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# AMERICAN GOVERNMENT



96/97



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# AMERICAN GOVERNMENT 96/97

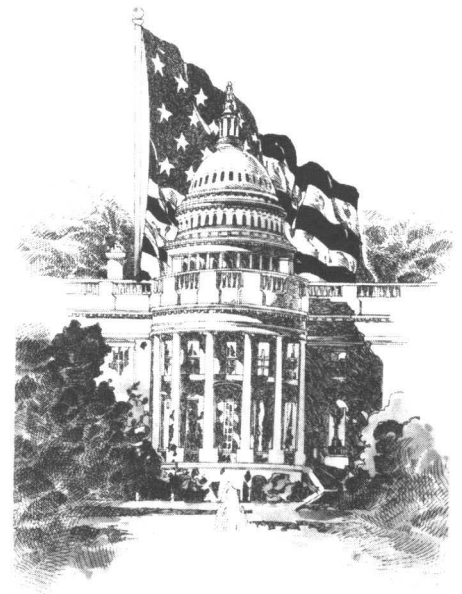
Twenty-Sixth Edition

## Editor

**Bruce Stinebrickner**  
DePauw University

Professor Bruce Stinebrickner teaches American politics and chairs the Department of Political Science at DePauw University in Greencastle, Indiana. He has also taught American politics at Lehman College of the City University of New York, at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, Australia, and, for one semester, in a DePauw program for Argentine students in Buenos Aires. He received his Ph.D. from Yale University in 1974. In his course and publications on American politics, Professor Stinebrickner brings to bear valuable insights gained from living, teaching, and lecturing abroad.

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Twenty-Sixth Edition

Printed in the United States of America

# To the Reader

In publishing ANNUAL EDITIONS we recognize the enormous role played by the magazines, newspapers, and journals of the *public press* in providing current, first-rate educational information in a broad spectrum of interest areas. Within the articles, the best scientists, practitioners, researchers, and commentators draw issues into new perspective as accepted theories and viewpoints are called into account by new events, recent discoveries change old facts, and fresh debate breaks out over important controversies.

Many of the articles resulting from this enormous editorial effort are appropriate for students, researchers, and professionals seeking accurate, current material to help bridge the gap between principles and theories and the real world. These articles, however, become more useful for study when those of lasting value are carefully collected, organized, indexed, and reproduced in a low-cost format, which provides easy and permanent access when the material is needed.

That is the role played by *Annual Editions*. Under the direction of each volume's *Editor*, who is an expert in the subject area, and with the guidance of an *Advisory Board*, we seek each year to provide in each ANNUAL EDITION a current, well-balanced, carefully selected collection of the best of the public press for your study and enjoyment.

We think you'll find this volume useful, and we hope you'll take a moment to let us know what you think.

*American Government 96/97* is the twenty-sixth edition of a book that has become a mainstay in many introductory courses on American politics. The educational goal is to provide a readable collection of up-to-date articles that are informative, interesting, and stimulating to students beginning their study of the American political system.

In January 1995, for the first time since 1947, a Democratic president faced a new Congress in which Republicans controlled a majority of seats in both houses. So-called "divided government"—a situation in which control of the presidency, the House of Representatives, and the Senate is split between Democrats and Republicans—has become commonplace in United States national government since 1969. The usual pattern, however, has been a Republican president facing Democratic control of both houses of Congress. Republican presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford faced that situation from 1969 to 1977, as did their fellow Republicans Ronald Reagan and George Bush from 1987 to 1993. In another variant of divided government, President Reagan faced a Democrat-controlled House of Representatives from 1981 to 1987, while Republicans controlled the Senate. For the first two years of President Clinton's term, party control of American national government was *not* divided between the two major parties: Democrats controlled the presidency as well as both houses of Congress. But the hotly contested congressional elections of November 1994 marked a sharp departure from post-World War II norms. In January 1995, the House of Representatives elected Congressman Newt Gingrich of Georgia to be the first Republican Speaker in 40 years.

As this book goes to press, Gingrich's remarkable first year as Speaker has drawn to a close. Twice during the last two months of 1995, nonessential parts of the national government were shut down because of a lack of funding. Budgetary differences between the Clinton administration and the Republican-controlled Congress continued and both sides claim to be aiming at a balanced budget in seven years. But President Clinton wants smaller cuts than his adversaries in such programs as Medicaid and Medicare, while Republicans favor bigger tax cuts than does the president. At this writing it remains unknown how the lengthy budgetary stalemate will affect the outcome of presidential and congressional elections in November 1996.

