, the concept that allowed the five great powers of the eighteenth century a degree of success was the balance of power construct. However, as we have already stated, the eighteenth-century understanding of the balance of power was reactionary rather than preventative. The great powers understood the consequences and the distinct possibility that one state could upset the balance and conquer the continent. Unfortunately, they had not created any international institutions or agreements capable of preventing such an occurrence. So when it finally happened, most of Western Europe was not ready to handle the military and political will of Napoleon Bonaparte, the man who would forever change the landscape

Table 11.2 Balance of Power in Practice		
Eighteenth Century: Balance of Power	Reactionary Model	Lack of international agreements and institutions. The five great powers come together only after a state has upset the balance.
Nineteenth Century: Balance of Power	Preemptive Model	Congress of Vienna was formed to prevent the collapse of the great powers system.

of Europe and the European concept of the balance of power. (Refer to Table 11.2, Balance of Power in Practice, to learn how the international system changed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.)

Theory and Practice

Grotius and the Rule of Law

Why do wars have rules? It is an interesting question and one that is often raised during arguments over military behavior. During the first decade of the Thirty Years' War, the scholar Hugo Grotius began to formulate ideas that laws and rules can be developed and agreed on by combating militaries. In his most famous work, *The Law of War and Peace* (1625), Grotius argued that because war seems to be a natural part of the human experience, it follows that some wars are considered legal and others illegal. Grotius also suggested that just as humanity has defined certain acceptable practices in domestic life, so too must humanity define what is considered acceptable in foreign warfare. Therefore, wartime, like peacetime, can and must be regulated.

Grotius's masterpiece is divided into three parts. The first part is designed to provide the reader with an understanding of the historical foundations of what is called *just war*, or the reasons that make war acceptable in certain circumstances. These circumstances are laid out in greater detail in the second part of the book. Grotius concluded that there are three reasons that make war acceptable: self-defense, reparation of injury, and punishment.[10] Essentially, if combatants have been attacked (or are being attacked), have been damaged following an attack, or have been wronged by any means that have hurt the ability of the ruler to rule, they are legally entitled to go to war.

Finally, and most important for this discussion, is Grotius's final section, which deals with behavior on the battlefield. Essentially, Grotius makes arguments for what is acceptable conduct during just wars. One of the most striking features of the third part is his constant use of the word moderation, which, in fact, is the word used to title Chapters 11 through 16. Although Grotius does allow for a wide array of behavior during times of war, he strongly condemns those acts conducted by members of the military that deliberately harm private citizens and private property. In essence, if the military is not behaving in a manner consistent with winning the war and has resorted to humiliation or unreasonable destruction, it is breaking international law and is therefore outlawed.

Think It Through

1. **Should there be rules of warfare?**
2. **If so, who is entitled to decide on these rules of engagement?**

The Nineteenth Century and the Concert of Europe: Preemptive Balance of Power

Napoleon's dominance and reorganization of the continent taught the leaders of Europe's most powerful states a valuable lesson about the balance of power, one they codified and put into practice. The leaders of the Quadruple Alliance (the United Kingdom, Prussia, Russia, and Austria), which had defeated the French army and had driven Napoleon into exile, were determined to create a new type of international arrangement, one that was, above all else, capable of preventing continent-wide warfare.

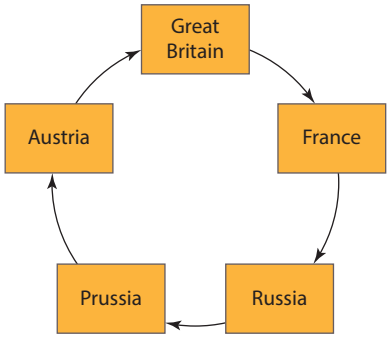
In 1814, the leaders of the Quadruple Alliance signed the Treaty of Chaumont, which brought the Napoleonic Wars to an end. During the final discussions, the leaders determined that they would reconvene the following spring in Vienna, Austria, for an international conference whose sole purpose was the maintenance of security and stability in Europe. The Congress of Vienna (1815), as it came to be known, was the first of its kind, an international conference whose sole purpose was preventative and not solely responsive. This is what made it so extraordinary for its day.

Up until the Congress of Vienna, conferences were held and treaties were signed with the sole intent of deciding on appropriate reparations and land redistribution. Conferences had traditionally consisted of the *winners* making demands and the *losers* having to agree to them.[11] The Congress of Vienna was something revolutionary because it was not designed to end a war: It was designed to create a future peace. The individuals who met in Austria in the fall of 1814 and the spring of 1815 decided that the balance of power concept needed to be reworked, which meant that it needed to be configured in such a way to ensure that stability was never again disrupted.

So how did they accomplish this? Initially, the Quadruple Alliance was hesitant to include France in the discussions concerning the future of Europe. After all, it was Revolutionary France that led to the disruption of the balance of power and a

Figure 11.2 The Five Great Powers of Europe

It was believed that as long as the five major powers remained in place and the balance was maintained, peace was assured.



decade of continental warfare. For many European leaders, the issue of France had to be remedied. Should the state that dominated and consolidated all of the European powers be allowed to participate in the creation of a lasting peace?

After several weeks of negotiations, it was decided that France would at some point in the future regain its place as one of the five great powers. The Quadruple Alliance realized that France was too powerful to be left out of an international conference whose priority was the establishment of peace. Although it still took several years (until 1818) for France to be formally included in periodic international conferences, the visionaries who met in Vienna understood that only animosity would emerge within French society and the new French government if French interests were not formally recognized.[12]

Additionally, the powers realized that they had to create a system that proactively maintained stability, so they "stipulated that the great powers would hold periodic conferences of the foreign ministers, 'for the purpose of consulting upon their interests, or for the consideration of measures which shall be considered the

Why Politics Matters to You!

What Would You Have Done with France?

If you were attending the Congress of Vienna in 1815 and had been representing one of the countries that had been devastated by France, how would you have treated the new French delegation? Would you have invited its members to attend the Congress as equal participants in the proceedings? Or would you have wanted to punish them to the point where they would no longer be an international threat to the peace and security of Europe? This is an important set of questions because it allows us to understand the great foresight of those diplomats who met in Vienna in 1815. The human impulse would be that of punishment, right? Here is France, the state that has consistently upset the balance of power and has conquered most of the continent. Why would you want to forgive its actions and let France back into the "great powers club"? You would want to cripple the country permanently, right? Well, the delegates who met in 1815 gave a resounding no!

Although many of the attendees wanted to make sure that France paid back a number of its wartime costs, which they did, they also realized that a country as large and as powerful as France needed a seat at the table if the great powers were to design a strong international system of security. And that is exactly what happened. France was brought back into the great power system because the Quadruple Alliance realized that it would be dangerous to ignore and possibly isolate this powerful country.

This is the exact opposite of the manner in which Germany was treated after World War I. Instead of realizing that German isolation would make for a much more dangerous international situation in the future, the leaders who met following World War I decided to punish Germany. What was the outcome of such a decision? The rise of Adolf Hitler and the global catastrophe of World War II.

Think It Through

1. **Do you think the balance of power is an effective form of rule?**
2. **Or do you think that a policy of collective security is more useful?**
3. **Which model was pursued after (a) the Congress of Vienna and (b) World War I?**

most salutary for the purpose and prosperity of Nations and the maintenance of the Peace of Europe.'"[13] This pledge was the first of its kind in international relations. The ministers present at the Congress of Vienna had decided that it was in their collective best interest to actively promote stability by any means necessary. They viewed the system they had created as if it were a grand orchestration of power and politics, a **Concert of Europe**.

Concert of Europe: The name given to the European balance of power system of the nineteenth century. Although many scholars agree that the nineteenth century had several low-level wars (wars fought between some of the great powers), the system that was forged in Vienna proved strong enough to prevent war for almost one hundred years.

This proactive mentality provided the nineteenth century with both its greatest strength and weakness. The benefit of a proactive balance of power is believed to be greater security. The leadership of Austria and Russia "tried to turn the Quadruple Alliance into an agency that would automatically intervene in the affairs of any country in which there was a revolution or an agitation against the status quo and suppress by force the revolutionary or democratic or liberal movements."[14] Several of the great powers argued that because the spirit of liberalism (i.e., those beliefs that called for greater protection of rights and freedoms) had perpetuated the French Revolution, it was an unacceptable feature of international politics. It was therefore continually suppressed for the first three decades after the Congress of Vienna.

It was this joint policy of suppression and military intrusion that gave the Vienna system its greatest weakness. In 1848, Europe was shaken by revolutions, so much so that the year 1848 is now commonly referred to as the Year of Revolutions. Revolutions took place in Sicily and France and then throughout most of Europe. Although they were easily suppressed, it was a wake-up call for the great powers. The design of those that had met in Vienna in 1815 had changed. The Vienna system was still intact, and the great powers still maintained a belief in the balance of power, but by the middle of the nineteenth century, new states were emerging, and a new system was developing.

Theory and Practice

The Balance of Power Updated? Or the Dawn of a New Cold War?

Nineteenth-century Europe is often described as the greatest example for the international relations theory known as the balance of power. Because the leaders of the five great powers in Europe (the United Kingdom, France, Prussia, Russia, and Austria) all realized that war was hurtful to the entire system, they decided to create a system that ensured their long-term survival. A balance of power is reliant on all of its members to maintain the equilibrium. It was understood that if one state became too powerful or too weak, the system would collapse.

In today's world, one could argue that a new "balancing act" is under way, balanced on the strength of nuclear arms and economic development. The Europeans of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries understood that stability equaled success and so too do some of our era's largest and most powerful countries. But so too did the policy makers of

(Continued)

Theory and Practice (Continued)

the Soviet Union and the United States after World War II. Let's consider the relationship between China, the United States, and the rest of the world as an example.

Right now, the American market consumes many goods created in China. Why? Because China's production costs are much cheaper than U.S. costs. American companies choose to have many of their manufacturing plants in Chinese cities (and elsewhere in Asia) because these locations create a much higher level of profit for them. In the United States, both the states and the federal government protect workers' wages, working conditions, vacations, etc. China does not. China is still considered a communist state that enforces wage controls on its workers. This means that workers get paid low salaries, but the state itself makes great profits from the dealings with American companies.

China also has also spent a great deal of money in pursuit of raw materials and the development of its Belt and Road Initiative: a superhighway program that seeks to enhance its trade with its partners in the region. The Chinese government is also actively involved in Africa, attempting to take advantage of the continent's resources and develop a stronghold there. These policy choices have made China the main competitor to the United States in not only Asia but also parts of Africa. It has also made Beijing a partner to states such as Russia who want to pursue and expand their own territorial reaches. Are there enough powerful states to develop a new "balance of power" model that might constrain Chinese and U.S. foreign policies? Or are the two economic superpowers headed toward the renewal of a two-sided, Cold War type arrangement? What does the evidence suggest?

Think It Through

1. **If you were an advisor to an American president, how would you advise the president on issues involving China?**
2. **Do you think it is in the long-term interest of the United States to maintain a strong alliance with China?**

Bismarck, the Rise of Germany, and the End of the Concert of Europe

In 1854, Russia and Britain (supported by France and Piedmont) fought in the Crimean War, the first major war fought in Europe since the Congress of Vienna. Although it was only a limited conflict fought among several of the great powers (Britain aided by France and Piedmont versus Russia), it was significant because it proved that war was neither impossible nor worrisome as long as it was limited in scope, in this case, fought between two or three rivals that possessed limited ambitions.[15] Unfortunately, limited wars made the idea of war become somewhat acceptable. In fact, 15 wars were fought between 1854 and 1870, a sign that limited wars were becoming the norm rather than an aberration.[16]

Of all the wars fought between 1854 and 1870, the last one, the Franco-Prussian War, caused the greatest impact in international politics. The Franco-Prussian War resulted in the creation of a united Germany, the French loss of Alsace-Lorraine (a resource-rich territory) to Germany, a new person in charge of German foreign policy (Otto von Bismarck), and a balance of power system quickly being defined by limited warfare on a continent running out of buffer zones and open territory.[17] Most experts consider these events as some of the most pivotal of the nineteenth

century. With the creation of Germany came the end of the open lands that had separated France from Prussia and Prussia from Austria. This continental buffer zone that had been an integral part of the original design of those at the Congress of Vienna had been swept away.

According to author Paul Kennedy, there were two main factors that contributed to Germany's impact on the international balance of power system: location and industrial/commercial/military growth. He writes:

> Germany had arisen right in the center of the old European states system; its very creation had directly impinged upon the interests of Austria-Hungary and France, and its existence had altered the relative position of all of the existing great powers of Europe. The second factor was the sheer speed and extent of Germany's further growth, in industrial, commercial, and military/naval terms.[18]

These two features created a great deal of hostility toward the newly unified state. In fact, it was this hostility that caused the German chancellor, Otto von Bismarck, to take actions into his own hands.

Realpolitik: The use of practical methods, instead of moral or ideological means, to secure political power. For example, one who engages in realpolitik would assess entry into a war as a calculation of power for one's own country, regardless of morality.

Bismarck realized that Germany's rise was not welcomed by its neighbors. Yet he also realized that Germany's fate was tied to that of the Concert of Europe. To maintain the balance and to secure German prosperity, Bismarck designed a system of alliances and treaties that placed Germany at the center of European affairs. In doing so, Bismarck changed the concept of the balance of power from one based on the concept of the raison d'état to one based on **realpolitik**, a German word that sought to explain international affairs in terms of power and force.

In 1879, Germany signed a secret treaty with Austria-Hungary with the intent of assuring Austrian support in the event of a Russian attack. In doing so, Bismarck created an alliance with Austria-Hungary that protected German interests, gained it one strong ally, and further isolated Russia from European politics. Russia became so concerned by the terms of the treaty, it asked for Germany to reconsider a reformulation of the historic Three Emperors' League (Prussia, Austria, Russia) to make sure that it was not isolated from European affairs.[19] "And that success brought the Italians . . . to Berlin, asking for protection against French attacks on their interests in North Africa—to which Bismarck agreed on condition that the Italians also make a treaty of accommodation with Austria (1882)."[20] As the great powers expanded their colonial reach, Germany had expanded its continental influence to the degree where it was either directly or indirectly allied with every European state, with the exception of its

Grafissimo/DigitalVision Vectors/Getty Images

Image 11.4 Bismarck needed to keep Germany at the center of European affairs, so he created a system of secret treaties and alliances.

most hostile neighbor, France. By the time of Bismarck's dismissal in 1890, France was almost completely isolated by the other powers.

