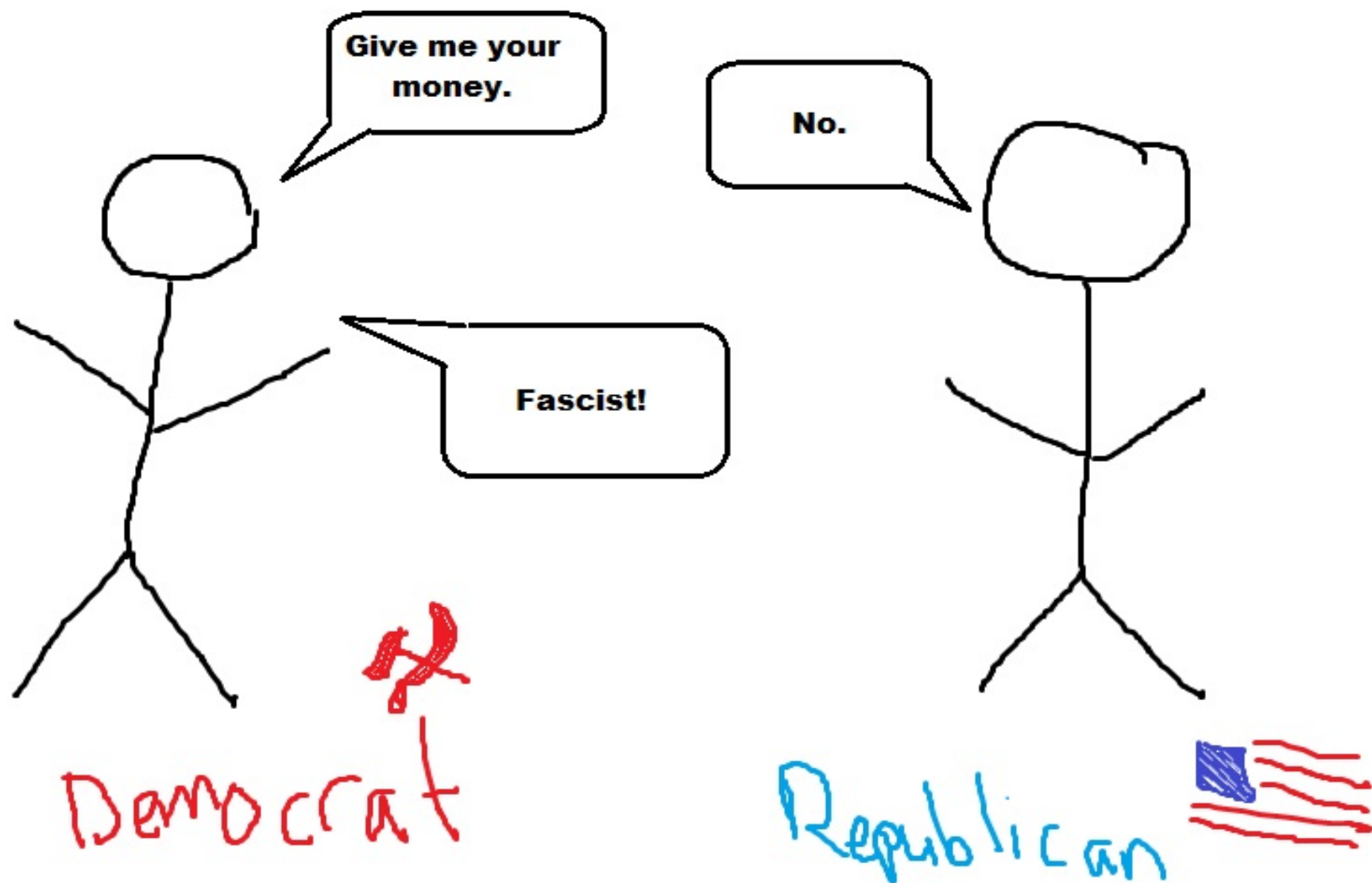


Dye & Sparrow: **Politics in America**

Chapter 1:

POLITICS: Who Gets What, When, and How

Simplified American Politics



Questions about politics:

- 1) When you see the word “politics” what comes to mind?
- 2) What words pop into your head?