On the foreign policy front, in early 1996 President Clinton agreed to send U.S. troops to Bosnia-Herzegovina as part of a multilateral peacekeeping force. Significant congressional reservations were voiced, and there are a number of unanswered questions. Will these arrangements bring anything resembling lasting peace to the area? How dangerous will the operation be for U.S. troops? How will American military involvement in Bosnia, unpopular among Americans at its outset, play itself out in the November 1996 elections? The selections in this book do not, of course, contain answers to these questions. But they do provide analyses that can help us see connections between such questions and related elements of the American political system.

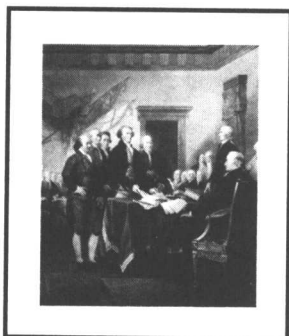
The systems approach provides a rough organizational framework for this book. The first unit focuses on ideological and constitutional underpinnings of American politics, from both historical and contemporary perspectives. The second unit treats the major institutions of the national government. Unit 3 covers the "input" or "linkage" mechanisms of the system—parties, elections, interest groups, and media. The fourth and concluding unit shifts the focus to policy choices that confront the government in Washington and resulting "outputs" of the political system.

Each year thousands of articles about American politics are published, and deciding which to reprint in a collection of readings such as this is not always easy. Criteria for selecting each article include the topic treated, the approach taken, and the level of analysis used. How well an article stands alone and how well it complements other likely selections are also taken into account. Furthermore, since no position on the political spectrum has a monopoly on truth, articles are chosen with an eye toward providing viewpoints from left, right, and center. More than half of the selections in this book are new to this year's edition.

Next year will bring another opportunity for change, and you, the reader, are invited to participate in the process. Please complete and return the postpaid article rating form on the last page of the book and let us know your reactions and your suggestions for improvement.



Bruce Stinebrickner  
Editor



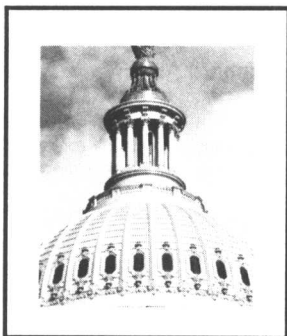
## Unit 1

### Foundations of American Politics

The twenty selections in this unit outline the foundations of American politics. In addition to primary documents, there are discussions of contemporary political ideals and viewpoints as well as recent commentaries on constitutional issues.

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<b>A. BASIC DOCUMENTS</b>	
1. The Declaration of Independence, 1776.	6
This document formally announces that 13 former British colonies have become the free and independent United States of America. It eloquently identifies certain <i>historic principles</i> on which their claim to independence rests.	
2. The Constitution of the United States, 1787.	7
The Constitution provides an organizational blueprint for the national government and for the <i>federal</i> relationship between the national government and the states. In addition, the first 10 amendments, commonly known as the <i>Bill of Rights</i> , spell out limits on what the government can do. A commentary accompanying the actual document provides a brief account of the writing of the Constitution and also notes some of its significant features.	
3. The Size and Variety of the Union as a Check on Faction, James Madison, <i>The Federalist Papers</i> , No. 10, 1787.	15
James Madison argues in support of the union of the 13 states under the new <i>Constitution</i> . According to Madison, a system of representative democracy governing a large territory and many people will help control the undesirable effects of "faction."	
4. Checks and Balances, James Madison, <i>The Federalist Papers</i> , No. 51, 1787.	19
According to James Madison, both the <i>separation of powers</i> among three branches of government and the <i>division of powers</i> between the states and the central government will help preserve representative democracy under the new <i>Constitution</i> .	
5. The Judiciary, Alexander Hamilton, <i>The Federalist Papers</i> , No. 78, 1787.	22
Alexander Hamilton discusses the federal <i>judiciary</i> to be established under the new <i>Constitution</i> . He emphasizes the crucial role of the courts in a system of limited government with a written Constitution.	
<b>B. CONTEMPORARY VIEWS AND VALUES</b>	
6. What Will Rogers Could Teach the Age of Limbaugh, Jon Meacham, <i>The Washington Monthly</i> , January/February 1994.	26
Jon Meacham compares two popular political and social commentators from different eras, Will Rogers of the <i>Great Depression/New Deal</i> period and Rush Limbaugh of today. Meacham argues that Rogers's style and tone were far more helpful to a <i>troubled American nation</i> than those of his counterpart of the 1990s.	
7. Inequality: For Richer, for Poorer, <i>The Economist</i> , November 5, 1994.	31
This article reports that the gap between rich and poor has been widening in the United States, Britain, and other industrialized democracies. Key differences are treated between the United States and other industrialized democracies in the causes of this gap and in citizens' attitudes toward <i>income inequality</i> .	
8. Restoring Public Trust, Daniel Yankelovich, <i>Mother Jones</i> , November/December 1995.	34
Based on what <i>public opinion polls</i> have shown about the beliefs of the American public today, Daniel Yankelovich proposes a four-step strategy that <i>liberals</i> could use to regain the public's trust.	