Although Bismarck's policy of alliances via secret treaties was effective in bringing a great amount of order to post-Crimean War Europe and increasing the economic and military dominance of Germany, it had serious consequences. The original design of the Concert of Europe that was constructed by those in Vienna in 1815 was based on preventing continent-wide war through the dual techniques of diplomacy and limited warfare. Bismarck's model was based on realpolitik and secrecy. Realpolitik tends to produce states that join alliances out of fear rather than cooperation because it assumes that states naturally operate according to their own interests rather than that of the system.

In the years leading up to the outbreak of World War I, the European system had degenerated into one of militarism and economic tension. As Great Britain, France, and Russia (now openly hostile to Germany because of an economic embargo levied against them) entered into formal alliances (Entente Cordial between France and Great Britain in 1904 and the Anglo-Russian Agreement of 1907), Europe slowly divided into two camps: those friendly to Germany and those unfriendly to

Why Politics Matters to You!

How Well Do You Understand Foreign Policy?

As we have already learned, a large part of today's world is considered democratic. Many states hold elections, have representative political parties, and, to a degree, have a legal system based on the concept of rights. In previous eras, however, this was not the case. Heads of state and diplomats (those who perform foreign policy making) regarded their people as unable to fully understand the nuances of foreign policy. This fact led Klemens von Metternich (Austria's delegate at the Congress of Vienna in 1815) to assert that foreign policy is not for the "plebs" (or common people) and Bismarck to assert that it is best that people "don't know how laws (like sausages) are made." Their understanding was based on the idea that foreign policy requires the quick action of well-informed individuals who know how the system works.

We, however, live in a different era—one that is characterized by public opinion polls and instantaneous media reports. In the United States, public opinion has swayed involvement in wars and attitudes toward returning soldiers. But is the public well informed on foreign affairs? Do you think that your opinions on issues related to national security or diplomacy are well informed? So now what do you think of Metternich and Bismarck?

Before you write them off, think about how well informed you are about foreign policy. Democracies in the twenty-first century will struggle with foreign policy because democracies function in fundamentally different ways than authoritarian states. Democracies (in theory) are based on the will of the people. Those who get elected need the people's votes. Yet, what if the people do not understand all the issues facing the international community?

Think It Through

1. **Is there any merit to the views of Metternich and Bismarck? Or should they just be regarded as voices from a previous era?**
2. **Can wars be conducted according to democratic principles if not all the combatants are democratic? More important, should they be?**

Germany. When the Archduke Franz Ferdinand was assassinated on June 28, 1914, in Sarajevo (the capital of modern-day Bosnia-Herzegovina in the Balkans region of Southern Europe), the alliance system collapsed, and Europe became engulfed in World War I. Kennedy has written:

> Austria-Hungary's demands upon Serbia, its rejection of the conciliatory Serbian reply, and its attack upon Belgrade led to the Russian mobilization in aid of its Serbian ally. But that, in turn, led the German General Staff to press for the immediate implementation of the Schlieffen Plan, that is, its preemptive westward strike, via Belgium, against France—which had the further effect of bringing in the British.[21]

By 1914, the seeds of war had been sown and the rigidity of the post-Bismarckian order had collapsed. When the "war to end all wars" finally ended in 1918, the international system had changed. The violence of the war—the trench warfare, the high rate of casualties, and the use of chlorine, mustard gas, and other chemical weapons—demonstrated that the powerful European states were willing to use any means to gain power. As a result, the world witnessed the simultaneous destruction of the Concert of Europe and the ascent of the United States. Although it would take another world war to witness the emergence of the United States as a *superpower*, American involvement in World War I gave it a seat at the victors' table.

Collective Security: The League of Nations and the Outbreak of World War II

In 1919, U.S. President Woodrow Wilson entered the Paris Peace Conference with the goal of creating a lasting peace through the realization of the principles of democracy and national self-determination: the belief that independent nations should have the right to govern themselves. What Wilson encountered was a hostile European audience unwilling to take the advice of the American president. Wilson's Fourteen Points representing the notion eventually termed collective security was poorly received by Europeans who still regarded the "balance of power" as the most appropriate design for maintaining stable international relations. (See Table 11.3 for what political scientist Karen A. Mingst has determined to be the five assumptions of collective security.) In a famous quote reflecting this hostility, the French representative Georges Clemenceau commented that while "God gave us the Ten Commandments . . . Mr. Wilson has given us the Fourteen Points." It was as if the European community had decided that certain states had more experience in issues of diplomacy than others and that these "older" states possessed the only voices that mattered. Therefore, the League of Nations, which operated under the notion of collective security (that an attack against one member was to be perceived as

Table 11.3 Karen A. Mingst's Assumptions of Collective Security[22]	
1. Wars are caused by aggressive states.	1. States that seek more power are a threat to international security.
2. Aggressors must be stopped.	2. States that seek to upend the international system must be stopped to provide security for all members.
3. Aggressors are easily identified.	3. Aggressor states are those that are expanding military power as well as using their power to get involved in the affairs of other states. They are thus easily identified.
4. Aggressors are always wrong.	4. States that act aggressively in the pursuit of their own power are always wrong because they violate the concepts of sovereignty and territorial integrity.
5. Aggressors know the international community will act against them.	5. Aggressor states understand that if they upset the international order, states will unite to stop them.

an attack against all), was never given an appropriate chance to carry out Wilson's dream. In many ways, it was what Lenin described as "still-born from the very first."

It is worth noting, though, that Europeans were not the only group concerned with an international institution that mandated equal membership regardless of economic, military, or political might. The U.S. Congress did not like Wilson's vision either. In fact, following the 1919 congressional elections, the newly Republican-dominated Senate refused the U.S. entrance into the League of Nations, claiming that the United States should return to its prewar ideology of isolationism.

Hulton Archive/Getty Images

Image 11.5 U.S. President Woodrow Wilson was the major architect for the creation of the League of Nations.

Nevertheless, the individuals who eventually signed the Treaty of Versailles made it clear that Germany would pay dearly for World War I. In fact, the new German government (known as the Weimar Republic) was forced to sign the treaty and claim full responsibility for all losses incurred during the war. This act made it clear that the signatories to the Treaty of Versailles lacked the foresight of their predecessors. We must remember that the statesmen who met in Vienna in 1815 faced a similar dilemma. However, unlike their diplomatic heirs, the Vienna statesmen realized that their era's aggressor state, France, was too influential in the international system to be denied an active role in future designs. The leaders who met in Paris 104 years later lacked this insight and blamed the new German government for the sins of the previous one.

This mistake has often been cited as one of the major reasons for the revival of German power in the 1930s. However, it is only one part of the flawed response. The other, more critical international error was the poorly designed League of Nations itself. Formally

erected in 1919 as part of the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations attempted to achieve stability through a policy of collective security. Unfortunately, the League's policy of collective security placed an equal share of responsibility and an assumption of power on all members. For example, each member state possessed an equal vote regardless of its economic or military capabilities. Many felt that this feature created a structure of inadequacy because powerful states could easily be vetoed by weaker ones.

In addition, the League of Nations lacked the support of some of the world's most powerful states. With the absence of both the United States and the Soviet Union (formerly Russia), the League of Nations lacked political credibility. How could an international institution intended to curb warfare do so without the inclusion of its two most powerful states? The answer, of course, is it couldn't. Within two decades of its creation, the political climate of global affairs proved to be too severe for the League. When Nazi Germany invaded Poland on September 1, 1939, and the Japanese attacked the American military base at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the world witnessed the start of another war of epic proportions and the beginning of a new understanding of international affairs whose outcomes would change the very definition of power itself.

Trinity Mirror/Mirrorpix/Alamy Stock Photo

Image 11.6 Signers of the Treaty of Versailles.

Correcting the League and Confronting a New World: The United Nations and the End of World War II

In 1945, the world witnessed the emergence of a new understanding of international relations. The international community observed the emergence of two competing superpowers (the United States and the Soviet Union), two economic ideologies (capitalism and communism), and a multitude of weapons capable of mass destruction. The world that was shaken by World War I was destroyed by World War II. The post-World War I era, defined by its denial of the balance of power and its nonbinding trust in collective security, was shattered by World War II. Where World War I ended through exhaustion, World War II ended with mass destruction. The Nazi Holocaust created an environment where the notion of human rights became front and center, and the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki reminded the global community that it had entered a new era of unthinkable destruction.

Since its creation on October 24, 1945, the United Nations (UN) has been based on a balancing act. Its configuration is built on a practical assessment of both power politics and representative democracy. While the League of Nations failed to properly

represent the military and economic differences of the world's states, the United Nations was designed to allot power more appropriately. For instance, among the six organs of the United Nations, the UN Security Council sits as a testament to power politics. Composed of five permanent members (the United States, France, Russia, China, and the United Kingdom) and ten nonpermanent members (whose membership is based on a rotating system of two-year terms consistent with geographic representation), the Security Council is charged with maintaining international peace and security by the acknowledgment in 1945 that its membership was based on real power.

Following World War II, the architects of the United Nations determined that the United States, France, Russia, China, and the United Kingdom were the world's most powerful states. They were therefore given a special status within the overall structure. These permanent five (P5) are the only states with veto power. Although the decisions made by the entire Security Council need to be approved by only nine out of the fifteen members, the permanent members need to provide unanimous support for any military action or economic sanction. In addition to the Security Council, the United Nations is composed of the General Assembly (made up of all 193 UN members, designed to provide even the smallest states with a forum for discussion); the largely dormant Trusteeship Council (made up of the P5, the Trusteeship Council was created to provide guidance to those states who were placed under protection by the UN and are attempting to gain recognition. It suspended its operations in 1994); the Secretariat (headed by the Secretary General, the Secretariat provides much of the administrative and research services of the United Nations); the Economic and Social Council, or ECOSOC (provides research and coordination on a number of issues related to economic development, health, climate change, etc., as well as coordination between **nongovernmental organizations [NGOs]** and specialized agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund and the World Health Organization); and the International Court of Justice (consisting of fifteen judges elected by both the General Assembly and Security Council who serve to decide disputes between states). Overlooking the East River in Midtown Manhattan on grounds donated by the Rockefeller Family, the United Nations was designed to promote peace and combat oppression.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs): Organizations that act independently of states and usually have a particular focus or interest. For example, the organization Doctors Without Borders can be considered an NGO committed to the prevention and treatment of disease in various parts of the world. They are privately funded and provide relief to many people who lack basic health care.

Unfortunately, much of the hope and assumed power of the United Nations was dashed as international relations became dominated by the Cold War system. As the United States and the Soviet Union began to dictate influence around the world, scholars began to question the relevancy of the United Nations as an agent capable of providing security and preventing war. Because the United Nations was founded to protect both the sovereignty of states and individual human rights, it sometimes has been unable to prevent warfare and preserve peace. For example, for **peacekeepers** to be deployed into a particular region, the permanent members of the Security Council need unanimous support. Although any of the permanent members are allowed to abstain (decline to vote), agreements to use force have proven difficult. The war in Ukraine has been an ongoing problem for Ukraine as well as the states of Eastern Europe, and the Security Council has done nothing to stop Russian

Peacekeepers: A group of troops sent as part of a UN mission to maintain a peace agreement in an area that appears troubled.

aggression. Then again, Russia is part of the Security Council, so how can it effectively end a crisis or in this case, a war, if it is one of the members required to vote on military action? The Security Council's inability to stop large-scale violence in the form of ethnic cleansing, genocide, and even war is its greatest weakness.

This weakness has made the relevancy of the United Nations a constant topic of debate in the international community. Although it must be made clear that the international system has greatly benefitted from the various UN agencies related to the eradication of poverty, education, and women's health and safety in the developing world, it has also proved somewhat ineffective when it comes to stopping large-scale tragedies. Would a change in the structure of the institutions of the United Nations give it greater strength to promote greater change in the world? What do you think? Take a look at the Theory and Practice Box and consider what you come up with.

Theory and Practice

Should We Reconfigure the UN Security Council?

At the end of World War II, it was decided that there must be a component of the United Nations that is given more authority to provide security on the basis that not all countries are equal in terms of power. Therefore, it was decided that there must be a Security Council made up of five permanent members and ten countries that rotate on a three-year basis based on regional representation. The five permanent members selected were China, the Soviet Union (Russia today), the United States, the United Kingdom, and France. Why? Because they had the largest militaries and therefore had the "right" to act as the protectors of international security. They are also the only countries legally allowed to have nuclear arms.

Over the last decade, however, the world has witnessed the emergence of Brazil and India as global leaders. Although their societies are still considered to have high levels of poverty and income inequality when compared to most states in Western Europe and North America, they are quickly developing strong middle classes and strong international financial connections. Should they have a seat at the Security Council? If both Brazil and India are regionally important and globally powerful, then why not give them seats on the Security Council? What about other states who possess nuclear arms, like Pakistan or Israel? Should this capability allow them a seat at the table?