*Here's what pops into mine...

“Politics: “Poli” a Latin word meaning “many” and

“tics” meaning “bloodsucking creatures”.



So politics literally means “many bloodsucking creatures” right?

I'm joking obviously BUT...it does
get you thinking right? LOL

What comes to your mind when
thinking of that word?

Politics and Political Science

What is politics?

According to Dye (p3) it is “the process which determines who gets what, when and how” (H. Lasswell)

Questions Political Scientists study

- Who governs?
- By what means?
- For what ends?



Take away quote: “The study of politics is the study of influence and the influential. . . .The influential are those who get the most of what there is to get. Those who get the most are elite; the rest are mass.”

Harold Lasswell

Who Participates in Governing?

Governmental

President and White House staff
Executive Office of the President,
including Office of Management and Budget
Cabinet officers and executive
agency heads
Bureaucrats

Congress members
Congressional staff

Supreme Court justices
Federal appellate and district judges

Nongovernmental

Voters
Campaign contributors
Interest-group leaders and
members
Party leaders and party
identifiers in the electorate
Corporate and union leaders
Media leaders, including press
and television anchors and
reporters
Lawyers and lobbyists
Think tanks and foundation
personnel

When & How: Governing Institutions

Constitution

- Separation of powers
- Checks and balances
- Federalism
- Judicial review
- Amendment procedures
- Electoral system

Presidency

Congress

- Senate
- House of Representatives

Courts

- Supreme Court
- Appellate courts
- District courts

Parties

- National committees
- Conventions
- State and local organizations

Media

- Television
- Press
- Internet

When & How: Processes of Governing

Socialization and learning
Opinion formation
Party identification
Voting
Contributing
Joining organizations
Talking politics

Running for office
Campaigning
Polling
Fund raising
Parading and demonstrating
Nonviolent direct action
Violence

Lobbying
Logrolling
Deciding
Budgeting
Implementing and evaluating
Adjudicating

Agenda setting
News making
Interpreting
Persuading

What: Public Policy Outcomes

Civil liberties
Civil rights
Equality
Criminal justice
Welfare
Social Security
Health
Education
Energy

Environmental protection
Economic development
Economic stability
Taxation
Government spending
and deficits
National defense
Foreign affairs
Homeland Security

Question: What is government?

a. Dye (p 5) says it is an “organization extending to the whole society that can legitimately use force to carry out its decisions”

B. Turetzky says government is an “institution that makes and enforces the law.” He adds that it “has a monopoly on the use of force and that force sometimes has to be used to enforce the law”

Purposes of Government

What are the purposes of government?

*In the Preamble to the Constitution, the Founding Fathers created a pretty good list...

1. To establish justice and insure domestic tranquility

2. To provide for the common defense



Purposes of Government

What are the purposes of government?

3. *To promote the general welfare*

4. *To secure the blessings of liberty*



Power-Some questions...

Question 1:

-What is power? Why is it so essential in politics?

Answer:

-Dye essentially says it is the ability to control and shape events. To get someone to do what they wouldn't ordinarily do...

This is where government comes in. It has the POWER to force you to do what you don't want to do...we grant governments this power...

Question: do you guys see any tension or potential problems with governments having the power to make and enforce laws?

Democracy

What is democracy?



Democratic Ideals:

- Greeks argued it was about people governing themselves (“rule by many”)
- Democratic ideals include individual dignity, equality, participation in DM, majority rule
- Our founders didn’t like Greek style democracy AT ALL...Why not?

Paradox of Democracy

“Paradox of democracy”—i.e., the potential for conflict between majority rule and individual freedom?

Question: How did Madison and the other founding fathers try and deal with this potentially disastrous problem?

Here's an example →



Government Power

How do these different types of government power differ from each other? (See Dye, pp13-14)



- Totalitarianism
- Authoritarianism
- Constitutional government

Direct Democracy

Question: What is Direct Democracy (“pure democracy”) and how practical is it in such a large, extended republic like ours?



Representative Democracy

Characteristics of representative democracies:

- Representatives are selected by vote of all the people.
- Elections are open to competition.
- Candidates and voters can freely express themselves.
- Representatives are selected periodically.