9. **The Paradox of Integration**, Orlando Patterson, *The New Republic*, November 6, 1995. 39  
The author examines **the state of race relations** in the United States today and reaches a paradoxical conclusion. By some measures African Americans are better off than ever before; from other perspectives, their circumstances are more problematic than ever.
  10. **Affirmative on Affirmative Action: But Not Optimistic**, Don Wycliff, *Commonweal*, May 19, 1995. 43  
Don Wycliff explains why he favors **affirmative action** in light of the long record of **racial discrimination** in the United States and why he feels that the era of affirmative action in the country is about to end.
  11. **For a New Nationalism**, John B. Judis and Michael Lind, *The New Republic*, March 27, 1995. 45  
The authors note that the world has changed. They argue that Americans need a new **nationalism** based on economic, social, and national security perspectives that reflect the circumstances of today.
  12. **The Other America Revisited**, Roger Starr, *The Public Interest*, Fall 1995. 51  
In an extended discussion of a famous book published in the early 1960s, Roger Starr reexamines poverty in the United States and considers what can and should be done about it.
  13. **Our Bodies, Our Souls**, Naomi Wolf, *The New Republic*, October 16, 1995. 57  
Naomi Wolf criticizes pro-choice **feminists** for the way they approach the question of **abortion**. She argues that feminists can maintain their pro-choice stance at the same time they recognize the ethical issues that abortions pose.
- C. **CONSTITUTIONAL AND LEGAL MATTERS**
14. **Race and the Constitution**, Thurgood Marshall, *Social Policy*, Summer 1987. 64  
In this 1987 article, Thurgood Marshall, the first African American to serve on the Supreme Court, argues that the 1787 **Constitution** contained many defects, including several provisions that supported the continuation of slavery. He suggests that the Constitution has evolved in desirable ways since originally written, but he notes that there is room for more progress in certain spheres.
  15. **Let Us Pray**, Stephen L. Carter, *The New Yorker*, December 5, 1994. 67  
Stephen Carter describes the contemporary controversy over **school prayer** in the United States. He analyzes it from constitutional, educational, religious, and policy perspectives.
  16. **Taking Affirmative Action Apart**, Nicholas Lemann, *The New York Times Magazine*, June 11, 1995. 73  
Nicholas Lemann recounts the development of **affirmative action** policies in the United States since the 1960s. He also states the case for affirmative action and suggests that this case has not been effectively made to the American public.
  17. **Constitutional Amendmentitis**, Kathleen M. Sullivan, *The American Prospect*, Fall 1995. 83  
Kathleen Sullivan notes the proliferation of proposed **amendments to the Constitution introduced in Congress** since January 1995. She argues for a strong presumption against amending the Constitution.
  18. **Term Limits: A Bad Idea Whose Time Has Passed**, Orrin G. Hatch, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, May 1995. 90  
Senator Orrin Hatch argues against a constitutional limit on the number of **terms that members of Congress can serve**. In his view, the 1994 congressional elections showed that voters can remove incumbents from Congress without resorting to **term limits**.



# Unit 2

## Structures of American Politics

The fifteen articles in this unit examine the structure and present status of the American presidency, Congress, judiciary, and bureaucracy.