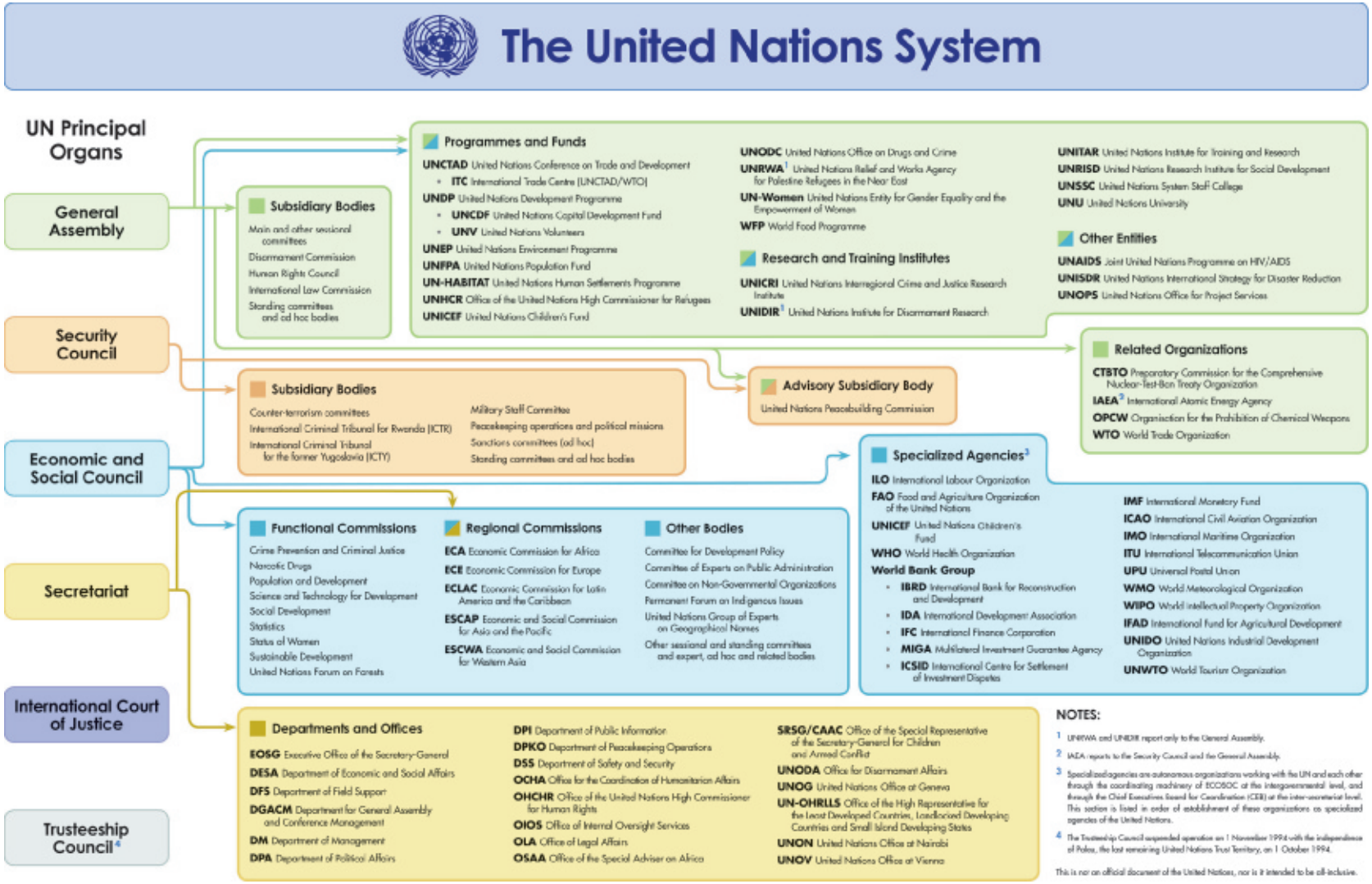
JOHANNES EISELE/AFP/Getty Images

Image 11.7 China has consistently vetoed or abstained from most votes pertaining to military interventions.

Think It Through

1. Should the UN Security Council be reconfigured?
2. Have there been changes in the power relations of the international system since the original Security Council?
3. Currently, the United Kingdom and France still reside as permanent members of the Security Council. Are they still two of the most powerful states on earth? If not, then do they still belong on the Security Council?

Figure 11.3 The United Nations System



Source: United Nations Organizational chart, found at http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/structure/index.shtml. Used by permission of United Nations.

Summary 11

North Wind Picture Archives/Alamy Stock Photo

Before reading this chapter, you may never have considered the ways in which international relations have evolved over time. In many ways, it is not an exaggeration to suggest that we are still living by certain principles that were established almost four hundred years ago. Principles such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, raison d'état, balance of power, and collective security are still at the heart of many debates related to intervention and security.

Although the world of the twenty-first century (which we will get to in Chapter 12) is in many ways more complex than in previous centuries, it is still linked to many of the institutions and practices of the past. Governments, heads of state, diplomats, militaries, and a host of other public officials continue to dictate foreign policy. Debates over the conduct of state behavior continue to reflect arguments of previous eras, and power as a source of conflict continues to be the dominant goal of those in the international community.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. How did the concept of the balance of power change from the eighteenth century to the nineteenth century?

   In the eighteenth century, the states employed a reactive balance of power model. In the nineteenth century, they employed a proactive one. By the nineteenth century, the states wanted to ensure security, so they proactively kept the system intact.

2. What is realpolitik? Does it accurately portray international relations?

   Realpolitik uses practical means instead of ideological ones to gain and maintain political power.

3. Is a balance of power the most effective way of maintaining international security?

   For realists, yes, the balance of power is the most effective way of maintaining international security because they argue that it creates an equilibrium among competitive states.

4. How did the victorious powers in Vienna (1815) and those that met in Paris (1915) differ?

   They differed in the treatment of their enemy. In Vienna, France was added back into the international system of Great Powers because to deny them entrance would have been shortsighted due to French power. In Paris, the diplomats wanted to punish Germany for all the damages caused during World War I.

5. What is the United Nations, and who makes up the membership of the Security Council? Is the Security Council's permanent membership still relevant in today's world?

Membership in the Security Council is based on five permanent members, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States, and ten nonpermanent members who are chosen based on geographical diversity and who serve two-year terms.

Key Terms

Concert of Europe p. 303
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Raison d'état p. 294
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12 Competing Visions for the Future of International Relations

Image 12.1 A McDonald's restaurant in Bengaluru (formerly Bangalore), India highlights some of the penetrating forces of the globalized economy. David Wells/Alamy Stock Photo

Chapter Outline

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▶ Questions to Consider

1. What is deterrence? What is containment? How did they define American foreign policy during the Cold War?
2. What best defines the processes known collectively as globalization?
3. How have multinational corporations impeded state sovereignty?
4. What are the differences between domestic, state, and international terrorism?
5. What are the differences of opinion between Friedman and Stiglitz? Are the processes of globalization good or bad? Why?

Introduction: Contemporary International Relations

This chapter will attempt to explain contemporary international relations, specifically, the course of international relations from the beginning of the Cold War to the present. Therefore, it will examine the transition from bipolarity (a system defined by the presence of two superpowers: the Soviet Union or the United States) to a system marked by several competing nonstate and state actors (the present state of world politics). If the Cold War was best defined by nuclear arms, international stability, competing economic ideologies (capitalism and communism), and proxy states (states supported either by the Soviet Union or the United States), the present era is best defined by states and nonstate actors, international instability, and globalization articulated by the presence of unprecedented information communication technology (ICT), competing economic and political ideologies (neoliberalism and populism), nuclear proliferation, terrorism, and challenges to the democratic order.

Because this chapter examines both the Cold War system and that of the contemporary era of international relations, it is important to clarify some of the themes before moving on. First, the discussion of the Cold War examines the major concepts of the era, namely, containment and deterrence and the ways in which the system produced what John Lewis Gaddis has referred to as the "Long Peace."[1] It will also look at the ways in which different American foreign policies (e.g., Marshall Plan and Truman Doctrine) were employed to maintain American dominance in the world.

Following the brief section that covers the collapse of the Soviet Union, our attention will shift to the current era of international politics by looking at the concept of globalization and the ways that new actors, ideologies, and economic and political forces have challenged the state's ability to govern. What we have seen is an era in which the state is returning to a state of international power, one that had

seemed to have weakened since the end of the Cold War. The forces of globalization have challenged the state's ability to govern, but it appears that now the state has returned to provide stability in global affairs.

Nuclear Security and Cold War Politics: Containment and Deterrence

The atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki forever changed international affairs. Within three days in August 1945, the United States demonstrated its ability to exert global authority. By 1949, the Soviet Union also possessed this capability. The era that came to be known as the Cold War was defined by this "nuclear tension" and, in fact, created two new understandings about power politics: nuclear deterrence and containment. To best understand these policies, it is best to view them within the time frame of 1945–91.

Deterrence

Deterrence has always been a strategy of international relations based on the ability of one state to successfully threaten another state to keep them from initiating a certain act. As Art and Waltz have suggested,

> To deter literally means to stop someone from doing something by frightening him . . . dissuasion by deterrence operates by frightening a state out of attacking, not because of *launching an attack and carrying it home, but because the expected reaction of the opponent will result in one's own severe punishment.*[3]

Deterrence: To deter literally means to stop people from doing something by frightening them; dissuasion through this measure operates by frightening a state out of attacking, not because of launching an attack and carrying it home, but because the expected reaction of the opponent will result in one's own severe punishment.[2]

States are less likely to engage in aggressive behavior if they fear that the reprisal to such behavior would weaken their international position. During the Cold War, however, the gravity of deterrence changed. States were not simply worried about the traditional consequences of their behavior, such as economic sanctions, military invasion, and the like, they were worried about the consequences of nuclear war.

Nuclear deterrence as employed by the superpowers, therefore, created a new understanding of the concept. The best way of understanding nuclear deterrence is to put it within a hypothetical context. As David Krieger explains:

> Country A tells country B that if B does X, A will attack it with nuclear weapons. The theory is that country B will be deterred from doing X by fear of nuclear attack by country A. For deterrence to work, the leaders of country B must also believe that country A has nuclear weapons and will use them. Nuclear deterrence theory holds that even if country A might not have nuclear weapons, so long as the leaders of country B believed that it did, they would be deterred.

> The theory goes on to hold that country A can generally rely upon nuclear deterrence with any country except one that also has nuclear weapons or one that is protected by another country with nuclear weapons. If country B also has nuclear weapons and the leaders of country A know this, then A, according to the theory, will be deterred from a nuclear attack on country B. This situation will result in a standoff. The same is true if country C does not have nuclear weapons but is under the "umbrella" of country B that does have nuclear weapons. Country A will not retaliate against country C for fear of itself being retaliated against by country B.[4]

It is this context that best explains the tension that existed between the two superpowers during the Cold War. Both the United States and the Soviet Union stockpiled nuclear weapons to stop the other from pursuing aggressive policies outside of each other's spheres of influence.

Containment

From the end of World War II until the end of the 1980s, both *superpowers* carved up much of the world into two competing spheres of influence based on each side's economic and political ideologies. The United States, through the **Marshall Plan** and the **North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**, provided protection over its fellow capitalist democracies in Western Europe and Japan, while at the same time, the Soviet Union attempted to maintain and spread its communist ideology throughout Eastern Europe through the creation of the **Warsaw Pact**. Realizing that they had each gained unprecedented levels of military and economic strength, the United States and the Soviet Union pursued an antagonistic policy of propping up or destroying pro-American or pro-Soviet regimes around the world.

With the establishment of the Truman Doctrine (1947), the United States pursued a policy that came to be known as **containment**. Based on the arguments of George Kennan, containment policy was designed to stop both the threat of the Soviet Union as an imperial power and communism as an ideology.[5] According to Kennan, "The main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."[6] To that end, he called for countering "Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world" through the "adroit and vigilant application of counterforce at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy." Such a policy, Kennan predicted, would "promote tendencies which must eventually find their outlet in either the break-up or the gradual mellowing of Soviet power."[7]

Although the Truman Doctrine was specifically tailored to protect democratic interests in Greece, its overall target knew no boundaries. The Truman Doctrine was designed to allow subsequent American administrations the ability to get involved outside the traditional boundaries of American foreign policy, in other words, beyond the western hemisphere.

Marshall Plan: The Marshall Plan (named after U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall) provided financial support to Europe following World War II. The United States realized that in order for it to maintain its dominance in areas of trade, it needed strong, reliable European trading partners.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Established in 1949 and designed primarily as a military organization among American and European powers. Its original purpose was to prevent Soviet aggression in Western Europe.

Warsaw Pact: During the Cold War, the collection of Eastern European states that were controlled by and part of the Soviet Union.

Containment: The Cold War theory that was designed to stop or limit the spread of both Soviet and communist ideology around the world.

By the 1950s, communism had become a separate threat, one not necessarily associated with the Soviet Union. In the eyes of American policy makers, the ideology of communism had degenerated into a cancer that was able to infect an entire region. The **domino theory**, as it came to be known, was based on the threat that if one state were to fall to communism, surrounding states would fall as well.

Domino Theory: The Cold War theory that argued that as soon as one country became communist, the surrounding states would as well.

When China became a communist state in 1949, the United States realized that communism had become a viable governing philosophy for the states in Southeast Asia. Containment policy became the major driving force behind the *proxy wars* (wars fought by the superpowers in third-party states) in Korea (1950–53) and Vietnam (1961–75). Although nuclear deterrence remained the overarching strategy that caused Gaddis to define the Cold War as the "Long Peace," containment policy was the method employed by the United States to actively stop the spread of communism around the world.[8]

Theory and Practice

Containment and Deterrence Today?

Are the principles of containment and deterrence still useful today? Or are they tied to a specific time and place, namely, the Cold War? Is the U.S. largest foreign threat China? Russia? Is China even considered a threat since so many of its goods are consumed by the United States? What about North Korea and Iran—two states that possess nuclear technology? What about the nuclear threat posed by India and Pakistan—two rival states who share a border in South Asia? Are containment and deterrence still relevant to a world of nuclear states?

What appeared to make containment and deterrence so successful during the Cold War was the fact that the United States was able to stop the spread of communism by force (wars in Korea and Vietnam) and by the *threat* of force under the policy known as mutually assured destruction (MAD). The United States had always attributed to a rational sense of logic to the leadership of the Soviet Union. American foreign policy makers assumed that the Soviet leadership (even as radical as it was portrayed in the press) was unwilling to resort to the use of nuclear arms because it would mean an end to its own political power. This is generally what we mean by the term *mutually assured destruction*. Country A is unlikely to launch a first strike because in doing so, it would destroy itself when country B retaliates.

In today's world, several states that either have nuclear arms or the capabilities of acquiring them might behave differently. We have already examined North Korea and its leader Kim Jong Un. Will Kim protect his people's interest the way the Soviet government protected theirs? Will any American president be able to broker a deal that limits North Korea's nuclear capabilities? What about Russia? It is clearly an aggressor state, whose ambitions are driven by access to warm water ports and a greater foothold on the doorstep of Europe (Ukraine). Can the United States alone or through its membership in NATO stop Russian aggression? These are some of the great policy questions facing the United States and the rest of the world today.

Think It Through

1. **What will it take to stop the Ukraine–Russia war? Can Putin be deterred by the threat of force? Can Russia be contained?**
2. **Is it rational to assume that all states operate according to the accepted principles of mutually assured destruction?**

The Last Days of Communism and the Soviet Union

By the 1980s, the Soviet Union had begun to unravel. Its centrally planned economy, totalitarian social policies, and military problems in Afghanistan (a country it invaded in 1979 to secure access to Middle Eastern oil) had caused its leader, Mikhail Gorbachev, to seek alternatives. Although Gorbachev initiated the dual policies of **glasnost** and **perestroika** as a way of reviving the socialist system, they proved to be ineffective. Years of political apathy, corruption, national stirrings from those under Soviet control in places like Poland, and an international arms race had caused the Soviet Union to implode economically and politically.

Glasnost: Referred to Gorbachev's policy of "openness" in government. It was introduced as a way of shedding light on some of the corruption of the Soviet Union during the 1980s.

Perestroika: A Russian term that means "restructuring." Here, it refers to Gorbachev's policy of restructuring the Soviet economy in a way that produced more growth and less government control.