Who is *really* in charge?

One of the central arguments in the field of political science centers on who is really in charge of the system, who really has the power. Some say that elites have all the power, whilst others say the people exercise power through group competition. Lets take a quick look at these perspectives...

The Elitist Perspective

What is the Elitist Perspective?

-Dye (p 17): It is a “political system in which power is concentrated in the hands of a relatively small group of individuals or institutions”

According to Dye, Elitism is characterized by:

- An elite being inevitable in any social organization
- The “few” having the power and the “many” not having it. Elites make decisions, not the many
- Only a few thousand people directly participating in decisions about war, taxes, employment, etc (Dye, p16)
- Elite status being open to talented people and the idea that elites aren't JUST self-serving...

The Pluralist Perspective

What is the pluralist perspective?

-Dye (p18): It is the idea “that democracy can be achieved through competition among multiple organized groups and that individuals can participate in politics through group memberships and elections”



Pluralism is characterized by:

- Competition
- Bargaining
- Compromise

Discussion Question: Is America run by a few big interests looking out only for themselves or is it run for the benefit of all the people? That is, who is really in charge?

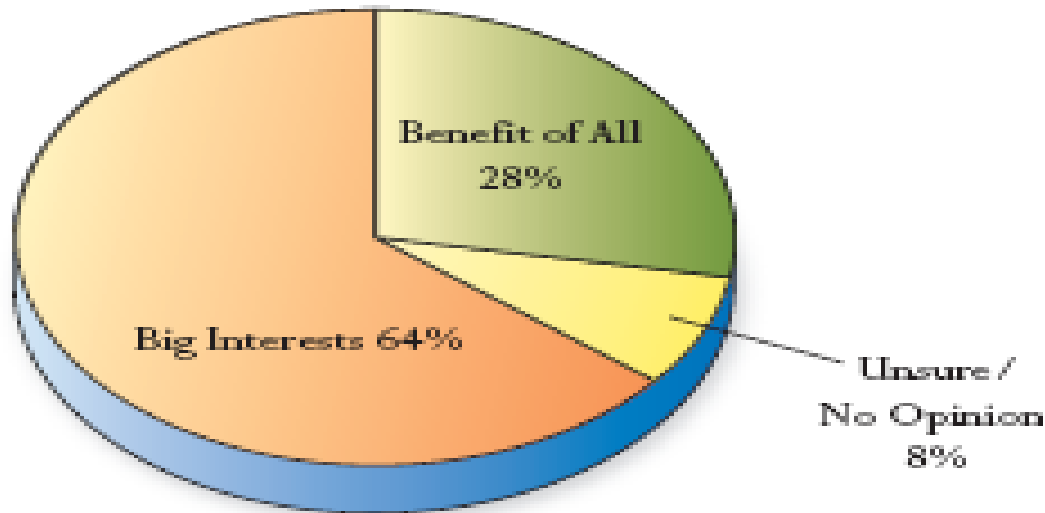


Figure 1.2 Public Opinion About Who Runs the Country

Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?

Source: CBS/New York Time Poll, July 11, 2004, as reputed in The Polling Report, www.pollingreport.com.

Practice Quiz

- 1) According to Dye/Turetzky politics is
- a. the study of political science
 - b. the study of who gets what, when and how
 - c. the analysis of conflict
 - d. the analysis of local, state, and federal governments

2) According to Dye, only the government has

- a. the legitimate right to use force to uphold the law
- b. the right to make decisions regarding welfare
- c. the right to maintain security
- d. the right to hold elections

3) Protections against the potential for the majority to oppress the minority include:

- a. checks and balances
- b. separation of powers
- c. federalism
- d. all of the above

4) The idea that all societies are divided into the few who have power and the many that do not would be consistent with

a. pluralism

b. classical liberalism

c. interest group theory

d. elitism

5) The idea that democracy can be achieved in a large society by bargaining, compromise, and competition b/n interest groups would be consistent with

- a. pluralism
- b. classical liberalism
- c. elitism
- d. systems theory

John Stossel's Politically Incorrect Guide to
Politics-"Do you believe in Magic?"