19. **The Case against a Balanced-Budget Amendment**, Charles J. Whalen, *Social Policy*, Spring 1995. Charles Whalen makes a forceful case against the proposed **balanced-budget constitutional amendment**. He argues that such an amendment would be unwise both politically and economically. 93
20. **Providing Guarantees of Equal Opportunity**, William H. Chafe, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 30, 1995. The author explores the meaning of "equal opportunity" and the application of the Fourteenth Amendment's **Equal Protection Clause** in American life. 95

### Overview 98

#### A. THE PRESIDENCY

21. **Do We Ask Too Much of Presidents?** Burt Solomon, *National Journal*, June 18, 1994. 100  
Burt Solomon notes that the presidents of the last 25 years have generally been judged to be disappointing. He argues that the difficult challenges besetting **contemporary presidents** and the **unrealistic expectations** held by the public have led to Americans' negative perceptions of recent presidents.
22. **Read Polls, Heed America**, Garry Wills, *The New York Times Magazine*, November 6, 1994. 102  
Garry Wills provides a penetrating analysis of how a successful president must use the results of **public opinion polls**. Wills describes the "constant balancing act" that a U.S. president must perform.
23. **Rush to Judgment: Picking Presidents**, James A. Barnes, *National Journal*, June 18, 1994. 105  
James Barnes explains how changes in the presidential nominating process a quarter of a century ago have affected **congressional-presidential relations** and the overall conduct of the **presidency** itself. He suggests that the changing roles of **political parties**, **primaries**, and **news media** have been most significant.
24. **Why Clinton Wishes He Were JFK**, Richard Reeves, *The Washington Monthly*, September 1995. 108  
Richard Reeves describes changes in the **culture in which presidents of the United States work**. He focuses on changes that have occurred since the administration of John Kennedy and reports why President Clinton thinks that Kennedy had an easier environment in which to be president.

#### B. CONGRESS

25. **Imperial Congress**, Joseph A. Califano Jr., *The New York Times Magazine*, January 23, 1994. 112  
Joseph Califano argues that **Congress** is now more powerful than the **presidency** and has become the dominant government branch in the American political system. He explains that this change has taken place since the presidency of Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s and suggests some ways to redress the current imbalance.
26. **Too Representative Government**, Steven Stark, *The Atlantic Monthly*, May 1995. 115  
Steven Stark observes that **Congress has changed** because the demands and expectations directed at members have changed. He also suggests that the change has not been for the better.
27. **Women on the Hill: Can They Make a Difference?** Teresa Riordan and Sue Kirchhoff, *Ms*, January/February 1995. 123  
The authors assess the role of **women as members of Congress**. They note a variety of factors leading to the conclusion that by no means do women have an equal voice on Capitol Hill.

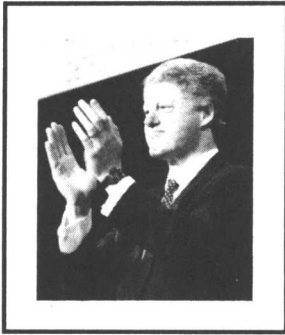
### C. JUDICIARY

28. **What Am I? A Potted Plant?** Richard A. Posner, *The New Republic*, September 28, 1987. 127  
Richard Posner argues that judges, no matter what approach to **constitutional** interpretation they espouse, inevitably exercise discretion and take consequences into account in reaching judicial decisions.
29. **A Conservative Case for Judicial Activism**, David P. Bryden, *The Public Interest*, Spring 1993. 130  
David Bryden argues that a politically conservative **Supreme Court justice** should not automatically assume that **judicial restraint** is the right course of action to further **conservatism**.
30. **In Whose Court?** W. John Moore, *National Journal*, October 5, 1991. 135  
State legislatures and state courts as well as **Congress** can make decisions that counter **Supreme Court** rulings, and sometimes the Supreme Court deliberately leaves room for policy questions to be handled by other institutions of government. In this selection, W. John Moore examines interactions between the current Supreme Court and other institutions.
31. **The Supreme Court's Right Turn**, David F. Forte, *The World & I*, October 1995. 140  
David Forte describes the approaches of the liberal and conservative factions on **the current Supreme Court** and notes that the conservative approach usually commanded a majority of justices during the 1994–1995 term.