In 1989, when the Berlin Wall fell and Germany had reunified, the world began to understand how severely damaged the Soviet Union was. The communist megastate that was brought to power during the last days of World War I was in a downward spiral. By the end of 1991, the Soviet Union was over, and the world was faced with a new international system, one that scholars are still trying to define today.

Post-Cold War Instability: Globalization and the Rise of the Nonstate Actor

On December 25, 1991, the Soviet Union formally dissolved, ending nearly seventy years as a global superpower. This event is considered one of the most important episodes in modern international relations. When trying to imagine the strength of the Soviet Union, consider the following: during its time as one of the world's two superpowers, the Soviet Union amassed an empire that stretched from the middle of Europe to the Sea of Japan, possessed nuclear arms, covered eleven time zones, and (by 1991) directly controlled the lives of approximately 293 million people. Its collapse not only shook the political world (by ending what had become a stable, bipolar Cold War system) but also changed the way scholars understood some of the most basic terms in international relations.

As we learned in Chapter 10, international relations had been defined by a set of "rules" since the middle of the seventeenth century. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, certain scholars claimed that "the Westphalian era seemed to be transitioning into . . . a post-international world," a world whose decision makers are both states and nonstate actors.[9] They claimed that the world's most important and legitimate actor, "the state," was in jeopardy of losing its ability to provide security in global politics. Although these scholars admitted that the world had been moving away from traditional politics for a number of years, the collapse of the Soviet Union (because of its size, strength, and stabilizing ability during the Cold War) accelerated the process.

By 2001 (and September 11 of that year), scholars had begun to examine international relations according to a new two-tiered approach known as *pluralist-interdependence theory*. Proponents of **pluralist-interdependence theory** argue that the traditional concepts of sovereignty and territorial integrity are no longer capable of explaining how the world works. Instead, they contend that **nonstate actors** (private corporations, private organizations, or private people), which have traditionally been ignored, have become powerful enough to formulate and carry out policies that have led to a more interconnected world. As a result of this change, they have also developed a term for this new era: globalization.

Globalization, which today has been applied to everything from the penetration of advanced information communication technology (ICT) to the global spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, was originally coined as a way of trying to explain the causes of new international phenomena. It was designed to bring some sense of order (at least terminologically) to a world that had become increasingly turbulent. Because globalization has become the buzzword of contemporary international relations, we will use it to examine some of the changes to the functioning of the international system.

Pluralist-Interdependence Theory: A theory that suggests that the long-standing concepts of sovereignty and territorial integrity are not capable of explaining international relations. It therefore argues that nonstate actors such as terrorist organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations must be considered vital agents in explaining international affairs.

Nonstate Actors: Organizations, businesses, corporations, terrorist groups, and/or private individuals that influence international relations.

Globalization: The global process that has witnessed a rise in the free movement and interconnectedness of goods, services, information, and people at the expense of the nation-state.

Understanding Globalization

Since the end of the Cold War, scholars have had to find a new way of explaining international politics. For many of them, *globalization* was the comprehensive term that could give scholars a grasp on the changing nature of international affairs. Definitions of globalization abounded over the past decade, but for our purposes, it is best to think of it as a turbulent process that has seen new forms of communications, economic policies, and a general weakening of the traditional form of state sovereignty. Richard Haass of the Council on Foreign Relations has provided a great starting point for us: "At its core, globalization entails the increasing volume, velocity and importance of flows within and across borders of people, ideas, greenhouse gases, goods, dollars, drugs, viruses, emails, weapons, and a good deal else."[10] From this well-packed definition, we see that globalization has to do with three basic concepts.

First, it appears that globalization has to do with the "free movement" of items from one place to another—some lawfully, others unlawfully. Second, it appears that globalization has to do with speed. It isn't just that multinational corporations or terrorist groups have an easier time moving their money and people from one place to the next, it is also the fact that because of improvements in ICT and mass transportation, they can do so much faster. Finally, from the definition just given, we see that globalization also has to do with the weakening of "state sovereignty" and the emergence of nontraditional sources of authority.

In the immediate aftermath of the collapse of the Soviet Union, through the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the financial crises of 2008 and 2013, and the spread of the

the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, many scholars had argued that the state had lost its ability to regulate the movement of goods, peoples, and services within their borders. As **multinational corporations** (MNCs; e.g., Nike, Walmart, McDonald's, Starbucks), nongovernmental organizations (NGOs; e.g., Greenpeace, Doctors Without Borders, Red Cross/Crescent, Amnesty International), global terrorist groups (e.g., al-Qaeda, ISIS, and a whole array of other private actors (including you and me) started to perform many of their tasks, states seemed to have a difficult time regulating them. The belief was that many of these nontraditional actors had more appeal, more money, and fewer restrictions than governments.

Multinational Corporations (MNCs): Companies that have the potential for global reach. In other words, they have the capacity (wealth, technology, personnel) to build, sell, and service products to and from any location in the world.

Neoliberalism and the Power of Multinational Corporations

When the Soviet Union dissolved and with it, its centrally planned economic structure, the world witnessed a rise in global markets, that is, places that had become "open for business." As the number of markets opened, so too did the strength and wealth of MNCs. Simply put, MNCs are companies that have the potential for global reach. In other words, they have the capacity (wealth, technology, personnel) to build, sell, and service products to and from any location in the world. Although MNCs such as Nike, Tesla, Walmart, Starbucks, McDonald's, and countless others have been able to act in the international arena for decades, during the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first century, they had a much greater ability to do so.

For example, if an MNC decides that the country that houses some of its largest factories (say, Nike, which has some operations in Indonesia) is requiring its workers to have a minimum wage or granting workers the ability to form unions, then it can (and most likely will) quickly move its assets (and managers) out of the country. When you think about this process as it relates to traditional international politics, you will see that in certain parts of the world, these MNCs might have more "power" than the states that house them.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Where Did Your Sneakers Come From?

In a *New York Times* article dated December 19, 2019, Sanam Yar examined the workplace environments and salaries of garment and textile workers around the world. In the process, Yar spoke with workers from a variety of places in South and Southeast Asia. On average, the workers' day consisted of long commutes, usually before 6 a.m., ten-hour work days, and salaries of between $230–250 a month.

All of the workers told stories of unsafe working conditions that have resulted in numerous injuries over their careers. Nevertheless, factory work is their only choice. They produce most of the items that those in

Why Politics Matters to You! (Continued)

Western countries wear on a regular basis. All of the items are mass produced, distributed, and sold for extremely high markups. In other words, the corporations are driven by the profits instead of workers. The shirt that is produced in Indonesia for pennies can be sold for nearly $100 in American stores.[11]

Think It Through

1. Have you ever thought about where your clothing comes from?
2. Do human rights matter to you? Does a company's labor practices play into your choice of which clothing to purchase?

But how did this change in the power structure of states and MNCs occur? Some scholars point to the emergence of the global acceptance of **neoliberalism**. According to David Harvey, neoliberalism is a concept that combines the sentiments of classic liberalism (the idea that one's freedom and liberty are at the center of the human experience) with those of neoclassical economics.[12] The overriding belief is that states, just like individuals, must remain free from government intervention. If taxes are the source of frustration for free individuals in the private, domestic sphere, tariffs are the same source of frustration for businesses in the international sphere. It has been this ideology that has prevailed in the era of globalization. It has also been this ideology that has witnessed the enhanced presence and power of MNCs around the world.

Neoliberalism: The ideology that combines the political principles of classical liberalism (see Chapter 3) with those of neoclassical economics, especially those that argue that the economy must remain unfettered by the government.

We have already learned that one of the major strengths of governments is their ability to maintain peace and security within their borders. However, we must also realize that economic stability is necessary toward maintaining those goals. If a government, for instance, is unable to provide economic security (jobs, services) to its people, it will most likely collapse. So governments rely on their ability to attract businesses. Why? Because wealthy MNCs provide not only jobs but also tax revenue to pay for programs that better the lives of the citizens.

When an apparel company is looking for a location to set up one of its factories, where do you think it will look? What kind of country will it choose? Most likely, it will look for a country with a low tax rate, a cheap labor force, and limited workers' rights. Why? These factors will ensure the highest return on its investment. Nike executives chose to set up a factory in Indonesia because the government promised the best incentives. Thus, you could make the argument that Nike has more "power" than the government of Indonesia, at least as it relates to an issue like workers' rights.

But MNCs are not the only private actors giving the state problems. Another type of organization, one with which you are probably much more familiar, is providing the state with many more challenges: global terrorist organizations. The following section will examine some of the problems caused by terrorist organizations.

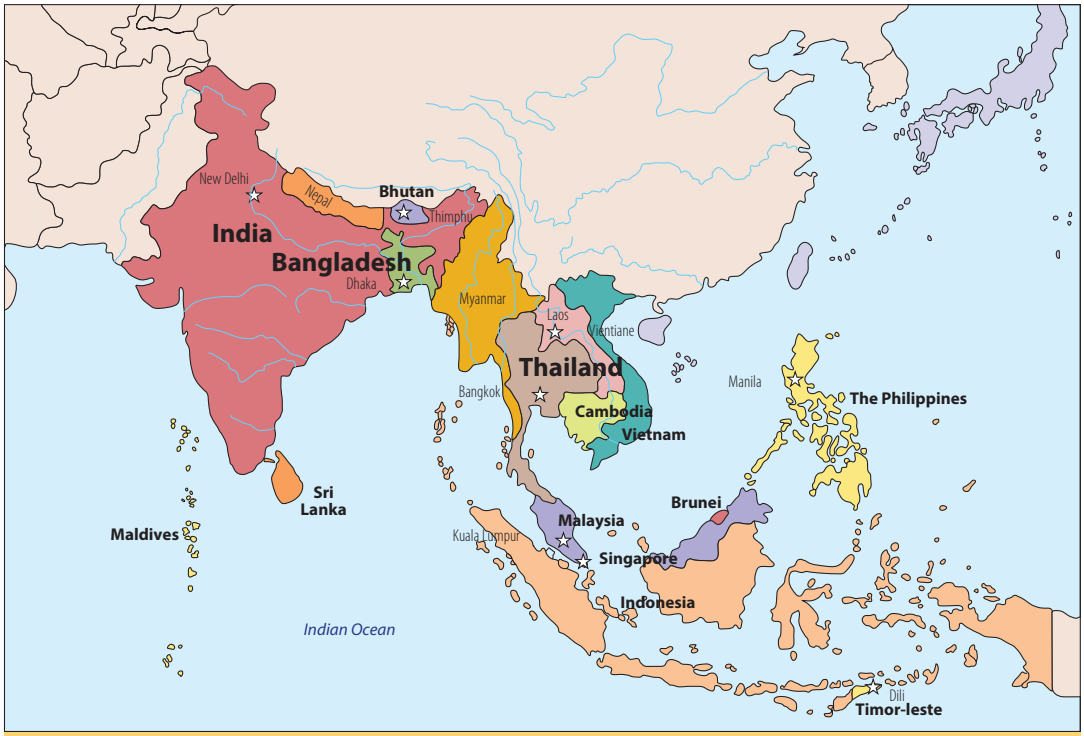

Image 12.2 The countries of South Asia and Southeast Asia are prime destinations for many MNCs, which see their people as cheap labor. Many of the products purchased in Europe and North America are produced in this region.

Transnational Terrorism

In the decades that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union, the world has also witnessed a rise in the number, reach, and strength of terrorist organizations. Whereas at one time terrorist organizations were defined primarily by their opposition to domestic conditions (think the Ku Klux Klan [KKK]) and their ability to carry out **low-level violence**, today, their objections seem to have a global dimension and their abilities appear endless. On September 11, 2001, the world was given a front-row seat to this type of terrorism that scholars have classified as **transnational terrorism**.

In addition to transnational terrorism (acts of terror carried out by private individuals against foreign targets), international relations (IR) scholars have identified three other types of terrorism. It is important to show you the differences between them because it helps to emphasize the ways in which globalization has made preventing terrorism so difficult. The first is *state terrorism*. Simply put, **state terrorism** is when the state uses acts of terror focused on people living within its borders (e.g., Nazi Germany). The second is *domestic terrorism*. **Domestic terrorism** has been the most common form of terror throughout history and occurs when a group of people within a state target either certain ethnic, racial, or religious groups and/or the government itself. Finally,

Low-Level Violence: The type of violence traditionally used by terrorist organizations, such as hangings, assassinations, intimidation tactics, and bombings of governmental or military installations.

Transnational Terrorism: A type of privately funded, politically motivated violence that involves targets around the world.

State Terrorism: When a state uses acts of terror focused on people living within its borders.

Domestic Terrorism: A group of people within a state that targets either certain ethnic, racial, or religious groups and/or the government itself.

Table 12.1 Terrorism Understood

Type of Terrorism	Description	Example(s)
State	Acts of terror carried out by the government against its own people	Nazi Germany, Soviet Union
Domestic	Acts of terror carried out by private individuals within a country that target ethnic/religious groups and/or the government in power	Ku Klux Klan (KKK), Tamil Tigers
International	Acts of terror carried out by private individuals (but possibly financed by states) across state borders	al-Qaeda, Islamic Jihad, Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA)

there is what scholars have referred to as *international terrorism*. **International terrorism** is when the government of one state finances acts of terror against another state. All of these acts possess similar characteristics. But to better understand transnational terrorism—the kind of terrorism that was used on 9/11—we should first consider the information in Table 12.1.

International Terrorism: When the government of one state finances acts of terror against another state or group within another state.

By its nature, terrorism uses violent means to exact both psychological and physical harm. Consider the attacks of 9/11. The terrorist attack itself only lasted seconds, but the fear remained much longer. This is what terrorism does. It is designed to disrupt not only the present situation but also the future. It attempts to psychologically intimidate people through the fear that another attack is imminent.

Theory and Practice

When Is One a Terrorist and One a Criminal?

What makes one a terrorist instead of an everyday criminal? Have you ever thought about that? Imagine the following scenario and try to see the difference.

Suppose an armed robber enters a bank. What is it that the bank robber wants? What motivates him? That's easy, right? The bank robber's goal is to gain money by robbing the bank and, in particular, a bank teller. If in the process someone gets killed (say, a teller who refuses to hand over the money), then the bank robber becomes a murderer. They most likely will never be considered a terrorist.

If, however, the armed robber who enters the bank is determined to kill the individuals in the bank (customers, tellers, managers, etc.) because they believe that the bank, its employees, and its customers are key conspirators of some government or political ideology, the gunman will most likely be considered a terrorist. Why is there such a delineation? From this example, we can see that one's *intent* matters greatly when it comes to violence and to determining whether one is a terrorist or an "everyday" criminal. When the public is targeted for *political* reasons, it is an act of terrorism. When the public is targeted for private gain (robbery) and someone gets killed, it is homicide.

Think It Through

1. Why do you think one's intent matters so much?
2. Should terrorists be treated differently than criminals? Why or why not?

This definition of terrorism lacks a key component. For an act of violence to be considered an act of terror (and not, for example, a crime) it must be political; in other words, its intent must target those perceived as political enemies. Therefore, what ultimately separates a *criminal* from a *terrorist* is their intent. The criminal's intent is based on personal gain, whereas the terrorist's is based on political ideology. Look at the accompanying Theory and Practice box for a common difference between a criminal act and an act of terrorism.

In the United States, the KKK has been using acts of terror against its victims, generally ethnic, racial, and religious minorities in the southern part of the United States, for more than 150 years. It has consistently tried to intimidate underrepresented groups through violent means such as cross burnings and public hangings. How would you classify the KKK? Because it operates on American soil and is not supported by the U.S. government (or any other government for that matter), the KKK is considered an example of a domestic terrorist organization. (Table 12.2 provides a list of many of the world's terrorist organizations.)

What about al-Qaeda? Al-Qaeda is considered a transnational terrorist organization. Why? Because it conducts its foreign missions without any government direction and is free of government financing. Its former leader, the Saudi billionaire Osama bin Laden, who followed an extreme anti-Western, antimodern version of Islam, had carried out acts of terror (or at least claimed responsibility for them) since the late 1980s. Following the end of the **Soviet-Afghan War** (in which groups of Afghan rebels aided by the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) successfully defeated the Soviet military), bin Laden founded al-Qaeda as way of continuing his violence against those countries he thought were illegitimate, namely, those in the Middle East and in the West.

Soviet-Afghan War: A war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan that lasted from 1979 to 1989. Waged for easier access to oil, the Soviet-Afghan War saw the presence of American CIA operatives funding and training rebel Afghans.

But hatred does not necessarily translate into action abroad. What has made al-Qaeda so unique is its annual budget. According to the 9/11 Commission report, al-Qaeda requires $30 million per year to carry out its campaign of terror. This means that al-Qaeda has an operating budget that is larger than that of many states in the developing world. It also means that it has more than enough money to acquire and use new forms of information technology.

Bin Laden was well versed in the use of cable news and its global reach. According to one CNN report, bin Laden "had a filmmaker with him in Afghanistan when he was fighting the Soviets," and al-Qaeda has had both a media committee and a media spokesperson since the 1980s.[13] This has meant that in many ways, al-Qaeda has turned a traditional transnational terrorist organization into one that understands the features of globalization.

However, it also meant that al-Qaeda's success was due to its well-funded and well-connected leadership, which has since changed dramatically over the past several years. On July 31, 2022, al-Qaeda's senior leader, Ayman al-Zawahiri was killed in a U.S. drone strike.[14] This attack prompted a power vacuum within its

Table 12.2 List of International and Transnational Terrorist Organizations, per U.S. State Department

December 1, 2021	Segunda Marquetalia
December 1, 2021	Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia – People's Army (FARC-EP)
March 11, 2021	ISIS-DRC
March 11, 2021	ISIS-Mozambique
January 14, 2021	Harakat Sawa'd Misr (HASM)
January 10, 2020	Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq (AAH)
April 15, 2019	Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)
September 6, 2018	Jama'at Nusrat al-Islam wal-Muslimin (JNIM)
July 11, 2018	al-Ashtar Brigades
May 23, 2018	ISIS in the Greater Sahara (ISIS-GS)
February 28, 2018	ISIS-West Africa
February 28, 2018	ISIS-Philippines
February 28, 2018	ISIS-Bangladesh
August 17, 2017	Hizbul Mujahideen (HM)
July 1, 2016	al-Qa'ida in the Indian Subcontinent (AQIS)
May 20, 2016	ISIS-Libya
January 14, 2016	Islamic State's Khorasan Province (ISIS-K)
September 30, 2015	Jaysh Rijal al-Tariq al Naqshabandi (JRTN)
May 15, 2014	al-Nusrah Front, aka Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (ANF/HTS)— Jabhat Fath al-Sham Amendment (November 14, 2016)—Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham Amendment (June 1, 2018)
April 10, 2014	ISIS-Sinai Province (formerly Ansar Bayt al-Maqdis)—ISIL Sinai Province Amendment (September 30, 2015)
January 13, 2014	Ansar al-Shari'a in Benghazi
January 13, 2014	Ansar al-Shari'a in Darnah
January 13, 2014	Ansar al-Shari'a in Tunisia
December 19, 2013	al-Mulathamun Battalion, aka al-Murabitoun
November 14, 2013	Ansaru
November 14, 2013	Boko Haram
March 22, 2013	Ansar al-Dine (AAD)
September 19, 2012	Haqqani Network (HQN)
May 30, 2012	Abdallah Azzam Brigades—Marwan Hadid Brigades Amendment (November 2, 2017)
March 13, 2012	Jemaah Anshorut Tauhid (JAT)
September 19, 2011	Indian Mujahedeen (IM)
May 23, 2011	Army of Islam (AOI)
November 4, 2010	Jaysh al-Adl (formerly Jundallah)— Jaysh al-Adl Amendment (July 2, 2019)
September 1, 2010	Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan (TTP)
August 6, 2010	Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami (HUJI)
January 19, 2010	al-Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP)—Ansar al-Shari'a Amendment (October 5, 2012)
July 2, 2009	Kata'ib Hizballah (KH)
May 18, 2009	Revolutionary Struggle (RS)
March 18, 2008	al-Shabaab—al-Hijra Amendment (August 1, 2018)

(Continued)

Table 12.2 (continued)

March 5, 2008	Harakat ul-Jihad-i-Islami/Bangladesh (HUJI-B)
June 17, 2005	Islamic Jihad Union (IJU)
December 17, 2004	ISIS (formerly al-Qa'ida in Iraq)—Islamic State of Iraq Amendment
(January 26, 2012)	— al-Hayat Media Center and Amaq News Agency Amendments (March 22, 2019)
July 13, 2004	Continuity Irish Republican Army (CIRA)
March 22, 2004	Ansar al-Islam (AAI)
January 30, 2003	Lashkar i Jhangvi (LJ)
October 23, 2002	Jemaah Islamiya (JI)
August 9, 2002	Communist Party of the Philippines/New People's Army (CPP/NPA)
March 27, 2002	al-Qa'ida in the Islamic Maghreb (formerly Salafist Group for Call and Combat)— AQIM Amendment (February 20, 2008)
March 27, 2002	Asbat al-Ansar (AAA)
March 27, 2002	Al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade (AAMB)
December 26, 2001	Lashkar-e-Tayyiba (LeT)— Tehrik-e-Tahafuz Qibla Awwal, Tehrik-e-Hurmat-e-Rasool, and Al-Anfal Trust Amendments (June 26, 2014)— Al Muhammadia Students Amendment (December 30, 2016)— Tehreek-e-Azadi-e-Kashmir and Milli Muslim League Amendments (April 4, 2018)
December 26, 2001	Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM)
May 16, 2001	New Irish Republican Army (formerly Real IRA)— New IRA Amendment (June 30, 2023)
September 25, 2000	Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan (IMU)
October 8, 1999	al-Qa'ida (AQ)
October 8, 1997	Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG)
October 8, 1997	HAMAS
October 8, 1997	Harakat ul-Mujahidin (HUM)—Ansar ul-Ummah Amendment (August 8, 2014)
October 8, 1997	Hizballah
October 8, 1997	Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK)
October 8, 1997	Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE)
October 8, 1997	National Liberation Army (ELN)
October 8, 1997	Palestine Liberation Front (PLF)
October 8, 1997	Palestine Islamic Jihad (PIJ)
October 8, 1997	Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP)
October 8, 1997	PFLP-General Command (PFLP-GC)
October 8, 1997	Revolutionary People's Liberation Party/Front (DHKP/C)
October 8, 1997	Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso, SL)

Source: U.S. State Department List of Foreign Terrorist Organizations, 2023.

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT): A treaty that came into force in 1970 that was designed to limit the nuclear arsenals of the five members of the UN Security Council and to prevent the proliferation or spread of weapons to states that did not already possess them. Currently, there are 188 signatories.

hierarchy. There was no one capable enough to take over the organization after both Bin Laden and Zawahiri's deaths. As a result, al-Qaeda has not been able to coordinate the kinds of attacks that it had for more than 25 years. It may still have a global reach, which makes it uniquely dangerous, but it is currently without someone at the top who has the ability to coordinate and inspire as previous leaders had.

Why Politics Matters to You!

Nuclear Proliferation and a New Threat of Nuclear War

In 1945, only the United States possessed atomic weaponry. In 1949, two states, the United States and the Soviet Union, possessed atomic weaponry. By the time the **Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)** came into force in 1970, there were five: the United States, the Soviet Union, Great Britain, France, and China (the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council). Since then, three other states have tested nuclear weapons: India, Pakistan, and North Korea. It is widely believed that Israel also possesses this capability and that the country of Iran will possess it by 2030.

So what is the NPT, and why has it not ended the threat of nuclear war? The NPT was a treaty (signed in 1968 and brought to force in 1970) that was designed to limit the nuclear arsenals of the major powers (the five permanent members of the Security Council just listed) and to prevent the development of nuclear arms in countries not already possessing them. Unfortunately, not all countries have signed and ratified the treaty—namely, Cuba, India, Israel, Pakistan, and North Korea. These countries preferred to pursue nuclear technology and have done so in the name of regional or national security. They argue that nuclear weapons allow them to protect their lands from hostile neighbors.

This idea constituted the main argument behind Pakistan's pursuit of nuclear weapons. When India, Pakistan's regional aggressor, successfully tested its first nuclear weapon in 1974, it created a sense of urgency for Pakistan to develop its own bomb. Thus, Pakistan, through the help of scientist A. Q. Khan, developed Pakistan's first nuclear device as a way of balancing Indian aggression.

However, in this era of globalization in which private actors (and private individuals) are gaining greater power over traditional state actors, nuclear proliferation has grown in complexity and danger. Take, for example, the aforementioned A. Q. Khan. In his book *The Inheritance: The World Obama Confronts and the Challenges of American Power*, *New York Times* journalist David Sanger exposes a frightening account of the ways in which A. Q. Khan was able to help countries advance their nuclear programs. After developing the necessary technology to craft nuclear technology in Pakistan, Dr. Khan began a global nuclear operation whose clients included the states of Libya, Iran, and North Korea. Sanger writes:

> *The meeting with the Iranians (1986) was the true beginning of what became the Khan network. Iran's shopping list, as pieced together years later by international inspectors, contained all the elements that Khan would later ship to Libya and North Korea: drawings of centrifuges, a few prototypes of the same machines for the Iranians to reverse-engineer, and the layout for a full uranium enrichment plant. They were the building-blocks that Iran would later use to construct its huge enrichment plant in the desert near the city of Natanz, supplied by small centrifuge-manufacturing workshops spread around the country. The process took years; it was not until the summer of 1994 that the Iranians arranged to buy a more sophisticated centrifuge, called the P-2, from Khan and his Malaysian cohort, Buhari Sayed Abu Tahir, who ran Khan's operations in Dubai.*[15]

This "operation" involved individuals from around the world capable of providing both the knowledge and the equipment to build nuclear arms. A. Q. Khan made it quite clear to all those interested that he could make them a member of the nuclear club.

So, the worry today is both traditional and *non*traditional. If someone like A. Q. Khan was willing to help other states develop nuclear weapons, why wouldn't he sell the information and parts to a well-financed terrorist organization? This is a major obstacle to nuclear nonproliferation. During the Cold War, states were the only logical nuclear actors; today, this might not be the case.

Think It Through

1. **How can the international community stop this type of proliferation?**
2. **How would a realist approach the solution? What about an idealist?**

How does this relate to globalization and, more importantly, to our overall discussion of its impact on state sovereignty? In today's world, terrorists could use ICT in ways that would allow them to not only spread political ideologies but also money. In much the same way that cyberspace has made life easier for people to buy and sell items (think Amazon.com or eBay), it too has aided those who perform acts of terror. In this regard, a transnational terrorist organization such as al-Qaeda can successfully use some of the features of globalization to its advantage by attacking traditional forms of governance.

Nongovernmental Organizations: Private Cooperation

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs): Groups that seek to privately help raise awareness about and money for specific causes. In many parts of the developing world today, NGOs work in conjunction with governments to care or advocate for people dying of disease, victims of natural disasters, environmental causes, and the like.

Although transnational terrorist organizations and MNCs have dominated much of our media coverage of late, they are not the only actors that have benefited from the forces of globalization. Another category comprises those independent agencies that seek to promote everything from civil society, democracy, economic development, and health care to human rights, education, technology, and the environment. These nonstate actors, more commonly referred to as **nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)**, provide services that bring about the betterment of the human condition. (Table 12.3 will give you a better idea of the many different types of NGOs.)

Before we begin a brief examination of Doctors Without Borders, an NGO that will highlight some of the basic ways NGOs function, it is important that we explain

Table 12.3 Examples and Types of NGOs

Children's Issues	Civil Society Outreach Programs	Corruption	Cultural Issues	Democracy	Health	Environment
Child Health Foundation	Advocacy Institute	Standing Committee on Extortion and Bribery	Aid to Artisans Inc.	Ford Foundation	Doctors Without Borders	Greenpeace
Childreach	Centro Latinoamericano de Economia Humana (CLAEH)	Probidad	Institute of Cultural Affairs	International Foundation for Election Systems	International Red Cross and International Red Crescent	African Wildlife Foundation
Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers	Eastern Caribbean Investment Promotion Service (ECPIPS)	Transparency International	Instituto Mora de Mexico	National Democratic Institute	International Medical Corps	Bahamas National Trust
Children's Defense Fund	Institute of Development Studies		American Association of Museums	U.S. Institute for Peace	Doctors of the World	Envirolink
Christian Children's Fund	International Council on Social Welfare		Piramide	Moviemiento Participacion Ciudadana	Rehydration Project	World Environment Center

Note: This list is just a small sample of the many NGOs that operate around the world.

a few things about NGOs and how they have developed. First, the number of NGOs has dramatically increased over the past sixty years. Following World War II and the collapse of the European empire system, many of the newly created states in the developing world that gained their independence were ill-equipped to handle the challenges of governance, for example, providing security, protecting freedoms, and the like. As more and more challenges emerged, so too did NGOs.