### D. BUREAUCRACY

32. **Still Trying to Reinvent Government**, Eliza Newlin Carney, *National Journal*, June 18, 1994. 145  
Eliza Newlin Carney notes that many, perhaps most, presidents claim that they are going to reform government **bureaucracies** to make them more effective and less costly. According to Carney, the **Clinton administration's** "Reinventing Government" initiative under the leadership of Vice President Al Gore is the latest example of this pattern of presidential behavior, but it has a better chance to succeed than most earlier reform efforts.
33. **Government Can Work**, Nicholas Lemann, *The Washington Monthly*, January/February 1994. 148  
Nicholas Lemann makes the case that **government bureaucracies** can succeed and notes that only government bureaucracies can perform many needed tasks. He suggests that more attention from **news media** and citizens can contribute to making government bureaucracies work better.
34. **Misuse of the I.R.S.: The Abuse of Power**, David Burnham, *The New York Times Magazine*, September 3, 1989. 152  
David Burnham discusses the enormous power of the **Internal Revenue Service (IRS)** and the opportunities to misuse that power in the tax collection process.
35. **You Can't Fix It If You Don't Raise the Hood**, Amy Waldman, *The Washington Monthly*, July/August 1995. 157  
Amy Waldman argues that government executives responsible for **supervising the bureaucracy** have an inadequate understanding of what government bureaucrats are actually doing. In turn, making them perform better is difficult.





# Unit 3

## Process of American Politics

The fourteen articles in this unit review how political parties, voters, election processes, interest groups, and the media work in the process of American politics.

### Overview

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#### A. VOTERS, PARTIES, AND ELECTIONS

36. **Why Americans Don't Vote**, Robert Kuttner, *The New Republic*, September 7, 1987. 164

Robert Kuttner compares **voting turnout** patterns in the United States with those of Western European democracies. He explains why American turnout rates are low and suggests **reforms** that would probably get more Americans to vote.

37. **The 1994 Congressional Elections: The Postindustrial Realignment Continues**, Everett Carl Ladd, *Political Science Quarterly*, Spring 1995. 167

The author places the results of the 1994 Congressional election in the context of long-term trends in the political attitudes and **voting behavior** of Americans.

38. **The Southern Coup**, Michael Lind, *The New Republic*, June 19, 1995. 181

The author analyzes the newfound prominence of the South in both the electoral coalitions and the leadership of the Republican party. In turn, he suggests, there has been a **"Southernization" of America**.

39. **Women in Electoral Politics: A Slow, Steady Climb**, Mary Beth Rogers, *Social Policy*, Summer 1993. 187

Mary Beth Rogers discusses why 1992 has come to be known as the "Year of the Woman" in U.S. electoral politics. She identifies a number of factors that have led to the **electoral successes of women**.

40. **If Campaign Finance Reform Is the Beginning, What Is the End?** David Dyssegaard Kallick, *Social Policy*, Fall 1995. 192

That **campaign finance reform** is needed is evident by the way that money has distorted the electoral process. This article looks at the present state of campaign finance and what needs to be done to reinvigorate the basic principles of democracy.

41. **Test-Marketing a President**, Elizabeth Kolbert, *The New York Times Magazine*, August 30, 1992. 196

Elizabeth Kolbert reports on an increasingly important campaign technique, the use of **focus groups**. She describes how George Bush and Bill Clinton used focus groups to shape their 1992 presidential campaigns.

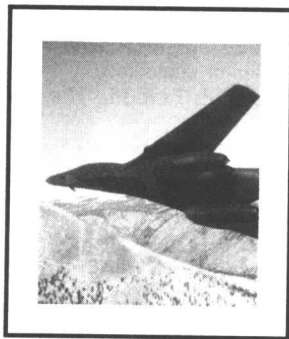
#### B. INTEREST GROUPS

42. **Demosclerosis**, Jonathan Rauch, *The New Democrat*, June/July 1994. 201

Jonathan Rauch identifies the important connection between **interest groups** and the shortcomings of government in Washington. He documents the connection and explains why any solution will be difficult to put into effect.

43. **Going to Extremes, Losing the Center**, W. John Moore, *National Journal*, June 18, 1994. 205

W. John Moore describes the factors that lead **interest groups** to take extreme positions on most public policy issues. He notes that when there are intensely committed groups on both sides of most issues, debate becomes polarized. In turn, centrist, consensus policy outcomes become more difficult to achieve.



# Unit 4

## Products of American Politics

The ten selections in this unit examine the domestic, economic, foreign, and defense policies that American government produces.

44. **Reforming the Biggest Lobby**, Michael Rust, *Insight*, 208  
October 23, 1995.