Second, as the number of NGOs increased, so did their ability to work with governments and international organizations such as the United Nations. Although some governments are less friendly to humanitarian-based NGOs (especially ones that are causing many of the problems the NGOs are trying to solve), most have learned to work well with them. In fact, the World Health Organization (WHO), the major health-related international organization of the United Nations, spends a large portion of its time working with NGOs in the development of health-related policies. This provides the NGOs with the ability to set up clinics on the ground and issue firsthand reports to the United Nations pertaining to potential health crises.

Finally, through their interactions with international organizations and with states, NGOs have become active participants in the promotion of what we call **global civil society**. Global civil society refers to "the increasing institution alization of citizen and nongovernmental networks in the governance of our complex world."[16] In essence, "the idea of a global civil society is closely related to widespread desires for a more democratic global political architecture."[17]

Global Civil Society: The ways in which private individuals and NGOs have worked together outside the realm of traditional politics to advance the concepts of human rights and democracy.

Sia Kambou/AFP/Getty Images

Image 12.3 NGOs such as Doctors Without Borders seek to help states administer everything from health care to education to environmental protection. Here, we see a clinic set up by aid workers from Doctors Without Borders providing treatment to individuals who otherwise would have none.

Theory and Practice

An NGO in Action: Doctors Without Borders (Médecins Sans Frontières)

Established in 1971 by French health professionals, Doctors Without Borders provides local health care and health education in sixty countries through its staff of 27,000 dedicated individuals.[18] Because it is a privately financed independent organization, its allegiance is to its mission, its board of directors, and those states/international organizations that help to coordinate its agenda. This distinction has allowed it to provide health care to those in need, regardless of political context.

According to its website, Doctors Without Borders "provides medical care (emergency help, vaccines, education) to people who are caught in warzones or those who have been devastated by disease" through the establishment of "clinics and mobile clinics, or [through the] rehabilitation of existing hospitals."[19] In essence, Doctors Without Borders provides services to those who are unable to secure health care for themselves. As it treats patients, it also documents the ways in which societies are failing to provide adequate health care to their most vulnerable. It is this last feature that makes Doctors Without Borders so special: It not only cares for people with disabilities and those who are sick, it sheds light on their stories as well.

Think It Through

1. **Do you think the world will see an increase in NGOs like Doctors Without Borders?**
2. **If so, what impact will this have on the nation-state?**

NGOs that seek to promote the development of global civil society help advance ideas like freedoms of speech and the press in places where they are not protected.

Because the concept of a global civil society may seem complex, we have decided to provide you with an example of one of the more prominent NGOs in the world today: Doctors Without Borders (in French, Médecins Sans Frontières). Although Doctors Without Borders is considered primarily a health-based NGO, it still contributes to the development of global civil society because it provides services that strengthen the stability of an impoverished state. It is also a great example of an NGO because it carries with it some basic criteria (refer to Table 12.3).

NGOs, like Doctors Without Borders, are therefore another set of actors that have proven themselves capable of challenging the traditional sovereignty of the state. NGOs like Greenpeace, the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, and Doctors Without Borders perform many of the tasks that states have traditionally performed. Although they do not have the ability to wage war, they do possess many of the state's basic features. NGOs have priorities (environmental, health, human rights), can conduct research and raise awareness about particular issues, and provide a service to people in a given territory. In many instances, NGOs have even directly challenged states that violate some of their principles.

The Verdict on Globalization: The Good and the Bad

Up to this point, we have discussed some of the ways that globalization has challenged state authority. We have looked at the ways in which MNCs, transnational terrorists, and NGOs have used new sources of technology to their advantage. We have also examined the new nature of nuclear proliferation and the ways in which states are unable to stop it. What we must do at this point, however, is try to determine if the processes of globalization will achieve a more open world that allows more freedom and democracy or a closed world in which human rights are stifled and economic development is ignored. Thus, the chapter will conclude with the appraisals of some noted thinkers and journalists who have written on the topic of *neoliberalism,* namely, Thomas L. Friedman (representing a more positive economic outlook) and Joseph Stiglitz (representing a negative economic outlook of globalization).

Friedman: The World Is Flat and Getting Flatter!

In his book *The World Is Flat*, *New York Times* best-selling author Thomas L. Friedman paints a rosy picture of globalization and the way that information technology has created a world that is *leveling the playing field* for millions of people in the world and giving hope to the hopeless.[20] Friedman vividly reports that because of **outsourcing** (the process by which certain jobs are being sent to foreign countries), the elimination of Soviet control, and advances in information technology, people in China, India, and other parts of the developing world are finding careers as accountants, medical technicians, and other professional jobs and are slowly gaining levels of wealth they once had thought were impossible. For Friedman, the liberalization of the global economy has led to endless possibilities for people once trapped in generational poverty.

Outsourcing: The practice by which professions from one country (usually a wealthy country such as the United States) are sent to other countries where labor laws are less intense, and the pay scale is lower.

This portrait also seems to describe the rise of China and India (as well as Brazil and Russia) as dominant players in the twenty-first century. If the BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) countries continue to grow and experience unprecedented levels of wealth and industrial development, the United States must understand that its role as the sole superpower is in jeopardy. But if U.S. policy makers attempt to strengthen trade and inspire the BRICs to develop their middle classes and provide more freedoms for their people, the United States will remain a major player. For Friedman, it is that simple: better trade relations and economic growth equal rights and a better life for future generations of Americans.

Stiglitz: Globalization and Its Discontents

In his book *Globalization and Its Discontents*, Joseph E. Stiglitz gives the most thorough argument about how globalization has created an international order of corruption and greed for both wealthy corporations and industrialized countries through the

International Monetary Fund (IMF): An international institution that extends short-term aid to states that have been damaged by natural/manmade disasters or war.

World Bank: An international institution that provides long-term financial help. It provides loans and grants to the governments of low- and middle-income countries

World Trade Organization (WTO): An international organization that seeks to lower barriers to trade to make states' economies more competitive.

politics and policies of the **International Monetary Fund (IMF)**, the **World Bank**, and the **World Trade Organization (WTO)**. These organizations, known collectively as the Bretton Woods institutions (named for the place in New Hampshire where they were created at the end of World War II), are international organizations composed of member states that lend relief money to countries in the developing world. Stiglitz claims that these organizations have taken advantage of the weaknesses of the developing world and gained unthinkable levels of wealth and power as a result.

The Bretton Woods System and Stiglitz's Critique

In the last days of World War II (1944), a number of countries (the United States and its European allies) met in Bretton Woods, New Hampshire, to create three international organizations to help Europe rebuild from the destruction of the war. They created the IMF, designed to provide short-term loans aimed at reconstruction and immediate stability and to oversee exchange rates; the World Bank, designed to provide for long-term stability; and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), now known as the WTO, which creates policies designed to lessen barriers to trade. As time went on, however, the focus of these organizations shifted from rebuilding Europe to rebuilding countries in need in the developing world.

Initially, the Bretton Woods System had five key elements. According to Boughton (2007) as quoted in George Ritzer (2011), they are as follows:

1. Each state that participated needed to create a "'par value' for its currency expressed in terms of gold or in terms of the gold value of the U.S. dollar as of July 1944."[21] As Ritzer points out, this meant that the "United States pegged its currency at $35 per ounce of gold, while . . . the figure for Nicaragua was 175 cordobas per ounce. This means that the exchange rate between the two currencies was five cordobas for one dollar."[22]
2. "The official monetary authority in each country would agree to exchange its own currency for those of other countries at the established exchange rates, plus or minus a one-percent margin."[23]
3. The IMF was created, and it was mandated that its forty member states provide some of their gold to its fund.[24]
4. "Member states had agreed to eliminate, at least eventually, 'all restrictions on the use of its currency for international trade.'"[25]
5. "The entire system was based on the U.S. dollar. The United States agreed to make the dollar convertible into other currencies or gold at the fixed par value. The dollar in effect became a global currency."[26]

This system, however, has changed significantly since 1944. The U.S. dollar is no longer tied or pegged to gold, the developing world of today has obstacles to growth that were never experienced by the European powers in need of financial help after World War II, and many scholars (including Joseph Stiglitz, whose theories we next examine) suggest that the policies employed by the IMF, World Bank, and

WTO seem to be unrealistic and at times authoritarian toward the states they are trying to help.

One of the strongest contemporary critiques of the Bretton Woods System (and of neoliberal globalization) has been made by renowned economist Joseph Stiglitz. Stiglitz has argued that the policies of the Bretton Woods institutions have, in fact, made life harder for those in the developing world. Because the IMF and the World Bank operate by providing support in the form of loans and assistance packages, they force those countries in the developing world to agree to certain mandates that they must attempt to implement or face the consequences of a subsequent aid package that has less money attached to it. For Stiglitz, some of the demands that the IMF and the World Bank have imposed on those to whom they have provided aid are unreasonable. For example, a common requirement of the IMF is for the country receiving aid to spend it on economic infrastructure projects only. The result is that government money is no longer spent on clinics, hospitals, or schools. The outcome is that the health of the people worsens, and education standards decline—two requirements usually cited as being essential for development.

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Image 12.4 Protesters criticize the policies of the WTO on the grounds that its policies hurt local workers to the benefit of wealthy states and corporations.

According to Sebastian Edwards, "Three interrelated policy issues are at the center of Stiglitz's criticism of globalization as follows:

1. In designing reform packages during the 1990s, crucial aspects of the sequencing and pace of reform were ignored. As a result, in many countries, reform was implemented too fast.
2. Advocating (and imposing) capital account liberalization (allowing tons of private money to pour into poor countries without any mechanism for long-term investment).
3. The IMF response to crises (East Asia) was a disaster that made things worse rather than better. In particular imposing fiscal austerity (limitations on spending) while raising interest rates."[27]

For Stiglitz, the pace at which the countries seeking investment were told to reform was too fast and, in many ways, left them worse off than they had been before any money was given to them. Countries receiving aid appeared to have been afflicted by a double-edged sword: money going in with high interest rates and an open-door trade policy that hurt domestic development. In other words, as IMF aid went to places in East Asia or the Caribbean, so too did the demands of the WTO to lower trade barriers, which brought foreign competitors into the marketplace, limiting the ability of local industries and farmers to compete and thus making it almost

impossible to pay back the money lent in the first place. For Stiglitz, this became a vicious cycle of aid followed by unreasonable demands.

The Return of the State

What will the remainder of the twenty-first century look like? Currently, it appears that states are reasserting their claims as to how global power is distributed. China's ability to colonize parts of Africa and to expand its market penetration through the development of its Belt and Road Initiative, Russia's ability to assert itself militarily as well as continue to develop ties with states currently in the European Union (Hungary), and populist parties winning elections in Latin America (Brazil) and Western and Eastern Europe all seem to indicate that the power of globalization is currently being checked by the oldest actor in international relations: the state.

NGOs, MNCs, and terrorist organizations will not disappear. That is inappropriate to suggest. However, a decade ago, it seemed that the world of the twenty-first century was going to be one of *private* influence, a world that was "governed," or at least challenged, by nonstate actors. What has transpired because of the global financial crisis and refugee crisis is the resurgence of *state* power. The reason that populists are winning elections is because the globalized world, heralded by some as bringing about positive developments, has brought a great deal of confusion, displacement, and change that many people are not comfortable with.[28] The current era is quite extraordinary because it is something that was unthinkable a decade ago. Most scholars have made arguments about how globalization is changing the world and that states are learning how to cope with them. Few, if any, were able to predict the backlash that we have seen. Few could have predicted the rise of populism and nationalism in "liberal" and "prosperous" Europe. But it happened.

The state, or rather the nation-state that was condemned to the scrapyard of history by scholars at the start of the twenty-first century, has become the main focus in international relations once again. States provide services that people require to live healthy and productive lives. States fight wars. States trade with one another. Since the 1990s, it was perceived that they had lost those abilities. Thus, we witnessed the rise of the nonstate actor and a whole array of scholars who tried to explain their new presence.

This last section is not designed to discredit the scholars who still believe that, in the long run, globalization will bring about positive change in the world. It is, however, designed to provide you with an understanding of how resilient states are. The model of governance that was established in the seventeenth century is not going to go away without a fight. What does mean for democracy? What does it mean for democratic states? Those are different questions. The world is better off when more of its people are free. However, when that freedom is perceived as causing security risks (arguments against immigration) or economic problems (financial crises, jobs shipped overseas), the people of the world seem to turn to the state for solutions. And the sad reality is that sometimes their leaders choose nondemocratic means to achieve their goals.

Summary 12

David Wells/Alamy Stock Photo

So there you have it—the conclusion of our explanation of the development of international relations from the seventeenth to the twenty-first century. We hope to have provided you with a good picture of how international politics has moved from a system dominated by a handful of European powers to one today balanced among the competing interests of powerful states (China and the United States) and an array of nonstate actors.

The world of tomorrow is yet to be written. But now that you are armed with a strong sense of the past, you are better suited for the challenges that remain unknown. Power is still being defined and expanded to suit the needs of a new era. Whether the major powers of the world will resort to violence or try to find diplomatic, peaceful solutions is still unclear. Still, there is always hope when a new generation of students becomes inspired to make a difference in global affairs. Believe it or not, you have already made such a difference.

▶ Questions to Consider

1. What is deterrence? What is containment? How did they define American foreign policy during the Cold War?

   Deterrence is a strategy designed to prevent a state from behaving in a way that is contrary to what they would ordinarily do if left to their own devices. Containment, on the other hand, is a technique defined by American foreign policy aimed at preventing the spread of a particular ideology (communism). Both strategies defined American foreign policy during the Cold War. The United States attempted to deter the Soviet Union from resorting to military expansion and contain its ideology from taking over the states of south east Asia.

2. What best defines the processes known collectively as globalization?

   Globalization refers to the processes of how the world has integrated its economies, created channels for mass communication through the use of information technology, and challenged the sovereignty of the state.

3. How have multinational corporations impeded state sovereignty?

   Multinational corporations have grown in wealth and have therefore challenged traditional state power. Certain multinational corporations move their production facilities to certain countries with favorable tax conditions. As a result, many MNCs have the ability to influence the decision-making of certain countries.

4. What are the differences between domestic, state, international, and transnational terrorism?

Domestic terrorism is terrorism directed at individuals within the same state as the terrorist group. State terrorism is the practice of a state (government) committing acts of terror against its own people. International terrorism is privately financed violence initiated within one country and aimed at the citizens of another.

5. What are the differences of opinion between Friedman and Stiglitz? Are the processes of globalization good or bad? Why?

Friedman believes that the processes of globalization can provide people around the world with greater access to information and an expansion of rights to those without them. Stiglitz believes that globalization has made the least developed countries worse off and unable to grow their economies to the benefit of the wealthier, industrialized countries.