Michael Rust describes the **lobbying activities** of government agencies. He also discusses how such activities pose obstacles to efforts to reduce government spending and to make government more efficient.

45. **Cultivating the Grass Roots to Reap Legislative Benefits**, Joel Brinkley, *New York Times*, November 1, 1993. 211  
Joel Brinkley reports new techniques that **interest groups** use to influence members of **Congress**. The most noteworthy innovation is the use of **new technologies** to stimulate **grassroots communications** that change the way Congress works.

### C. MEDIA

46. **Resisting Pressures on a Free Press**, William H. Rent- 215  
schler, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, July 1995.

The author explains the importance of all sides of the political spectrum being represented in **the nation's news media**. He also suggests that conservative viewpoints such as Rush Limbaugh's are dominating media outlets today.

47. **Did You Have a Good Week?** James Fallows, *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1994. 218

James Fallows identifies and laments the tendency of **news media** to exaggerate the critical and especially the emergency nature of a variety of public policy issues. According to him, the negative consequences include making "the week" the fundamental unit of political evaluation and treating political news in the same manner as sports.

48. **Confessions of an Investigative Reporter**, Christopher 220  
Georges, *The Washington Monthly*, March 1992.

Christopher Georges admits that investigative reporters seldom expose major **institutional scandals** within government and business. Government investigators have been far more successful than journalists in uncovering such scandals in recent years.

49. **The Messages of the New Medium**, Graeme Browning, 227  
*National Journal*, October 21, 1995.

The author considers the potential and the likely **impact of the Internet on political communications** in general and political commentary in particular.

### Overview 228

#### A. DOMESTIC AND ECONOMIC POLICY

50. **Federal Government Mandates: Why the States Are 230  
Complaining**, Martha Derthick, *The Brookings Review*, Fall 1992.

Martha Derthick identifies four main ways in which the national government influences state governments. In this context, she discusses affirmative commands—that is, **mandates**—from the national government to the states and evaluates their implications for **federalism** in the United States.

51. **Sixty Years of Tinkering**, Michael Tanner, *The World & I*, 234  
November 1995.

The author describes the history of **Social Security** since its inception during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency and identifies the many difficult problems that exist.

52. **Act Now—There's Still Time to Stop the "Revolution,"** 238  
*The Washington Monthly*, September 1995.  
 This brief selection identifies and criticizes 23 **Republican policy proposals**. The proposals range from tax cuts for high-income people to repeal of clean water standards.
53. **The Long View**, Eli Ginzberg, *Society*, November/December 1995. 242  
 Eli Ginzberg takes a "long view" of America's **health care delivery system** and concludes his analysis with five suggestions about the current system and the prospects for reform.
54. **The Superfund Saga**, Margaret Kriz, *National Journal*, 248  
 October 21, 1995.  
 Margaret Kriz reviews **the history of the "superfund" program**, which was initiated by Congress in 1980 in an attempt to clean up sites polluted by petroleum sludge, discarded industrial chemicals, and the like. She also examines current proposals to reform the "superfund" and the opposition that they are likely to face.
55. **Put an End to Corporate Welfare**, Stephen Moore and 252  
 Dean Stansel, *USA Today Magazine (Society for the Advancement of Education)*, September 1995.  
 The authors argue that **taxpayer subsidies to industries** and firms should be ended. He identifies numerous examples of such subsidies and gives eight reasons why such policies are misguided and dangerous.
56. **Ten Essential Observations on Guns in America**, James 255  
 D. Wright, *Society*, March/April 1995.  
 James Wright identifies what he considers to be 10 fundamental truths about guns and gun violence and then discusses their implications for **American public policy**.
57. **Does Kids' TV Need Fixing?** *U.S. News & World Report*, 261  
 September 11, 1995.  
 This brief selection outlines the pros and cons of the government's requiring **television stations** to air more quality kids' programs.

#### B. FOREIGN AND DEFENSE POLICY

58. **My So-Called Foreign Policy**, Owen Harries, *The New 262*  
*Republic*, October 10, 1994.  
 Owen Harries surveys a whole range of issues related to U.S. foreign policy in the post-cold war era. He discusses and evaluates the performance of the Clinton administration, old habits and new inhibitions that combine to shape **American foreign policy**, and the contradictions inherent in thinking that it is the sole superpower in the world.
59. **We Arm the World**, David Evans, *In These Times*, 268  
 November 15, 1993.  
 David Evans describes the extent to which **U.S. arms makers** sell military hardware to nations around the world. He then examines the many problems associated with these sales.