Key Terms

Containment p. 318
Deterrence p. 317
Domestic Terrorism p. 324
Domino Theory p. 319
Glasnost p. 320
Global Civil Society p. 331
Globalization p. 321
International Monetary Fund (IMF) p. 333
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Glossary

Alienation of Labor: The concept developed by Karl Marx that explained the ways in which modern life removes the worker from the product they are creating.

Anarchism: A doctrine that advocates the abolition of organized authority. Anarchists believe all government is corrupt and evil.

Annapolis Convention: An interstate convention called in 1786 to discuss issues of commerce. The meeting was largely seen as a failure because only five of the thirteen states sent delegations.

Anti-Federalists: Persons generally opposed to both a stronger central government and the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

Anti-Pluralist: One who opposes a political system where power is shared between a wide array of people from different social, cultural, and political backgrounds.

Appellate Jurisdiction: Courts that hear cases on appeal from a lower court. These courts primarily determine whether a legal mistake was made at trial.

Aristocracy: A government in which power is vested in a minority, consisting of those believed to be best qualified.

Austerity Measures: A political budgeting strategy that attempts to reduce budget deficits by raising taxes and/or cutting governmental spending.

Authoritarian States: States that continue to lack principles such as due process of the law, free and open elections, legitimate political parties, human rights, and so forth.

Authoritarianism: A form of government in which a large amount of authority is invested in the state at the expense of individual rights.

Autocracy: A system of government in which almost all power rests with the ruler. The Soviet Union under Joseph Stalin and Iraq under Saddam Hussein are examples of autocracies.

Balance of Power: A term that has historically referred to the ways in which great political powers have attempted to maintain security and avoid international conflicts. The concept originated in Europe during the early part of the nineteenth century when five great powers (Great Britain, France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia) dominated international politics and were committed to avoiding war and maintaining each state's position as a dominant power.

Behavioralism: The school of thought that looks at the "actual" behavior of certain persons or institutions. It is largely data driven and without a strong commitment to values.

Bicameral Legislature: A legislature that consists of a two-chamber body—an upper house and a lower house. The U.S. Congress and every state legislature except Nebraska's are bicameral.

Cabinet: The cabinet is composed of the appointed officials of the president or prime minister. Each official is charged with leading a particular department. For example, defense, state, health and human services, etc.

Capitalism: An economic system in which the means of production, such as land and factories, are privately owned and operated for profit.

Case Law: Legal principles spelled out in previous judicial decisions.

Checks and Balances: A system of government where each branch of government can limit, amend, and/or nullify the acts of another branch of government.

Civil Disobedience: The refusal to obey governmental demands or commands, especially as a nonviolent and usually collective means of forcing concessions from the government.

Civil Rights Act of 1964: Landmark congressional legislation that outlawed discrimination in places of public accommodation against all racial and ethnic groups, religious minorities, and women.

Classic Realism: The school of thought in international relations that considers power as the main goal of each state. In addition, classic realists claim that the state is the main actor in international relations, that it is to be thought of as a unitary actor, and that international politics is inherently chaotic.

Classical Liberalism: Classical liberalism advocates for a limited government and for greater individual liberties at the political, social, and economic levels of society. John Locke

(1632–1704) and Adam Smith (1732–90) are generally regarded as two leading classical liberals. This movement inspired the American and French Revolutions and the economic system of capitalism.

Climate Change: The result of many years of burning high levels of fossil fuels, which has caused the earth to heat up.

Cloture: A rule in the Senate that requires sixty senators to vote to stop a filibuster.

Collective Security: The idea that an attack on one particular state by another should be understood as an attack against all states.

Colonialism: A form of state domination in which one state controls the political system of another or several others for its own gain.

Communism: The political ideology under which the economy, including capital, property, major industries, and public services, is controlled and directed by the state and in that sense is "communal."

Comparative Politics: The subfield of political science that examines different types of institutions and issues within different countries. Such examinations are usually regionally based. For example, one may do comparative research on the area of the world known as the Middle East.

Concert of Europe: The name given to the European balance of power system of the nineteenth century. Although many scholars agree that the nineteenth century had several low-level wars (wars fought between some of the great powers), the system that was forged in Vienna proved strong enough to prevent war for almost one hundred years.

Concurrent Power: Powers that are granted to both the national and state governments in the U.S. Constitution. The power to tax is an example of a concurrent power.

Confederal System of Government: A system of government that gives little power to the central government and instead gives power to smaller state governments. The United States adopted a confederal system when it operated under the Articles of Confederation system from 1781 to 1787.

Connecticut Compromise: The Great Compromise between the large and small states at the Constitutional Convention that called for the U.S. House of Representatives to be apportioned according to the state's population and the U.S. Senate to be comprised of two senators per state.

Conservatism: A political philosophy that tends to support the status quo and advocates change only in moderation. Conservatism upholds the value of tradition and seeks to preserve all that is good about the past.

Constitutional Provisions: The specific arrangement of the law in any particular country; exactly what protections individuals have and how the government is able to act.

Constructivism: A school of thought within international relations that examines the impact of values and norms on the behavior of states.

Containment: The Cold War theory that was designed to stop or limit the spread of both Soviet and communist ideology around the world.

Correlation: The relationship between two items or variables.

Corrupt Bargain: A theory that John Quincy Adams secured the presidency in 1824 by engaging in a corrupt bargain with Speaker of the House Henry Clay. Adams allegedly promised to appoint Clay U.S. Secretary of State if Clay delivered the House vote for Adams. Neither candidate received a majority vote in the Electoral College, thus leaving it to the U.S. House of Representatives to determine the winner in the 1824 presidential election.

Cue-Taking: Taking a political cue from a respected colleague or party leader when determining how to vote on a particular bill.

Defense of Marriage Act: A federal law enacted in 1996 that allowed states to not recognize same-sex marriages performed in other states.

Democracy: A system of government in which the supreme power is vested in the people and exercised by them directly or indirectly through a system of representation usually involving periodically held free election.

Demographics: Classifications of different groups of people that usually refer to one's race, class, ethnicity, gender, level of wealth, age, place of residence, employment status, level of education, and so on.

Deterrence: To deter literally means to stop people from doing something by frightening them; dissuasion through this measure operates by frightening a state out of attacking, not because of launching an attack and carrying it home, but because the expected reaction of the opponent will result in one's own severe punishment.

Direct Democracy: A system of democracy whereby citizens directly participate in the decision-making process of government.

Domestic Terrorism: A group of people within a state that targets either certain ethnic, racial, or religious groups and/or the government itself.

Domino Theory: The Cold War theory that argued that as soon as one country became communist, the surrounding states would as well.

Eleventh Amendment: Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that has been interpreted to mean that a state cannot be sued in federal court by one of its own citizens, by a citizen of another state, or by a foreign country.

Empire: A political arrangement in which one powerful government is in control of a vast territory and peoples of (possibly) different economic, ethnic, and religious groups than the powerful government itself. This configuration dominated the period right before the emergence of the modern state system.

Enumerated Powers: Powers expressly granted to the government in the U.S. Constitution. The power to declare war, for example, is an enumerated power of Congress that can be found in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Environmentalism: A social and political movement that seeks to prevent the further deterioration of our natural resources. Environmentalists primarily believe that all living things, including nonhuman living things, warrant serious consideration when enacting public policy. The movement played a large role in the passage of the Clean Air Act (1970), the Clean Water Act (1972), the Endangered Species Act (1973), and a host of other major policies in the United States.

Executive and Legislative Fusion: The ways in which power is controlled by the office of the prime minister as both head of the legislature and head of the executive.

Extradition Clause: A clause found in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution that asserts states must surrender criminal offenders to states in which the crime was committed.

Fascism: A nationalistic, authoritarian, anticommunist movement founded by Benito Mussolini in 1919. Fascism was a response to the economic hardship and social disorder that ensued after the end of World War I.

Federalist System of Government: A system of government that divides power between the national and state governments. The system is in place in a number of countries, including the United States, Canada, and India.

Federalists: Persons supportive of ratifying the U.S. Constitution. Federalists such as Alexander Hamilton and George Washington generally favored a stronger central government. A Federalist Party later emerged under Alexander Hamilton's leadership.

Feminism: A political ideology that calls for social, political, economic, and familial equality between men and women. Feminism can be broken down into several components, including radical feminism, liberal feminism, and democratic feminism. The feminist movement was successful in securing the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment (1920) to the U.S. Constitution, which prohibited states from denying voting rights to women, and continues to push for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment.

Feudal System: System of economic, political, and social organization that flourished in Europe during the Middle Ages. It was based on the relationship of lord to vassal and the holding of land in feud.

Feudalism: A medieval form of social, economic, and political organization. Feudalism had a pyramidal structure. At its head was the king; below the king was a hierarchal chain of nobles, down to the lords of individual manors—the manor being the basic social and economic unit.

Fifteenth Amendment: The amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made it illegal to deny voting rights on the basis of race.

Fifth Amendment: The U.S. constitutional amendment that deals with the rights of the accused by providing for due process of law, prohibiting double jeopardy, and by stating that people are not required to testify against themselves.

Filibuster: A formal method used in the Senate to stop a bill from coming to a vote. Senators can prevent a vote by making long speeches or by engaging in unlimited debate.

Fossil Fuels: a carbon compound- or hydrocarbon-containing material such as coal, oil, and natural gas.

Fourteenth Amendment: The post-Civil War amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guaranteed all Americans the rights of due process of law, equal protection of law, and equal privileges and immunities.

Full Faith and Credit Clause: A clause found in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution that requires each state to recognize the civil judgments and public records of other states.

Glasnost: Referred to Gorbachev's policy of "openness" in government. It was introduced as a way of shedding light on some of the corruption of the Soviet Union during the 1980s.

Global Civil Society: The ways in which private individuals and NGOs have worked together outside the realm of traditional politics to advance the concepts of human rights and democracy.

Globalization: The global process that has witnessed a rise in the free movement and interconnectedness of goods, services, information, and people at the expense of the nation-state.

Greenhouse Effect: The burning of fossil fuels that results in CO_2 and H_2O being trapped in the atmosphere.

Gridlock: A lack of progress on enacting legislation typically caused by partisan and/or institutional infighting.

Hard Power: Using military and/or economic pressure in a way that allows one state to force another to do something it might not have wanted to do.

House Majority Leader (U.S.): The second-most important person in the House of Representatives. The majority leader assists the Speaker in establishing the political agenda in the House.

House Minority Leader (U.S.): The elected leader of the party with minority status in the House of Representatives.

House of Commons (British): The lower house in the British parliament. Members of the House of Commons (known as members of Parliament or MPs) are directly elected by the people and therefore are charged with the duty of passing legislation.

House of Councilors (Japanese): The upper house in the Japanese parliament. It is designed to approve proposed legislation that has already been passed in the lower House of Representatives. However, if it chooses to reject the proposed law, its ruling can be overturned in the House of Representatives by a two-thirds majority vote.

House of Lords (British): The upper house in the British parliament. The House of Lords reflects the history and traditions of British society. Today, it serves as a deliberative body that can no longer prevent the passage of legislation but can only delay it.

House of Representatives (Japanese): The lower house in the Japanese parliament. Its members are directly elected by the people, and it is the ultimate source of authority in the legislative process.

Hypothesis: An educated guess about a particular experiment.

Identity Politics: A form of politics where people of different racial, ethnic and/or religious factions promote the interests of their particular group.

Impeachment: The first stage of a process by which a head of state (or occasionally a member of a legislature) is removed for illegal activity. In countries where it is found, it is usually voted on by one or both legislative houses.

Imperialism: The highest stage of capitalism according to V. I. Lenin; the stage at which industrial growth and the banking system become monopolized by a wealthy group of state and industry leaders. For Lenin, it was the stage immediately before the worldwide communist revolution.

International Monetary Fund (IMF): Founded in 1944, a 190-member nation international institution that extends short-term aid to states that have been damaged by natural/manmade disasters or war.

International Relations: The field of political science that studies the way nations interact with one another and the influence of global trends on nation-states.

International Terrorism: When the government of one state finances acts of terror against another state or group within another state.

Interstate Commerce Clause: A clause in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution that gives Congress the authority to regulate commerce between foreign nations, states, and Indian tribes.

Ionians: The earliest Greek philosophers who believed in using rationality rather than mythology to understand the universe.

Jacksonian Democracy: Jacksonian democracy refers to the political philosophy and influence of President Andrew Jackson. The era (1824–54) was marked with the expansion of democratic rights and started the trend away from political appointments and toward the use of elections to select public officials.

Judicial Activism: A judicial belief that the politics of the day and the needs of the nation should influence judicial decisions.

Judicial Restraint: A judicial belief that justices should strictly construe the constitution and/or previous legal precedents when arriving at a judicial opinion.

Judicial Review: The court's power to strike laws that violate the U.S. Constitution.

Left-Wing Populist: Believe the interests of the people are best served by expanding federal regulations over the private sectors to promote equality.

Liberal: A person who believes it is the duty of government to ameliorate social conditions and create a more equitable society.

Liberalism: The school of thought that is centered on the creation of international institutions designed to enhance the natural tendencies of cooperation found in human nature.

Libertarianism: A political ideology that believes that the government should not interfere in the lives of citizens other than to provide police and military protection.

Logrolling: Trading influence or votes among legislators to achieve the passage of projects that are of interest to one another.

Lower House: A lower house, like the British House of Commons, is designed to best represent the will of the people. Thus, its members are elected directly by the people and their representation is based on population.

Low-Level Violence: The type of violence traditionally used by terrorist organizations, such as hangings, assassinations, intimidation tactics, and bombings of governmental or military installations.

Majority–Minority Concentrated District: A congressional district that includes a majority of minority voters that increases the probability of electing a minority representative.

Manichean: Relating to the ancient religion of Manichaeism, which believes in a dualistic vision of the universe where everything is either good or evil.

Marshall Plan: Named after U.S. Secretary of State George Marshall, the plan provided financial support to Europe following World War II. The United States realized that in order for it to maintain its dominance in areas of trade, it needed strong, reliable European trading partners.

Marxism: Based on the theories associated with Karl Marx (1818–83), the ideology of Marxism believes almost all conflict in society occurs because of class conflict. Karl Marx pointed to the level of exploitation and social deterioration that occurred during the Industrial Revolution in the mid-nineteenth century as proof that capitalism primarily fuels human suffering and social alienation. Marx and Friedrich Engels wrote *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848.

Marxism: The theory developed by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, which became the official doctrine of communism. According to Marxism, the key to how society operated was economics; all other aspects of society, such as politics and religion, were conditioned by the economic system.

***McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819):** The landmark Supreme Court case that expanded the powers of the national government by finding the government had "implied powers" in addition to the expressed powers found in Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution.

Meritocracy: A society in which power is wielded by those who deserve it, based on their talents, industry, and success in competition, rather than through membership in a certain class or possession of wealth.

Missouri Compromise: A political compromise whereby Missouri was admitted into the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state. The remaining states in the Louisiana territory were divided into slave states in the South and free states in the North.

Modern Liberalism: Modern liberalism points out potential problems associated with systems of "majority rule" and "equality" by emphasizing the tendency of democracies to degenerate into a tyranny of the majority. Alexis de Tocqueville (1805–59) and John Stuart Mill (1806–73) are two leading modern liberal thinkers.

Modernization (Development) Theorists: The most famous is Walt Whitman Rostow, who argued that there is a formula for economic growth and development. Prosperity is based on the ability of certain states to assume an economic formula that will move them from "traditional life" to "mass consumption."

Monarchy: Form of rulership whereby a queen or king, empress or emperor holds absolute or limited power, usually inherited.

Multinational Corporations (MNCs): Companies that have the potential for global reach. In other words, they have the capacity (wealth, technology, personnel) to build, sell, and service products to and from any location in the world.

Multiparty Parliamentary Democracy: A democratic state that has more than two active political parties in the legislature.

National Diet: The formal name of the Japanese legislature composed of the House of Councilors and the House of Representatives.

National Interest: For realists, states (countries) will always behave in ways that expand their security and protect what they deem as essential to their well-being.

Nation-State System: A sovereign state inhabited by people who share political and cultural traditions.

Nation-State: Usually used to describe the modern state but strictly speaking applies only when the whole population of a state feels itself to belong to the same nation.

Natural Law: A body of law or a special principle held to be derived from nature and binding upon human society.

Necessary and Proper Clause: Also known as the elastic clause, it is found in the last paragraph of Article I, Section 8 of the Constitution and expands federal power by granting the federal government all powers that are "necessary" and "proper" to carry out the enumerated powers of Congress.

Neoliberalism: The ideology that combines the political principles of classical liberalism (see Chapter 3) with those of neoclassical economics, especially those that argue that the economy must remain unfettered by the government.

New Deal: Series of policies enacted during the presidency of Franklin Delano Roosevelt geared toward lifting the United States out of the Great Depression. Some policies, such as the Social Security Act of 1935, still have a major impact on American society.

New Jersey Plan: Proposed by William Paterson at the Constitutional Convention, the plan called for a one-house chamber with equal representation from each state.

New World Order: For neo-Marxists, this is the way in which the exploitation of the wealthy over the poor will continue. It is best seen in the ways that large corporations have been successful in passing legislation that allows them to lower other poorer countries' tariffs and gain access to their markets, resources, and labor.

Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs): Organizations that act independently of states and usually have a particular focus or interest. For example, the organization Doctors Without Borders can be considered an NGO committed to the prevention and treatment of disease in various parts of the world. They are privately funded and provide relief to many people who lack basic health care.

Nonstate Actors: Organizations, businesses, corporations, terrorist groups, and/or private individuals that influence international relations.

Normative Theory: Any theory that examines the way something "should" or "ought" to be rather than focusing on the way something actually "is."

Normative: A normative approach is any approach that seeks to determine how one "ought to live." You will see the normative approach more clearly in the discussion of Plato and Aristotle in Chapter 2.

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): Established in 1949 and designed primarily as a military organization among American and European powers. Its original purpose was to prevent Soviet aggression in Western Europe.

Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT): A treaty that came into force in 1970 that was designed to limit the nuclear arsenals of the five members of the UN Security Council and to prevent the proliferation or spread of weapons to states that did not already possess them. Currently, there are 188 signatories.

Oligarchy: A political system that is controlled by a small group of individuals who govern in their own interests.

Omnibus Legislation: A large bill that contains several smaller bills.

Original Jurisdiction: Courts that hear cases for the first time. These courts decide on guilt or innocence or resolve civil disputes on the merits of the facts of the case.

Outsourcing: The practice by which professions from one country (usually a wealthy country such as the United States) are sent to other countries where labor laws are less intense, and the pay scale is lower.

Pacifist: The doctrine holding that war is never justified and that all disputes between nations should be settled peacefully.

Parliamentary System: A system in which the executive branch is part of the legislature.

Partisan Gerrymandering: The act of dividing congressional districts to give one political party an unfair advantage in congressional elections.

Party Discipline: Political parties that follow the lead of the prime minister/president. They are usually found within parliamentary systems.

Patriarchy: A concept that is used to define societies that place men in positions of power over women.

Peacekeepers: A group of troops sent as part of a UN mission to maintain a peace agreement in an area that appears troubled.

Peloponnesian War: The war between Athens and Sparta from 431 to 404 BCE. Sparta, with the assistance of Persia (now Iran), built a massive fleet that destroyed the Athenian navy at Aegospotami in 405 BCE. The war destroyed Athens.

Perestroika: A Russian term that means "restructuring." Here, it refers to Gorbachev's policy of restructuring the Soviet economy in a way that produced more growth and less government control.

Petitioners: The party requesting, or petitioning, the court to intervene on a particular dispute.

Pluralist-Interdependence Theory: A theory that suggests that the long-standing concepts of sovereignty and territorial integrity are not capable of explaining international relations. It therefore argues that nonstate actors such as terrorist organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and multinational corporations must be considered vital agents in explaining international affairs.

Plutocracy: Government by the wealthy, or a group of wealthy people who control or influence a government.

Pocket Veto: An indirect presidential veto occurs when a president takes no action on a bill for ten days and Congress has adjourned.

Political Realignments: Situations in which one political party dominates over the other for an extended period of time.

Political Science: The academic discipline that seeks to understand the relationship between individuals and political institutions.

Political Socialization: The process by which one's attitudes and values are shaped.

Positive Law: A body of law established or recognized by a governmental authority.

Postbehavioralism: The school of thought that seeks to combine elements of the traditional approach (especially the idea of values) with those of behavioralism.

Power: The ability to persuade others to do what they would not do on their own. Machiavelli asserts that power can be exercised through the use of force, by making threats, and/or by enticing desired behavior by providing gifts.

Presidential System: A system in which the executive branch is separate from the legislature.

Privileges and Immunities Clause: A clause found in Article IV of the U.S. Constitution that assures nonresidents are granted basic privileges and immunities across all states.

Public Opinion Polls: Surveys that seek to determine how different groups of people perceive political issues.

Quantitative Analysis: An analysis that uses data to interpret political phenomena to better understand the political world. The data may come from survey research or established data sets.

Quorum: A legislative rule that requires a minimum number of legislators to be present for a bill to be voted on.

Raison d'état: Best understood by the modern expression "the national interest," where modern leaders put forth what is best for their own state above all other reasons.

Realist: A school of thought in international relations that emphasizes the furtherance of national interests and military security. Realists primarily believe nations exist within an anarchic international political system and, because of a tendency to distrust international organizations, believe nations must be prepared to militarily defend themselves at all times.

Realpolitik: The use of practical methods, instead of moral or ideological means, to secure political power. For example, one who engages in realpolitik would assess entry into a war as a calculation of power for one's own country, regardless of morality.

Representative Democracy: A system of government in which the people elect agents to represent them in a legislature.

Republic: A system of government in which power is exercised indirectly through representatives who are voted into office by citizens of the state.

Republic: The form of government in which ultimate power resides in the people, who elect representatives to participate in decision-making on their behalf.

Right-Wing Populist: Tend to stress nationalistic and anti-elitist themes and are inclined to believe international organizations, trade agreements, and illegal immigration hurt the nation and its working class.

Secularism: The belief that religion should be separate from governmental authority and political power.

Senate Majority Leader (U.S.): The elected leader of the majority party in the U.S. Senate. The majority leader is responsible for setting the agenda in the U.S. Senate and plays a role in selecting committee assignments.

Senate Minority Leader (U.S.): The elected leader of the minority party in the U.S. Senate.

Separation of Powers: A system of government that is divided between a legislative branch, an executive branch, and a judicial branch of government.

Shays's Rebellion: An armed insurrection in Massachusetts led by Revolutionary War hero Daniel Shays. The rebellion targeted attacks on courthouses in an attempt to prevent farm foreclosures.

Skeptics: Philosophers who generally agree that nothing can be known with absolute certainty.

Social Contract Theorists: Thinkers beginning in the seventeenth century who sought to explain human nature by looking at the terms by which governments are set up in the first place.

Social Contract Theory: A wide range of theories linked most closely with Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau on the most appropriate relationship between the state and the individual. Social contract theorists typically provide an observation on human nature, an observation on problems that arise in the absence of government (i.e., precontract state), and a recommendation on a form of government best able to solve these problems.

Social Contract: The political theory that a state and its citizens have an unwritten agreement between them, a social contract into which they voluntarily enter.

Social Sciences: Any number of academic disciplines that seek to understand human behavior. Classically they have been understood to include anthropology, archaeology, economics, criminology, political science, and psychology.

Socialism: A political system in which the means of production, distribution, and exchange are mostly owned by the state and used, at least in theory, on behalf of the people.

Soft Power: Using methods other than military/economic coercion to receive desired outcomes. For example, getting another country to "want" the things we want can create a system of security.

Sovereignty: The idea that the government within a state is recognized (domestically and internationally) as the ultimate source of authority to create, implement, and enforce laws.

Soviet-Afghan War: A war between the Soviet Union and Afghanistan that lasted from 1979 to 1989. Waged for easier access to oil, the Soviet-Afghan War saw the presence of American CIA operatives funding and training rebel Afghans.

Speaker of the House (U.S.): The presiding officer of the House of Representatives. The Speaker is the highest-ranking official in the House of Representatives. The Speaker is third in line of succession to the presidency and is responsible for establishing the political agenda of the body.

State Terrorism: When a state uses acts of terror focused on people living within its borders.

State: The primary actor in international relations. States (referred to by American students as "countries") have governments, bureaucracies, territory, and people. States are in possession of the ultimate source of authority within their borders and are therefore said to possess sovereignty.

Structural Realism: The international system that determines the level of power within each state. State power is determined by the prospect of the balance of power within the international system. Sometimes the balance of power within the international system motivates states to pursue aggressive policies; sometimes it stifles them.

Subfields of Political Science: The different content approaches within the overall discipline of political science. Subfields include political theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations.

Subprime Mortgage Lending: Home mortgages provided to borrowers with lower-than-average credit ratings. Banks charge much higher interest rates to these borrowers because they are at greater risk of defaulting on loans.

Supermajority Vote: A congressional vote requiring more than a simple majority vote. The Constitution requires a two-thirds supermajority vote in Congress in five instances: when overriding a presidential veto, when impeaching federal officials, on Senate treaty ratification votes, when removing fellow members for misconduct, and when proposing constitutional amendments.

Supremacy Clause: Found in Article VI of the U.S. Constitution, the supremacy clause asserts that the Constitution, national laws, and treaties are supreme over state laws when national laws are in compliance with the U.S. Constitution.

Territorial Integrity: The boundaries of any state are to be protected against any acts of aggression and are to be maintained.

Terrorism: The pursuit of a political aim by means of violence and intimidation.

Theocracy: A state or government that is run by priests or clergy.

Theory: An idea that has been tested that aims to demonstrate a correlation between political phenomena.

Thirteenth Amendment: An amendment to the U.S. Constitution that abolished the institution of slavery in the United States.

Thirty Years' War: A war fought in Europe during the period from 1618 to 1648 that was begun by the Catholic states to bring the Protestant parts of Europe back to the "true" faith. Its conclusion resulted in the modern idea of the state as we know it today and the rise of international relations based on political rather than religious motives.

Three Levels of Analysis: A framework developed by political scientist Kenneth Waltz as a way to better understand the reasons for conflict. The three level refers to three different actors involved in warfare: the individual (political leaders, terrorists, etc.), the state (domestic level actors such as interest groups, political parties, and ethnic or religious groups), and the international community (international tensions that spill over and cause conditions ripe for wars to occur).

Timocracy: A government in which the love of honor is the ruling principle.

Totalitarianism: A system of government where the ruling authority extends its power over all aspects of society and regulates every aspect of life.

Traditional Conservatism: The belief that government should not attempt to change society but that government should instead merely reflect changes that have already taken place in society. Conservatism believes that government should play a role in upholding traditional and religious values and that social changes should occur incrementally. Edmund Burke is generally regarded as the father of conservatism.

Traditionalism: The methodological tradition that seeks to understand if certain government or political institutions are behaving in accordance with how they "ought to behave."

Transnational Terrorism: A type of privately funded, politically motivated violence that involves targets around the world.

Twelfth Amendment: Amendment to the U.S. Constitution that changed the procedure set out for the election of the president and vice president by providing for separate ballots for president and vice president.

Tyranny of the Majority: A chief criticism of democratic systems of government where those in the political majority violate the rights of those in the political minority.

Tyrant: An absolute ruler unrestrained by law or constitution.

Unicameral Legislature: A legislature that consists of a one-house chamber.

Unicameral Legislature: A legislature that has only one house.

Unitary System of Government: A system of government where all powers are located in the central government. In this system, regional and local government derive power from the central government. Approximately 150 nations currently have a unitary system of government, including Britain, China, France, and Japan.

Upper House: An upper house is intended to be removed from the day-to-day activities of the legislature. Thus, it promotes the national interest and provides consultation on serious issues.

Utilitarianism: A political philosophy developed in England in the nineteenth century by thinkers such as Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill, which says that the duty of government is to promote the greatest good for the greatest number.

Variable: Features or attributes of social science research. For example, a variable might look at the relationship between race and voting, age and voting, or religious preference and voting.

Virginia Plan: Primarily drafted by James Madison and Edmund Randolph of Virginia, it was proposed at the Constitutional Convention and called for representation in Congress to be apportioned according to the state's population.

Vote of No Confidence: A feature of parliamentary systems in which members of the legislature deem the sitting executive as unfit to rule. No-confidence votes can result in a call for national elections.

Wahhabism: A form of Sunni Islam established in the eighteenth century by Muhammad Ibn Abdul-abl-Wahhab. It is considered by most scholars to be one of the most conservative interpretations of the Muslim holy book, the Koran.

Warsaw Pact: During the Cold War, the collection of Eastern European states that were controlled by and part of the Soviet Union.

Whip: Party leaders who work closely with rank-and-file members to ensure individual members vote in accordance with the wishes of party leaders.

World Bank: Founded in 1944, a 189-member nation international institution that provides long-term help to states.

World Trade Organization (WTO): Established in 1995, a 164-member country international organization that seeks to lower barriers to trade to make states' economies more competitive.

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