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# Topic Guide

This topic guide suggests how the selections in this book relate to topics likely to be treated in American politics textbooks and courses. The guide is arranged alphabetically according to topic, and the selections that give substantial coverage to each topic are named. Most of the topics in the topic guide come from the italicized terms in the brief descriptions of each selection that appear in the table of contents.

TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN	TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN
<b>Abortion</b>	13. Our Bodies, Our Souls	<b>Equality</b>	7. Inequality 20. Providing Guarantees of Equal Opportunity
<b>Affirmative Action</b>	See Race/Racial Discrimination	<b>Federalism</b>	2. Constitution of the United States 3. Size and Variety of the Union 30. In Whose Court? 50. Federal Government Mandates
<b>Bureaucracy</b>	32. Still Trying to Reinvent Government 33. Government <i>Can</i> Work 34. Misuse of the I.R.S. 35. You Can't Fix It If You Don't Raise the Hood	<b>Feminism</b>	See Gender/Gender Discrimination
<b>Clinton, Bill</b>	24. Why Clinton Wishes He Were JFK 41. Test-Marketing a President	<b>Foreign and Defense Policy</b>	58. My So-Called Foreign Policy 59. We Arm the World
<b>Congress</b>	17. Constitutional Amendmentitis 18. Term Limits 25. Imperial Congress 26. Too Representative Government 27. Women on the Hill 45. Cultivating the Grass Roots 54. Superfund Saga	<b>Fourteenth Amendment</b>	14. Race and the Constitution
<b>Conservatism</b>	29. Conservative Case for Judicial Activism	<b>Gender/Gender Discrimination</b>	14. Race and the Constitution 27. Women on the Hill 39. Women in Electoral Politics
<b>Constitution</b>	3. Size and Variety of the Union 4. Checks and Balances 5. Judiciary 14. Race and the Constitution 17. Constitutional Amendmentitis 18. Term Limits 19. Case against a Balanced Budget Amendment 20. Providing Guarantees of Equal Opportunity	<b>Health Care</b>	53. Long View
<b>Crime</b>	56. Ten Essential Observations on Guns in America	<b>Historical Perspectives</b>	1. Declaration of Independence 2. Constitution of the United States 3. Size and Variety of the Union 4. Checks and Balances 5. Judiciary 25. Imperial Congress
<b>Elections and Nominations</b>	23. Rush to Judgment 36. Why Americans Don't Vote 37. 1994 Congressional Elections 38. Southern Coup 39. Women in Electoral Politics 41. Test-Marketing a President	<b>Interest Groups</b>	3. Size and Variety of the Union 26. Too Representative Government 30. In Whose Court? 42. Demosclerosis 43. Going to Extremes 44. Reforming the Biggest Lobby 45. Cultivating the Grass Roots
<b>Environment</b>	54. Superfund Saga	<b>Liberalism</b>	8. Restoring Public Trust
		<b>Media</b>	46. Resisting Pressures on a Free Press 47. Did You Have a Good Week? 48. Confessions of an Investigative Reporter 49. Messages of the New Medium
		<b>Nationalism</b>	11. For a New Nationalism

TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN	TOPIC AREA	TREATED IN
<b>Political Parties</b>	37. 1994 Congressional Elections 38. Southern Coup	<b>Reform</b>	36. Why Americans Don't Vote
<b>Poverty</b>	12. <i>The Other America</i> Revisited	<b>Religion</b>	15. Let Us Pray
<b>Presidency</b>	21. Do We Ask Too Much of Presidents? 22. Read Polls, Heed America 23. Rush to Judgment 24. Why Clinton Wishes He Were JFK 25. Imperial Congress	<b>Rights</b>	14. Race and the Constitution 30. In Whose Court?
<b>Public Opinion</b>	8. Restoring Public Trust 22. Read Polls, Heed America	<b>Separation of Powers</b>	4. Checks and Balances
<b>Race/Racial Discrimination</b>	9. Paradox of Integration 10. Affirmative on Affirmative Action 14. Race and the Constitution 16. Taking Affirmative Action Apart	<b>Sex/Sex Discrimination</b>	See Gender/Gender Discrimination
		<b>Supreme Court</b>	5. Judiciary 15. Let Us Pray 30. In Whose Court? 31. Supreme Court's Right Turn
		<b>Term Limits</b>	18. Term Limits

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# Foundations of American Politics

- Basic Documents (Articles 1–5)
- Contemporary Views and Values (Articles 6–13)
- Constitutional and Legal Matters (Articles 14–20)



This unit treats some of the less concrete aspects of the American political system—historical ideals, contemporary ideas and values, and constitutional and legal issues. These dimensions of the system are not immune to change. Instead, they interact with the wider political environment in which they exist and are modified ac-

cordingly. Usually this interaction is a gradual process, but sometimes events foster more rapid change.

Human beings can be distinguished from other species by their ability to think and reason at relatively high levels of abstraction. In turn, ideas, ideals, values, and principles can and do play important roles in politics.

Most Americans value ideas and ideals such as democracy, freedom, equal opportunity, and justice. Yet the precise meanings of these terms and the best ways of implementing them are the subject of much dispute in the political arena. Such ideas and ideals, as well as disputes about their “real” meanings, are important elements in the practice of American politics.

Although the selections in this unit span more than 200 years, they are clearly related to one another. Understanding contemporary political viewpoints is easier if the ideals and principles of the past are also taken into account. In addition, we can better appreciate the significance of historic documents such as the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution if we are familiar with contemporary ideas and perspectives. The interaction of different ideas and values plays an important part in the continuing development of the “foundations” of the American political system.

The first section includes several historic documents from the eighteenth century. The first is the Declaration of Independence. Written in 1776, it proclaims the Founders’ views of why independence from England was justified and, in so doing, identifies certain “unalienable” rights that “all men” are said to possess. The second document, the Constitution of 1787, remains in effect to this day. It provides an organizational blueprint for the structure of American national government, outlines the federal relationship between the national government and the states, and expresses limitations on what government can do. Twenty-seven amendments have been added to the original Constitution in two centuries. In addition to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, the first section includes three selections from *The Federalist Papers*, a series of newspaper articles written in support of the proposed new Constitution. Appearing in 1787 and 1788, *The Federalist Papers* treated various provisions of the new Constitution and suggested that putting the Constitution into effect would bring about good government.

The second section treats contemporary political ideas and viewpoints. As selections in this section should illustrate, efforts to apply or act on political beliefs in the context of concrete circumstances often lead to interest-

ing commentary and debate. “Liberal” and “conservative” are two labels often used in American political discussions, but political views and values are far more complex than these two terms capture.

Selections in the third section show that constitutional and legal issues and interpretations are tied to historic principles as well as to contemporary ideas and values. It has been suggested that, throughout American history, almost every important political question has at one time or another appeared as a constitutional or legal issue.

The historic documents and some other selections in this unit can be more difficult to understand than most articles in other units. Some of them may have to be read and reread carefully to be fully appreciated. But to grapple with the important material treated here is to come to grips with a variety of conceptual blueprints for the American political system. To ignore the theoretical issues raised would be to bypass an important element of American politics today.

### Looking Ahead: Challenge Questions

What do you think would surprise the Founding Fathers most about the values and ideals held by Americans today?

Which ideals, ideas, and values seem likely to remain central to American politics, and which seem likely to erode and gradually disappear?

To what rights do you think all Americans are entitled? Do all Americans have these rights now? If not, why not?

What provisions of the U.S. Constitution do you think are particularly wise and desirable? Which provisions, including ones that have been superseded by amendments, seem unwise and undesirable?

What makes constitutional interpretation and reinterpretation necessary in the American political system? Why, at the same time, do the very words of the Constitution remain a respected foundation of the entire system of government?

What groups seem most likely to become visible, active forces on the American political scene in the way that blacks and women have in the recent past? Why?

Do you consider yourself a conservative, a liberal, a socialist, a reactionary, or what? Why?



# The Declaration of Independence

WHEN in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.—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.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.—That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.—He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.—He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.—He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.—He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.—He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.—He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the meantime exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.—He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.—He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.—He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.—He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to harass our people, and eat out their substance. He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.—He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.—He has combined with others to

subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:—For quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:—For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:—For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:—For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:—For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:—For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences:—For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:—For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:—For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.—He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.—He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.—He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.—He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.—He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions. In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince, whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people. Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.—

WE, THEREFORE, the Representatives of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be FREE AND INDEPENDENT STATES; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.—And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor.