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Freedom, Order, or Equality?

★ **The Globalization of American Government**

★ **The Purposes of Government**

Maintaining Order
Providing Public Goods
Promoting Equality

★ **A Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Government**

★ **The Concepts of Freedom, Order, and Equality**

Freedom
Order
Equality

★ **Two Dilemmas of Government**

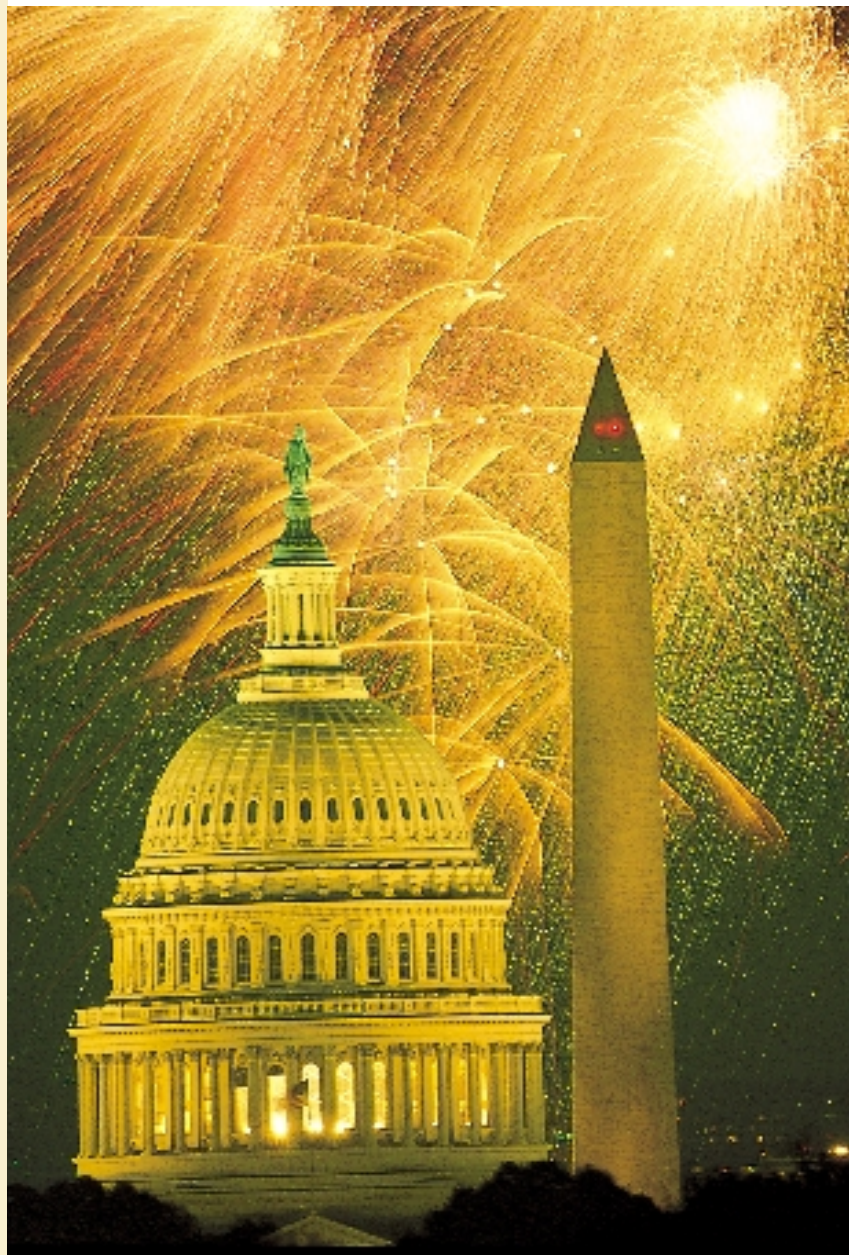
The Original Dilemma:
Freedom Versus Order
The Modern Dilemma:
Freedom Versus Equality

★ **Ideology and the Scope of Government**

Totalitarianism
Socialism
Capitalism
Libertarianism
Anarchism
Liberals and Conservatives—
The Narrow Middle

★ **American Political Ideologies and the Purpose of Government**

Liberals Versus Conservatives:
The New Differences
A Two-Dimensional Classification
of Ideologies





“ILOVEYOU,” said the e-mail message. “Kindly check the attached LOVELETTER coming from me.” Thousands of intrigued men and women around the globe eagerly clicked the attachment—only to have the malicious love-bug virus destroy their computer files.

ILOVEYOU messages popped up on e-mail systems around the world on May 3, 2000. The virus proved especially devastating in the United States, wiping out files of private citizens, shutting down e-mail systems across the country, and costing untold millions of dollars in damage. On May 5, the Federal Bureau of Investigation acted under the U.S. Computer Abuse Act. By May 8, FBI agents were in Manila when Philippine investigators raided an apartment to which they traced the virus.

The police eventually identified a twenty-three-year-old computer school dropout as the love-bug’s creator. They couldn’t charge him, however, because the Philippines had no law against computer hacking. Two months later, the police charged him under a 1998 law regulating the use of “access devices” such as credit cards and passwords.¹ Frustrated FBI agents left the Philippines knowing that they had helped find the culprit but could not bring him to justice.

This vignette illustrates a facet of **globalization**—the increasing interdependence of citizens and nations across the world—and the challenges that globalization presents to American government. Someone in a country halfway around the world caused damage to U.S. companies and distress to American citizens, and our government could do little about it. In this book, we will deal with the many effects of globalization on U.S. government, but we will also point out important effects of U.S. politics on government elsewhere.

The love-bug virus incident also raises the issue of the purpose and value of government at home, which is our main interest in this text. We have strong laws against computer hackers and—with a judge-issued warrant—the FBI can use its surveillance system to search the e-mail of a suspected criminal or terrorist. The FBI’s software, called Carnivore, is typically installed at an Internet provider to record to-and-from communications traffic, but it can also capture and archive all messages sent via the Internet provider.² Although the British government exercises even more sweeping powers over e-mail communications, some say that the FBI’s wiretapping power over the Internet is too great.³ They see the Internet as embodying personal freedom and would keep it virtually free of government regulation. Others see a different technological threat; they fear the consequences of the “digital divide”—the greater use of Internet technology by wealthy, white, urban, and highly educated segments of society—that will

globalization

The increasing interdependence of citizens and nations across the world.

leave other segments of society far behind.⁴ How much in the form of government subsidies, if any, should government provide to close the digital divide?

Which is better: to live under a government that allows individuals complete freedom to do whatever they please or to live under one that enforces strict law and order? *Which is better:* to let all citizens keep the same share of their income or to tax wealthier people at a higher rate to fund programs for poorer people? These questions pose dilemmas tied to opposing political philosophies that place different values on freedom, order, and equality.

This book explains American government and politics in light of these dilemmas. It does more than explain the workings of our government; it encourages you to think about what government should—and should not—do. And it judges the American government against democratic ideals, encouraging you to think about how government should make its decisions. As its title implies, *The Challenge of Democracy* argues that good government often involves difficult choices.

College students frequently say that American government and politics are hard to understand. In fact, many people voice the same complaint. More than 60 percent of a national sample interviewed after the 1996 presidential election agreed with the statement “Politics and government seem so complicated that a person like me can’t understand what’s going on.”⁵ With this book, we hope to improve your understanding of “what’s going on” by analyzing the norms, or values, that people use to judge political events. Our purpose is not to preach what people ought to favor in making policy decisions; it is to teach what values are at stake.

Teaching without preaching is not easy; no one can completely exclude personal values from political analysis. But our approach minimizes the problem by concentrating on the dilemmas that confront governments when they are forced to choose between important policies that threaten equally cherished values, such as freedom of speech and personal security.

Every government policy reflects a choice between conflicting values. We want you to understand this idea, to understand that all government policies reinforce certain values (norms) at the expense of others. We want you to interpret policy issues (for example, should assisted suicide go unpunished?) with an understanding of the fundamental values in question (freedom of action versus order and protection of life) and the broader political context (liberal or conservative politics).

By looking beyond the specifics to the underlying normative principles, you should be able to make more sense out of politics. Our framework for analysis does not encompass all the complexities of American government, but it should help your knowledge grow by improving your comprehension of political information. We begin by considering the basic purposes of government. In short, why do we need it?

THE GLOBALIZATION OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Most people do not like being told what to do. Fewer still like being coerced into acting a certain way. Yet, billions of people in countries across the world willingly submit to the coercive power of government. They accept laws that state on which side of the road to drive, how many wives (or husbands) they can have, what constitutes a contract, how to dispose of human waste—and how much they must pay to support the government that makes these coercive laws.

government

The legitimate use of force to control human behavior; also, the organization or agency authorized to exercise that force.

national sovereignty

“A political entity’s externally recognized right to exercise final authority over its affairs.”

In the first half of the twentieth century, people thought of government mainly in territorial terms. Indeed, a standard definition of **government** was the legitimate use of force—including firearms, imprisonment, and execution—within specified geographical boundaries to control human behavior. For over three centuries, since the Peace of Westphalia in 1648 ended the Thirty Years War in Europe, international relations and diplomacy have been based on the principle of **national sovereignty**, defined as “a political entity’s externally recognized right to exercise final authority over its affairs.”⁶ Simply put, national sovereignty means that each national government has the right to govern its people as it wishes, without interference from other nations.

Some scholars argued strongly early in the twentieth century that a body of international law controlled the actions of supposedly sovereign nations, but their argument was essentially theoretical.⁷ In the practice of international relations, there was *no* sovereign power over nations. Each enjoyed complete independence to govern its territory without interference from other nations. Although the League of Nations and later the United Nations were supposed to introduce supranational order into the world, even these international organizations explicitly respected national sovereignty as the guiding principle of international relations. The U.N. Charter, Article 2.1, states: “The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members.”

As we enter into a world of increasing globalization in the twenty-first century, human rights weigh more heavily in international politics. Consider what Kofi-Annan, secretary general of the United Nations, said in support of NATO airstrikes against Serbian forces to stop the ethnic cleansing in Kosovo. Speaking before the United Nations Commission on Human Rights on April 7, 1999, the secretary-general warned rogue nations that they could no longer “hide” behind the U.N. Charter. He said that the protection of human rights must “take precedence over concerns of state sovereignty.”⁸

The world’s new concern with human rights is not limited to rogue nations; all nations are grappling with international law. In late 2000, the Japanese government admitted violating a 1907 Hague Convention on prisoners’ rights in wartime and gave a cash settlement to survivors of 1,000 Chinese prisoners forced to work under harsh conditions in World War II—the first time that Japan awarded compensation for a violation of international law.⁹ National laws in Europe are increasingly being brought into line with laws of the European Union. For example, rulings of the European Court of Human Rights in 1999 led Britain to end its ban on gay men and women in the military.¹⁰

Can You Explain Why...

the United States might oppose an international criminal court?

Our government, you might be surprised to learn, is worried about this trend of holding nations accountable to international law. In fact, the United States failed to sign the 1998 treaty to create an International Criminal Court that would define and try crimes against humanity until the last month of Clinton’s presidency, when he signed it over advisors’ objections and sent it to a likely death under the Bush presidency.¹¹

Why would the United States oppose such an international court? One reason is its concern that U.S. soldiers stationed abroad might be arrested and tried in that court.¹² Another reason is the death penalty, which has been abolished by more than half the countries in the world and all countries in the European Union. Indeed, in 1996, the International

 ★
Sealand Web site

The Principality of Sealand is perched on a World War II military platform approximately six miles off the south-eastern coast of England. Located in international waters, the platform was acquired in 1967 by Paddy Roy Bates, a retired British officer who declared it a sovereign nation and lived there with his family for decades. In 2000, he leased it to an Internet firm, HavenCo, headed by an American citizen. HavenCo (<http://www.havenco.com>) expects customers “who wish to keep their e-mail safe from government subpoenas as well as other businesses seeking to avoid regulation, like international electronic commerce, banking and gambling.”



Commission of Jurists condemned our death penalty as “arbitrarily and racially discriminatory,” and there is a concerted campaign across Europe to force the sovereign United States of America to terminate capital punishment.¹³

While the United States is the world’s most powerful nation, it is not immune to globalization (see Politics in a Changing World 1.1) and to the erosion of national sovereignty. Ironically, our military strength qualifies the United States to be the world’s enforcer of international decisions. As the world’s cop, should the United States be above international law if it finds its *own* sovereignty threatened by nations that don’t share *our* values? What course of action should we follow if this situation occurs?

Although our text is about American national government, it recognizes the growing impact of international politics and world opinion on U.S. politics. The Cold War era, of course, had a profound effect on domestic politics because the nation spent heavily on the military and restricted trading with communist countries. Now, we are closely tied through trade to former enemies (we now import more goods from communist China than from France and Britain combined) and thoroughly embedded in a worldwide economic, social, and political network. (See Chapter 20, “Global Policy,” for an extended treatment of the economic and social dimensions of globalization.) More than ever, we must discuss American politics while casting an eye abroad to see how foreign affairs affect our government and how American politics affects government in other nations.

**THE PURPOSES
OF GOVERNMENT**

Governments at any level require citizens to surrender some freedom as part of being governed. Although some governments minimize their infringements on personal freedom, no government has as a goal the maximization of personal freedom. Governments exist to control; *to govern* means “to control.” Why do people surrender their freedom to this

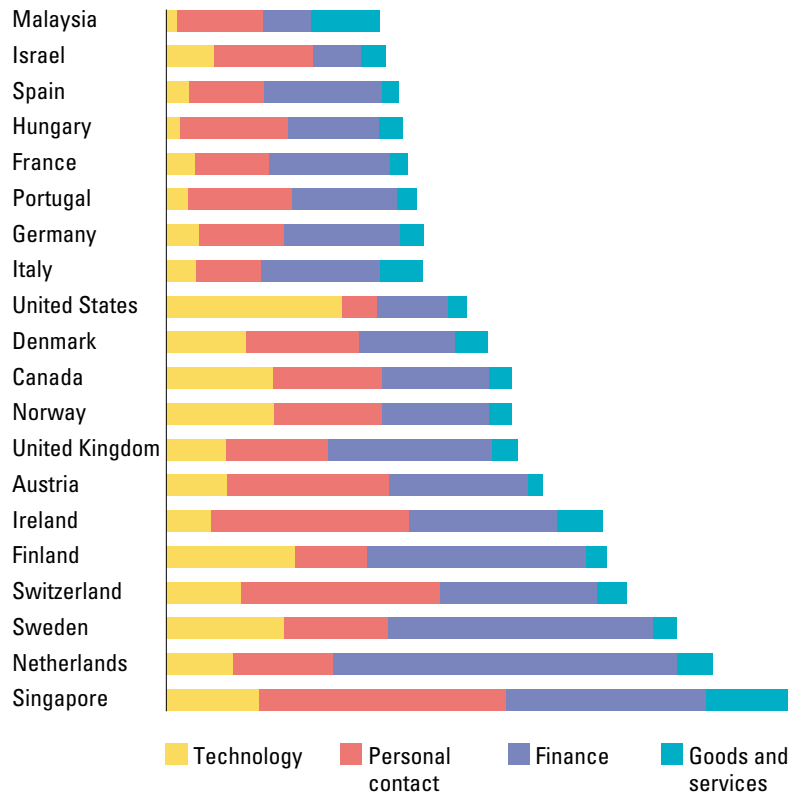
★ politics in a changing world

1.1 The “Globalization” of Nations

The text presents a working definition of globalization as “the increasing interdependence of citizens and nations across the world.” But obviously, citizens and nations differ in their degree of global interdependence. Scholars measure the extent of globalization in different nations by combining various indicators of personal contact across national borders, international financial transactions, and use of international communication through technology. Here is a ranking of the “global top twenty” according to a recent study. Although the United States has clearly been catching up in the globalization process, it does not rank among the most globalized nations. First place goes to Singapore, an international city-state in southeast Asia located astride a confluence of cultures. The next eight countries are core countries in Western Europe, but even Canada

edges out the United States on global indicators. Relative to other globalized nations, Americans have little personal contact with people in other countries. Of course, the large population of the United States helps its domestic self-sufficiency, but the process of globalization seems inexorable.

Source: “The Global Top Twenty,” Foreign Policy, January–February 2001, p. 58. Nations were scored on the basis of four sets of indicators: (1) Goods and services: convergence of domestic prices with international prices, and international trade as a share of gross domestic product (see Chapter 18). (2) Finance: Inward- and outward-directed foreign investment, portfolio capital flows, and income payments and receipts as shares of GDP. (3) Personal contacts: Cross-border remittances and other transfers as a share of GDP; minutes of international phone calls per capita, and number of international travelers per capita. (4) Technology: Percentage of population online, number of internet hosts per capita, and number of secure servers per capita.



★ Leviathan, Hobbes's All-Powerful Sovereign

This engraving is from the 1651 edition of *Leviathan*, by Thomas Hobbes. It shows Hobbes's sovereign brandishing a sword in one hand and the scepter of justice in the other. He watches over an orderly town, made peaceful by his absolute authority. But note that the sovereign's body is composed of tiny images of his subjects. He exists only through them. Hobbes explains that such government power can be created only if people "confer all their power and strength upon one man, or upon one assembly of men, that may reduce all their wills, by plurality of voices, unto one will."



control? To obtain the benefits of government. Throughout history, government has served two major purposes: maintaining order (preserving life and protecting property) and providing public goods. More recently, some governments have pursued a third purpose: promoting equality, which is more controversial.

Maintaining Order

order

The rule of law to preserve life and protect property. Maintaining order is the oldest purpose of government.

Maintaining order is the oldest objective of government. **Order** in this context is rich with meaning. Let's start with "law and order." Maintaining order in this sense means establishing the rule of law to preserve life and protect property. To the seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679), preserving life was the most important function of government. In his classic philosophical treatise, *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes described life without government as life in a "state of nature." Without rules, people would live as predators do, stealing and killing for their personal benefit. In Hobbes's classic phrase, life in a state of nature would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." He believed that a single ruler, or sovereign, must possess unquestioned authority to guarantee the safety of the weak, to protect them from the attacks of the strong. Hobbes named his all-powerful government Leviathan, after a biblical sea monster. He believed that complete obedience to Leviathan's strict laws was a small price to pay for the security of living in a civil society.

Most of us can only imagine what a state of nature would be like. But in some parts of the world, whole nations have experienced lawlessness. It occurred in Somalia in 1992 after the central government collapsed; in Haiti in 1994 after the elected president had to flee; and in Bosnia in 1995

after the former Yugoslavia collapsed and Croats, Serbs, and Muslims engaged in ethnic war. In each case, U.S. forces intervened to prevent starvation and restore a semblance of order. Throughout history, authoritarian rulers have used people's fear of civil disorder to justify taking power. Ironically, the ruling group itself—whether monarchy, aristocracy, or political party—then became known as the *established order*.

Hobbes's conception of life in the cruel state of nature led him to view government primarily as a means of guaranteeing people's survival. Other theorists, taking survival for granted, believed that government protected order by preserving private property (goods and land owned by individuals). Foremost among them was John Locke (1632–1704), an English philosopher. In *Two Treatises on Government* (1690), he wrote that the protection of life, liberty, and property was the basic objective of government. His thinking strongly influenced the Declaration of Independence; it is reflected in the Declaration's famous phrase identifying "Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness" as "unalienable Rights" of citizens under government.

Not everyone believes that the protection of private property is a valid objective of government. The German philosopher Karl Marx (1818–1883) rejected the private ownership of property used in the production of goods or services. Marx's ideas form the basis of **communism**, a complex theory that gives ownership of all land and productive facilities to the people—in effect, to the government. In line with communist theory, the 1997 constitution of the former Soviet Union declared that the nation's land, minerals, waters, and forests "are the exclusive property of the state." In addition, "The state owns the basic means of production in industry, construction, and agriculture; means of transport and communication; the banks, the property of state-run trade organizations and public utilities, and other state-run undertakings."¹⁴

Years after the Soviet Union collapsed, the Russian public remains deeply split over changing the old communist-era constitution to permit the private ownership of land. Even outside the formerly communist societies, the extent to which government protects private property is a political issue that forms the basis of much ideological debate.

Providing Public Goods

After governments have established basic order, they can pursue other ends. Using their coercive powers, they can tax citizens to raise money to spend on **public goods**, which are benefits and services that are available to everyone—such as education, sanitation, and parks. Public goods benefit all citizens but are not likely to be produced by the voluntary acts of individuals. The government of ancient Rome, for example, built aqueducts to carry fresh water from the mountains to the city. Road building was another public good provided by the Roman government, which also used the roads to move its legions and to protect the established order.

Government action to provide public goods can be controversial. During President James Monroe's administration (1817–1825), many people thought that building the Cumberland Road (between Cumberland, Maryland, and Wheeling, West Virginia) was not a proper function of the national government, the Romans notwithstanding. Over time, the scope

communism

A political system in which, in theory, ownership of all land and productive facilities is in the hands of the people, and all goods are equally shared. The production and distribution of goods are controlled by an authoritarian government.

public goods

Benefits and services, such as parks and sanitation, that benefit all citizens but are not likely to be produced voluntarily by individuals.

Rosa Parks: She Sat for Equality

Rosa Parks had just finished a day's work as a seamstress and was sitting in the front of a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, going home. A white man claimed her seat, which he could do according to the law in December 1955. When she refused to move and was arrested, angry blacks, led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., began a boycott of the Montgomery bus company.



of government functions in the United States has expanded. During President Dwight Eisenhower's administration in the 1950s, the federal government outdid the Romans' noble road building. Despite his basic conservatism, Eisenhower launched the massive Interstate Highway System, at a cost of \$27 billion (in 1950s dollars). Yet some government enterprises that have been common in other countries—running railroads, operating coal mines, generating electric power—are politically controversial or even unacceptable in the United States. People disagree about how far the government ought to go in using its power to tax to provide public goods and services and how much of that realm should be handled by private business for profit.

Promoting Equality

The promotion of equality has not always been a major objective of government. It has gained prominence only in this century, in the aftermath of industrialization and urbanization. Confronted by the paradox of poverty amid plenty, some political leaders in European nations pioneered extensive government programs to improve life for the poor. Under the emerging concept of the welfare state, government's role expanded to provide individuals with medical care, education, and a guaranteed income, "from cradle to grave." Sweden, Britain, and other nations adopted welfare programs aimed at reducing social inequalities. This relatively new purpose of government has been by far the most controversial. People often oppose taxation for public goods (building roads and schools, for example) because of its cost alone. They oppose more strongly taxation for government programs to promote economic and social equality on principle.

The key issue here is government's role in redistributing income, taking from the wealthy to give to the poor. Charity (voluntary giving to the poor)

has a strong basis in Western religious traditions; using the power of the state to support the poor does not. (In his nineteenth-century novels, Charles Dickens dramatized how government power was used to imprison the poor, not to support them.) Using the state to redistribute income was originally a radical idea, set forth by Marx as the ultimate principle of developed communism: “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs.”¹⁵ This extreme has never been realized in any government, not even in communist states. But over time, taking from the rich to help the needy has become a legitimate function of most governments.

That function is not without controversy, however. Especially since the Great Depression of the 1930s, the government’s role in redistributing income to promote economic equality has been a major source of policy debate in the United States. For example, after the Republicans won control of Congress in 1994, a fierce partisan battle was waged over the Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) program, created by the Democrats in 1935. The nation’s main cash welfare program, AFDC issued government checks to low-income mothers to help them care for their children. The Republicans had long argued that the program was inappropriate and ineffective, and in 1996 they ended it over the strenuous objections of Democrats.

Government can also promote social equality through policies that do not redistribute income. For example, it can regulate social behavior to enforce equality, as it did when the Texas Supreme Court cleared the way for homosexuals to serve in the Dallas police department in 1993. Policies that regulate social behavior, like those that redistribute income, inevitably clash with the value of personal freedom.

A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR ANALYZING GOVERNMENT

Citizens have very different views of how vigorously they want government to maintain order, provide public goods, and promote equality. Of the three objectives, providing for public goods usually is less controversial than maintaining order or promoting equality. After all, government spending for highways, schools, and parks carries benefits for nearly every citizen. Moreover, services merely cost money. The cost of maintaining order and promoting equality is greater than money; it usually means a tradeoff in basic values.

To understand government and the political process, you must be able to recognize these tradeoffs and identify the basic values they entail. Just as people sit back from a wide-screen motion picture to gain perspective, to understand American government you need to take a broad view, a view much broader than that offered by examining specific political events. You need to use political concepts.

A concept is a generalized idea of a set of items or thoughts. It groups various events, objects, or qualities under a common classification or label. The framework that guides this book consists of five concepts that figure prominently in political analysis. We regard the five concepts as especially important to a broad understanding of American politics, and we use them repeatedly throughout the book. This framework will help you evaluate political events long after you have read this text.

The five concepts that we emphasize deal with the fundamental issues of what government tries to do and how it decides to do it. The concepts that relate to what government tries to do are *order*, *freedom*, and *equality*. All governments by definition value order; maintaining order is part of the meaning of government. Most governments at least claim to preserve individual freedom while they maintain order, although they vary widely in the extent to which they succeed. Few governments even profess to guarantee equality, and governments differ greatly in policies that pit equality against freedom. Our conceptual framework should help you evaluate the extent to which the United States pursues all three values through its government.

How government chooses the proper mix of order, freedom, and equality in its policymaking has to do with the process of choice. We evaluate the American governmental process using two models of democratic government: *majoritarian* and *pluralist*. Many governments profess to be democracies. Whether they are or are not depends on their (and our) meaning of the term. Even countries that Americans agree are democracies—for example, the United States and Britain—differ substantially in the type of democracy they practice. We can use our conceptual models of democratic government both to classify the type of democracy practiced in the United States and to evaluate the government's success in fulfilling that model.

The five concepts can be organized into two groups.

- Concepts that identify the values pursued by government:

Freedom

Order

Equality

- Concepts that describe models of democratic government:

Majoritarian democracy

Pluralist democracy

The rest of this chapter examines freedom, order, and equality as conflicting values pursued by government. Chapter 2 discusses majoritarian democracy and pluralist democracy as alternative institutional models for implementing democratic government.

THE CONCEPTS OF FREEDOM, ORDER, AND EQUALITY

These three terms—*freedom*, *order*, and *equality*—have a range of connotations in American politics. Both *freedom* and *equality* are positive terms that politicians have learned to use to their own advantage. Consequently, freedom and equality mean different things to different people at different times, depending on the political context in which they are used. Order, on the other hand, has negative connotations for many people because it symbolizes government intrusion into private lives. Except during periods of social strife, few politicians in Western democracies call openly for more order. Because all governments infringe on freedom, we examine that concept first.

The Four Freedoms



Norman Rockwell became famous in the 1940s for the humorous, homespun covers he painted for the *Saturday Evening Post*, a weekly magazine. Inspired by an address to Congress in which President Roosevelt outlined his goals for world civilization, Rockwell painted *The Four Freedoms*, which were reproduced in the *Post*. Their immense popularity led the government to print posters of the illustrations for the Treasury Department's war

bond drive. The Office of War Information also re-produced *The Four Freedoms* and circulated the posters in schools, clubhouses, railroad stations, post offices, and other public buildings. Officials even had copies circulated on the European front to remind soldiers of the liberties for which they were fighting. It is said that no other paintings in the world have ever been reproduced or circulated in such vast numbers as *The Four Freedoms*.



Freedom of Speech



Freedom of Worship



Freedom from Fear



Freedom from Want



Roosevelt's "Four
Freedoms" Speech

freedom of

An absence of constraints on behavior, as in *freedom of speech*, or *freedom of religion*.

freedom from

Immunity, as in *freedom from want*.

Freedom

Freedom can be used in two major senses: freedom of and freedom from. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt used the word in both senses in a speech he made shortly before the United States entered World War II. He described four freedoms—freedom of religion, freedom of speech, freedom from fear, and freedom from want. The noted illustrator Norman Rockwell gave Americans a vision of these freedoms in a classic set of paintings published in the *Saturday Evening Post* (see Feature 1.1).

Freedom of is the absence of constraints on behavior; it means freedom to do something. In this sense, *freedom* is synonymous with *liberty*. Two of Rockwell's paintings—*Freedom of Worship* and *Freedom of Speech*—exemplify this type of freedom.

Freedom from is the message of the other paintings, *Freedom from Fear* and *Freedom from Want*. Here freedom suggests immunity from fear and want. In the modern political context, *freedom from* often symbolizes the fight against exploitation and oppression. The cry of the civil rights movement in the 1960s—"Freedom Now!"—conveyed this meaning. If you recognize that freedom in this sense means immunity from discrimination, you can see that it comes close to the concept of equality.¹⁶ In this book, we avoid using *freedom of* to mean "freedom from"; for this sense, we simply use *equality*. When we use *freedom*, we mean "freedom of."

Order

When *order* is viewed in the narrow sense of preserving life and protecting property, most citizens would concede the importance of maintaining order and thereby grant the need for government. For example, “domestic Tranquility” (order) is cited in the preamble to the Constitution. However, when *order* is viewed in the broader sense of preserving the social order, people are more likely to argue that maintaining order is not a legitimate function of government (see Compared with What? 1.1). *Social order* refers to established patterns of authority in society and to traditional modes of behavior. It is the accepted way of doing things. The prevailing social order prescribes behavior in many different areas: how students should dress in school (neatly, no purple hair) and behave toward their teachers (respectfully); under what conditions people should have sexual relations (married, different sexes); what the press should not publish (sexually explicit photographs); and what the proper attitude toward religion and country should be (reverential). It is important to remember that the social order can change. Today, perfectly respectable men and women wear bathing suits that would have caused a scandal at the turn of the century.

police power

The authority of a government to maintain order and safeguard citizens’ health, morals, safety, and welfare.

political equality

Equality in political decision making: one vote per person, with all votes counted equally.

A government can protect the established order by using its **police power**—its authority to safeguard residents’ safety, health, welfare, and morals. The extent to which government should use this authority is a topic of ongoing debate in the United States and is constantly being redefined by the courts. In the 1980s, many states used their police powers to pass legislation that banned smoking in public places. In the 1990s, a hot issue was whether government should control the dissemination of pornography on the Internet. There are those who fear the evolution of a police state—a government that uses its power to regulate nearly all aspects of behavior. For example, South Africa under the former apartheid regime had laws governing intermarriage between blacks and whites and prescribing where an interracial married couple could live. It is no accident that the chief law enforcement officer in South Africa was called the minister of law and *order*.

Most governments are inherently conservative; they tend to resist social change. But some governments have as a primary objective the restructuring of the social order. Social change is most dramatic when a government is overthrown through force and replaced by a revolutionary government. Societies can also work to change social patterns more gradually through the legal process. Our use of the term *order* in this book includes all three aspects: preserving life, protecting property, and maintaining traditional patterns of social relationships.

Equality

As with *freedom* and *order*, *equality* is used in different senses, to support different causes. **Political equality** in elections is easy to define: each citizen has one and only one vote. This basic concept is central to democratic theory—a subject explored at length in Chapter 2. But when some people advocate political equality, they mean more than one person, one vote. These people contend that an urban ghetto dweller and the chairman of the board of Microsoft are not politically equal, despite the fact that each



Video: *The Status of Women*

★ compared with what?

1.1 The Importance of Order as a Political Value

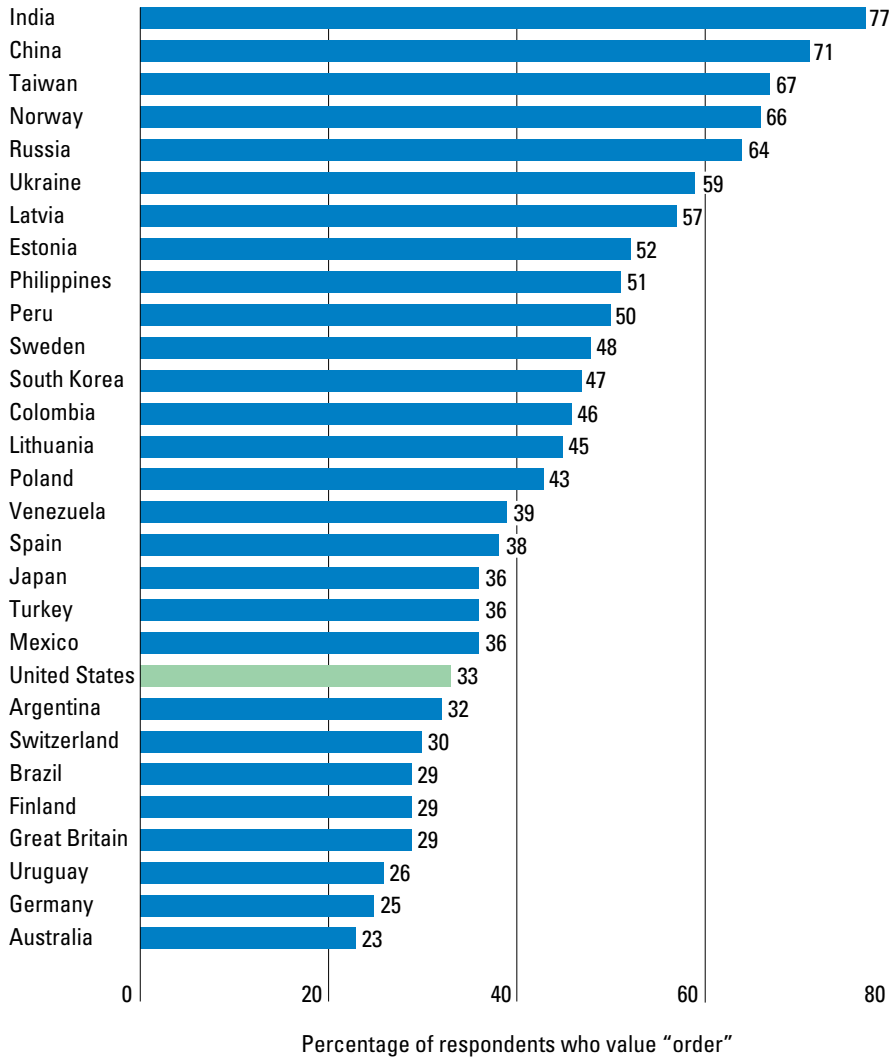
Compared with citizens in other nations, Americans do not value order very much. Surveys in the United States in twenty-eight other countries asked respondents to select which of the following four national goals was “very important.”

- Maintaining order in the nation
- Giving people more say in important government decisions

- Fighting rising prices
- Protecting freedom of speech

Just 33 percent of U.S. respondents thought that “maintaining order” was very important. Compared with citizens in other countries, Americans do not value government control of social behavior.

Source: World Values Survey, 1995–1997.



A Woman's Place Is in the Sky ★

During World War II, women served in the military in “auxiliary” corps. The U.S. Army had the Women’s Army Auxiliary Corps (shortened to WAC), and the Navy had the Women Appointed for Voluntary Emergency Service (WAVES). Women in these corps usually served in clerical and support units and were not trained for “men’s work.” In today’s military, women often occupy traditionally male roles—such as helicopter pilot.



social equality

Equality in wealth, education, and status.

equality of opportunity

The idea that each person is guaranteed the same chance to succeed in life.

equality of outcome

The concept that society must ensure that people are equal, and governments must design policies to redistribute wealth and status so that economic and social equality is actually achieved.

has one vote. Through occupation or wealth, some citizens are more able than others to influence political decisions. For example, wealthy citizens can exert influence by advertising in the mass media or by contacting friends in high places. Lacking great wealth and political connections, most citizens do not have such influence. Thus, some analysts argue that equality in wealth, education, and status—that is, **social equality**—is necessary for true political equality.

There are two routes to achieving social equality: providing equal opportunities and ensuring equal outcomes. **Equality of opportunity** means that each person has the same chance to succeed in life. This idea is deeply ingrained in American culture. The Constitution prohibits titles of nobility and does not make owning property a requirement for holding public office. Public schools and libraries are free to all. For many people, the concept of social equality is satisfied just by offering equal opportunities for advancement—it is not essential that people actually end up being equal. For others, true social equality means nothing less than **equality of outcome**.¹⁷ President Johnson expressed this view in 1965: “it is not enough just to open the gates of opportunity. . . . We seek . . . not just equality as a right and a theory but equality as a fact and equality as a result.”¹⁸ According to this outlook, it is not enough that governments provide people with equal opportunities; they must also design policies that redistribute wealth and status so that economic and social equality are actually achieved. In education, equality of outcome has led to federal laws that require comparable funding for men’s and women’s college sports. In business, equality of outcome has led to certain affirmative action programs to increase minority hiring and to the active recruitment of women, blacks, and Latinos to fill jobs. Equality of outcome has also produced federal laws that require employers to pay men and women equally for equal work. In recent years, the very concept of affirmative action has come under

rights

The benefits of government to which every citizen is entitled.

scrutiny. In 1996, for example, the University of California's Board of Regents ended its policy of using race and gender criteria in admitting students and hiring professors.

Some link equality of outcome with the concept of government-supported **rights**—the idea that every citizen is entitled to certain benefits of government, that government should guarantee its citizens adequate (if not equal) housing, employment, medical care, and income as a matter of right. If citizens are entitled to government benefits as a matter of right, government efforts to promote equality of outcome become legitimized.

Clearly, the concept of equality of outcome is quite different from that of equality of opportunity, and it requires a much greater degree of government activity. It also clashes more directly with the concept of freedom. By taking from one to give to another—which is necessary for the redistribution of income and status—the government clearly creates winners and losers. The winners may believe that justice has been served by the redistribution. The losers often feel strongly that their freedom to enjoy their income and status has suffered.

TWO DILEMMAS OF GOVERNMENT

The two major dilemmas facing American government at the end of the twentieth century stem from the oldest and the newest objectives of government—maintaining order and promoting equality. Both order and equality are important social values, but government cannot pursue either without sacrificing a third important value: individual freedom. The clash between freedom and order forms the original dilemma of government; the clash between freedom and equality forms the modern dilemma of government. Although the dilemmas are different, each involves trading some amount of freedom for another value.

The Original Dilemma: Freedom Versus Order

The conflict between freedom and order originates in the very meaning of government as the legitimate use of force to control human behavior. How much freedom must a citizen surrender to government? The dilemma has occupied philosophers for hundreds of years. In the eighteenth century, the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) wrote that the problem of devising a proper government “is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain free as before.”¹⁹

The original purpose of government was to protect life and property, to make citizens safe from violence. How well is the American government doing today in providing law and order to its citizens? More than 40 percent of the respondents in a 1997 national survey said that there were areas within a mile of their home where they were “afraid to walk alone at night.” Only 7 percent felt “more safe” in their community compared to the year before, and 33 percent felt “less safe.”²⁰ Simply put, Americans view crime (which has actually decreased in recent years) as a critical issue and do not believe that their government adequately protects them.

Can You Explain Why...
 crime rates rose in communist
 countries after they
 abandoned communism?

When the old communist governments still ruled in Eastern Europe, the climate of fear in urban America stood in stark contrast to the pervasive sense of personal safety in cities such as Moscow, Warsaw, and Prague. Then it was common to see old and young strolling late at night along the streets and in the parks of these communist cities. The formerly communist regimes gave their police great powers to control guns, monitor citizens' movements, and arrest and imprison suspicious people, which enabled them to do a better job of maintaining order. Communist governments deliberately chose order over freedom. But with the collapse of communism came the end of strict social order in all communist countries. Even in China, which still claims to be communist but where the majority of people now work in the private economy, there has been an increase in crime, notably violent crime. As relaxed state controls have created more motives and opportunities for crime a Chinese professor said, "It's become difficult to control people."²¹

The crisis over acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) adds a new twist to the dilemma of freedom versus order. Some health officials believe that AIDS, for which there is no known cure, is the greatest medical threat in the history of the United States. At the end of 1999, more than 733,000 cases of AIDS had been reported to the Center for Disease Control, and some 430,000 of these patients (59 percent) had died.²²

To combat the spread of the disease in the military, the Department of Defense began testing all applicants for the AIDS virus. Other government agencies have begun testing current employees. And some officials are calling for widespread mandatory testing within the private sector as well. Such programs are strongly opposed by those who believe they violate individual freedom. But those who are more afraid of the spread of AIDS than of an infringement on individual rights support aggressive government action to combat the disease.

The conflict between the values of freedom and order represents the original dilemma of government. In the abstract, people value both freedom and order; in real life, the two values inherently conflict. By definition, any policy that strengthens one value takes away from the other. The balance of freedom and order is an issue in enduring debates (whether to allow capital punishment) and contemporary challenges (how to deal with urban gang members who spray-paint walls; whether to allow art galleries to display sexually explicit photographs). And in a democracy, policy choices hinge on how much citizens value freedom and how much they value order.

The Modern Dilemma: Freedom Versus Equality

Popular opinion has it that freedom and equality go hand in hand. In reality, the two values usually clash when governments enact policies to promote social equality. Because social equality is a relatively recent government objective, deciding between policies that promote equality at the expense of freedom, and vice versa, is the modern dilemma of politics. Consider these examples:

- During the 1960s, Congress (through the Equal Pay Act) required employers to pay women and men the same rate for equal work. This

legislation means that some employers are forced to pay women more than they would if their compensation policies were based on their free choice.

- During the 1970s, the courts ordered the busing of schoolchildren to achieve a fair distribution of blacks and whites in public schools. This action was motivated by concern for educational equality, but it also impaired freedom of choice.
- During the 1980s, some states passed legislation that went beyond the idea of equal pay for equal work to the more radical notion of pay equity—equal pay for comparable work. Women had to be paid at a rate equal to men's even if they had different jobs, providing the women's jobs were of "comparable worth." For example, if the skills and responsibilities of a female nurse were found to be comparable to those of a male laboratory technician in the same hospital, the woman's salary and the man's salary would have to be the same.
- In the 1990s, Congress prohibited discrimination in employment, public services, and public accommodations on the basis of physical or mental disabilities. Under the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act, businesses with twenty-five or more employees cannot pass over an otherwise qualified disabled person in employment or promotion, and new buses and trains have to be made accessible to them.

These examples illustrate the problem of using government power to promote equality. The clash between freedom and order is obvious, but the clash between freedom and equality is more subtle. Americans, who think of freedom and equality as complementary rather than conflicting values, often do not notice the clash. When forced to choose between the two, however, Americans are far more likely to choose freedom over equality than are people in other countries (see *Compared with What?* 1.2). The emphasis on equality over freedom was especially strong in the former Soviet Union, which guaranteed its citizens medical care, inexpensive housing, and other social services. Although the quality of the benefits was not much by Western standards, Soviet citizens experienced a sense of equality in shared deprivation. Indeed, there was such aversion to economic inequality that citizens' attitudes hindered economic development in a free market after the fall of the Soviet Union. As the director of the Moscow Arts Theater explained, "People are longing for the lost paradise—the lost Communist paradise."²³

The conflicts among freedom, order, and equality explain a great deal of the political conflict in the United States. The conflicts also underlie the ideologies that people use to structure their understanding of politics.

IDEOLOGY AND THE SCOPE OF GOVERNMENT

People hold different opinions about the merits of government policies. Sometimes their views are based on self-interest. For example, most senior citizens vociferously oppose increasing their personal contributions to Medicare, the government program that defrays medical costs for the elderly, preferring to have all citizens pay for their coverage. Policies also are judged according to individual values and beliefs. Some people hold an assortment of values and beliefs that produce contradictory opinions on

★ compared with what?

1.2 The Importance of Freedom and Equality as Political Values

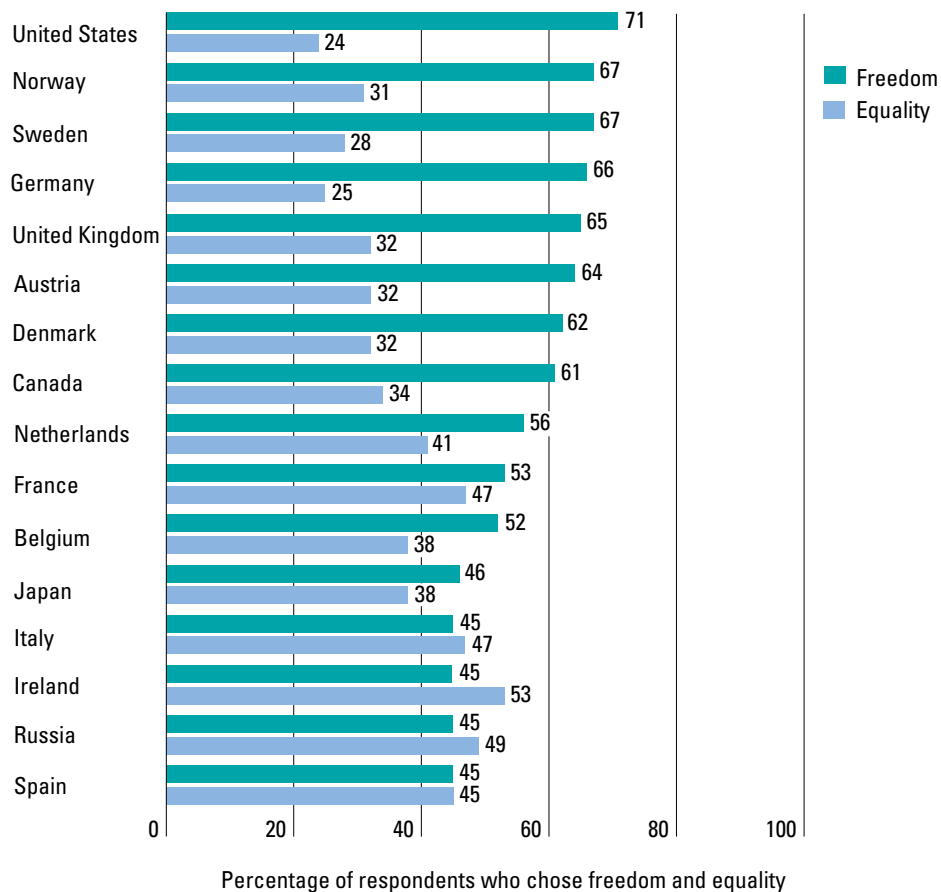
Compared with citizens' views of freedom and equality in fifteen other nations, Americans value freedom more than others do. Respondents in each country were asked which of the following statements came closer to their own opinion:

- "I find that both freedom and equality are important. But if I were to make up my mind for one or the other, I would consider personal freedom more important, that is, everyone can live in freedom and develop without hindrance."
- "Certainly both freedom and equality are important. But if I were to make up my mind for one of the two, I would consider

equality more important, that is, that nobody is underprivileged and that social class differences are not so strong."

Americans chose freedom by a ratio of nearly 3 to 1. No other nation showed such a strong preference for freedom, and citizens in four countries favored equality instead. When we look at this finding together with Americans' disdain for order (see Compared with What? 1.1), the importance of freedom as a political concept in the United States is clear.

Source: World Values Survey, 1990–1991. The tabulation was provided by Professor Ronald F. Inglehart, University of Michigan.



figure

1.1

Ideology and the Scope of Government

We can classify political ideologies according to the scope of action that people are willing to allow government in dealing with social and economic problems. In this chart, the three rows map out various philosophical positions along an underlying continuum ranging from “most” to “least” government. Notice that conventional politics in the United States spans only a narrow portion of the theoretical possibilities for government action.

In popular usage, liberals favor a greater scope of government; conservatives want a narrower scope. But over time, the traditional distinction has eroded and now oversimplifies the differences between liberals and conservatives. See Figure 1.2 for a more discriminating classification of liberals and conservatives.

MOST GOVERNMENT	POLITICAL THEORIES		LEAST GOVERNMENT
Totalitarianism	Libertarianism	Anarchism	
ECONOMIC THEORIES			
Socialism		Capitalism	Laissez Faire
POPULAR POLITICAL LABELS IN AMERICA			
Liberal		Conservative	

government policies. Others organize their opinions into a **political ideology**—a consistent set of values and beliefs about the proper purpose and scope of government.

How far should government go to maintain order, provide public goods, and promote equality? In the United States (as in every other nation), citizens, scholars, and politicians have different answers. We can analyze their positions by referring to philosophies about the proper scope of government—the range of its permissible activities. Imagine a continuum. At one end is the belief that government should do everything; at the other is the belief that government should not exist. These extreme ideologies—from the most government to the least government—and those that fall in between are shown in Figure 1.1.

Totalitarianism

Totalitarianism is the belief that government should have unlimited power. A totalitarian government controls all sectors of society: business, labor, education, religion, sports, the arts. A true totalitarian favors a network of laws, rules, and regulations that guides every aspect of individual behavior. The object is to produce a perfect society serving some master plan for “the common good.” Totalitarianism has reached its terrifying full potential only in literature and films (for example, George Orwell’s 1984), but several real societies have come perilously close to “perfection.” One thinks of Germany under Hitler and the Soviet Union under Stalin. Not many people openly profess totalitarianism today, but the concept is useful because it anchors one side of our continuum.

Socialism

Whereas totalitarianism refers to government in general, **socialism** pertains to government’s role in the economy. Like communism, socialism is an economic system based on Marxist theory. Under socialism (and

political ideology

A consistent set of values and beliefs about the proper purpose and scope of government.

totalitarianism

A political philosophy that advocates unlimited power for the government to enable it to control all sectors of society.

socialism

A form of rule in which the central government plays a strong role in regulating existing private industry and directing the economy, although it does allow some private ownership of productive capacity.

communism), the scope of government extends to ownership or control of the basic industries that produce goods and services. These include communications, mining, heavy industry, transportation, and power. Although socialism favors a strong role for government in regulating private industry and directing the economy, it allows more room than communism does for private ownership of productive capacity.

Many Americans equate socialism with the communism practiced in the old closed societies of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. But there is a difference. Although communism in theory was supposed to result in a “withering away” of the state, communist governments in practice tended toward totalitarianism, controlling not just economic life but both political and social life through a dominant party organization. Some socialist governments, however, practice **democratic socialism**. They guarantee civil liberties (such as freedom of speech and freedom of religion) and allow their citizens to determine the extent of the government’s activity through free elections and competitive political parties. Outside the United States, socialism is not universally viewed as inherently bad. In fact, the governments of Britain, Sweden, Germany, and France, among other democracies, have at times since World War II been avowedly socialist. More recently, the formerly communist regimes of Eastern Europe have abandoned the controlling role of government in their economies in favor of elements of capitalism.

democratic socialism

A socialist form of government that guarantees civil liberties such as freedom of speech and religion. Citizens determine the extent of government activity through free elections and competitive political parties.

capitalism

The system of government that favors free enterprise (privately owned businesses operating without government regulation).

libertarianism

A political ideology that is opposed to all government action except as necessary to protect life and property.

libertarians

Those who advocate minimal government action; those who subscribe to libertarianism.

Capitalism

Capitalism also relates to the government’s role in the economy. In contrast to both socialism and communism, **capitalism** supports free enterprise—private businesses operating without government regulation. Some theorists, most notably economist Milton Friedman, argue that free enterprise is necessary for free politics.²⁴ This argument, that the economic system of capitalism is essential to democracy, contradicts the tenets of democratic socialism. Whether it is valid depends in part on our understanding of democracy, a subject discussed in Chapter 2.

The United States is decidedly a capitalist country, more so than Britain or most other Western nations. Despite the U.S. government’s enormous budget, it owns or operates relatively few public enterprises. For example, railroads, airlines, and television stations are privately owned in the United States; these businesses are frequently owned by the government in other countries. But our government does extend its authority into the economic sphere, regulating private businesses and directing the overall economy. American liberals and conservatives both embrace capitalism, but they differ on the nature and amount of government intervention in the economy that is necessary or desirable.

Libertarianism

Libertarianism opposes all government action except what is necessary to protect life and property. **Libertarians** grudgingly recognize the necessity of government but believe that it should be as limited as possible. For example, libertarians grant the need for traffic laws to ensure safe and effi-

laissez faire

An economic doctrine that opposes any form of government intervention in business.

cient automobile travel. But they oppose as a restriction on individual actions laws that set a minimum drinking age, and they even oppose laws outlawing marijuana and other drugs. Libertarians believe that social programs that provide food, clothing, and shelter are outside the proper scope of government. Helping the needy, they insist, should be a matter of individual choice. Libertarians also oppose government ownership of basic industries; in fact, they oppose any government intervention in the economy. This kind of economic policy is called **laissez faire**, a French phrase that means “let (people) do (as they please).” Such an extreme policy extends beyond the free enterprise advocated by most capitalists.

Libertarians are vocal advocates of hands-off government, in both the social and the economic sphere. Whereas those Americans who favor a broad scope of government action shun the description *socialist*, libertarians make no secret of their identity. The Libertarian Party ran candidates in every presidential election from 1972 through 2000. However, not one of these candidates won more than 1 million votes.

Do not confuse libertarians with liberals. The words are similar, but their meanings are quite different. *Libertarianism* draws on *liberty* as its root and means “absence of governmental constraint.” In American political usage, *liberalism* evolved from the root word *liberal*. **Liberals** see a positive role for government in helping the disadvantaged. Over time, *liberal* has come to mean something closer to *generous*, in the sense that liberals (but not libertarians) support government spending on social programs. Libertarians find little benefit in any government social program.

liberals

Generally, those people whose political ideology favors a broad scope for government; those who value freedom more than order but not more than equality.

Anarchism

Anarchism stands opposite totalitarianism on the political continuum. Anarchists oppose all government, in any form. As a political philosophy, **anarchism** values freedom above all else. Because all government involves some restriction on personal freedom (for example, forcing people to drive on one side of the road), a pure anarchist would object even to traffic laws. Like totalitarianism, anarchism is not a popular philosophy, but it does have adherents on the political fringes.

Anarchists sparked the violence that disrupted the December 1999 meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Seattle (see Chapter 10). Labor unions protested the WTO meeting for failing to include labor rights on its agenda; environmental groups protested it for promoting economic development at the expense of the environment. But anarchists were against the WTO on *principle*—for concentrating the power of multinational corporations in a shadowy “world government.” Discussing old and new forms of anarchy, Joseph Kahn said, “Nothing has revived anarchism like globalization.”²⁵ When the World Bank held its August 1999 meeting in Prague, an anarchists’ Web site promised to “Turn Prague into Seattle.”²⁶ While anarchists were battling Czech police in Prague, anarchists back in Oregon were planning protests at the Democratic party convention in Los Angeles.²⁷ Although anarchism is not a popular philosophy, it is not merely a theoretical category.

anarchism

A political philosophy that opposes government in any form.

Liberals and Conservatives— The Narrow Middle

As shown in Figure 1.1, practical politics in the United States ranges over only the central portion of the continuum. The extreme positions—totalitarianism and anarchism—are rarely argued in public debates. And in this era of distrust of “big government,” few American politicians would openly advocate socialism (although one did in 1990 and won election to Congress as an independent candidate). On the other hand, almost 300 people ran for Congress in 2000 as candidates of the Libertarian Party. Although none won, American libertarians are sufficiently vocal to be heard in the debate over the role of government.

Still, most of that debate is limited to a narrow range of political thought. On one side are people commonly called *liberals*; on the other are *conservatives*. In popular usage, liberals favor more government, conservatives less. This distinction is clear when the issue is government spending to provide public goods. Liberals favor generous government support for education, wildlife protection, public transportation, and a whole range of social programs. **Conservatives** want smaller government budgets and fewer government programs. They support free enterprise and argue against government job programs, regulation of business, and legislation of working conditions and wage rates.

But in other areas, liberal and conservative ideologies are less consistent. In theory, liberals favor government activism, yet they oppose government regulation of abortion. In theory, conservatives oppose government activism, yet they support government control of the publication of sexually explicit material. What’s going on? Are American political attitudes hopelessly contradictory, or is something missing in our analysis of these ideologies today? Actually, something is missing. To understand the liberal and conservative stances on political issues, we have to look not only at the scope of government action but also at the purpose of government action. That is, to understand a political ideology, it is necessary to understand how it incorporates the values of freedom, order, and equality.

conservatives

Generally, those people whose political ideology favors a narrow scope for government. Also, those who value freedom more than equality but would restrict freedom [MS. CUT OFF]

AMERICAN POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES AND THE PURPOSE OF GOVERNMENT

Much of American politics revolves around the two dilemmas just described: freedom versus order and freedom versus equality. The two dilemmas do not account for all political conflict, but they help us gain insight into the workings of politics and organize the seemingly chaotic world of political events, actors, and issues.

Can You Explain Why...

conservatives might favor more government than liberals

Liberals Versus Conservatives: The New Differences

Liberals and conservatives are different, but their differences no longer hinge on the narrow question of the government’s role in providing public goods. Liberals still favor more government and conservatives less, but this is no longer the critical difference between them. Today, that difference stems from their attitudes toward the purpose of government. Conservatives support the original purpose of government—maintaining social order. They are willing to use the coercive power of the state to force

citizens to be orderly. They favor firm police action, swift and severe punishment for criminals, and more laws regulating behavior. Conservatives would not stop with defining, preventing, and punishing crime, however. They tend to want to preserve traditional patterns of social relations—the domestic role of women and the importance of religion in school and family life, for example.

Liberals are less likely than conservatives to want to use government power to maintain order. In general, liberals are more tolerant of alternative lifestyles—for example, homosexual behavior. Liberals do not shy away from using government coercion, but they use it for a different purpose—to promote equality. They support laws that ensure equal treatment of homosexuals in employment, housing, and education; laws that require the busing of schoolchildren to achieve racial equality; laws that force private businesses to hire and promote women and members of minority groups; laws that require public transportation to provide equal access to the disabled; and laws that order cities and states to reapportion election districts so that minority voters can elect minority candidates to public office.

Conservatives do not oppose equality, but they do not value it to the extent of using the government's power to enforce equality. For liberals, the use of that power to promote equality is both valid and necessary.

A Two-Dimensional Classification of Ideologies

To classify liberal and conservative ideologies more accurately, we have to incorporate the values of freedom, order, and equality into the classification. We can do this using the model in Figure 1.2. It depicts the conflicting values along two separate dimensions, each anchored in maximum freedom at the lower left. One dimension extends horizontally from maximum freedom on the left to maximum order on the right. The other extends vertically from maximum freedom at the bottom to maximum equality at the top. Each box represents a different ideological type: libertarians, liberals, conservatives, and communitarians.²⁸

Libertarians value freedom more than order or equality. (We will use this term for people who have libertarian tendencies but may not accept the whole philosophy.) In practical terms, libertarians want minimal government intervention in both the economic and the social sphere. For example, they oppose affirmative action and laws that restrict transmission of sexually explicit material.

Liberals value freedom more than order but not more than equality. Liberals oppose laws that ban sexually explicit publications but support affirmative action. Conservatives value freedom more than equality but would restrict freedom to preserve social order. Conservatives oppose affirmative action but favor laws that restrict pornography.

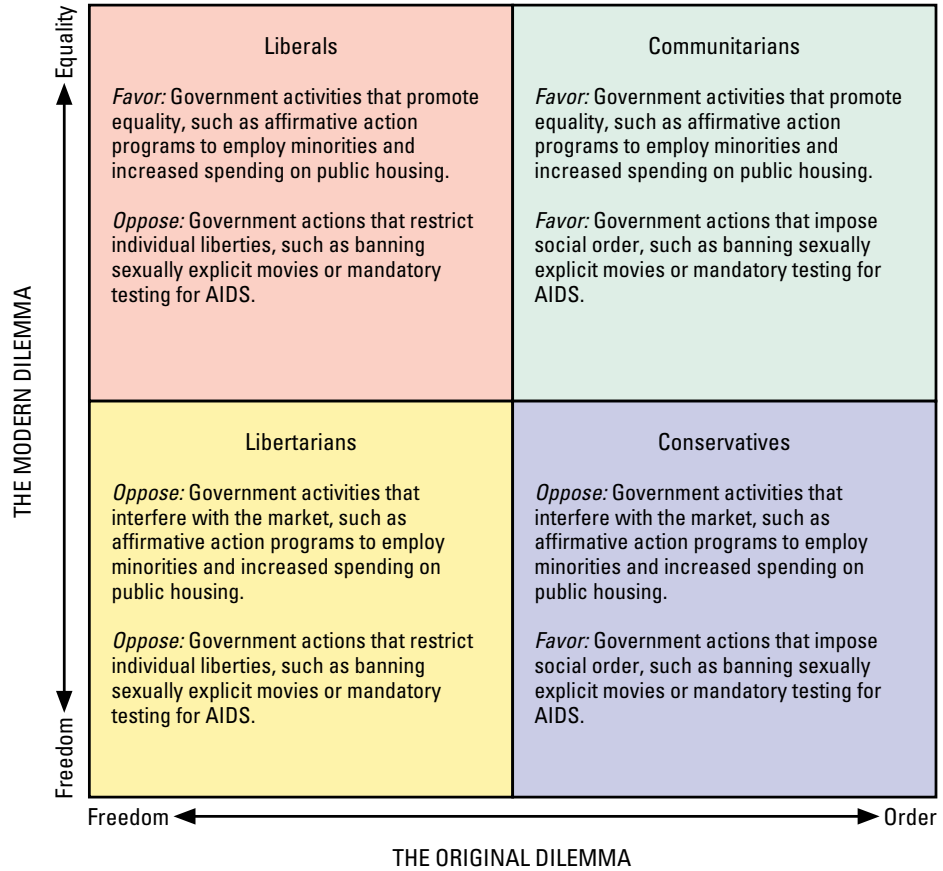
Finally, we arrive at the ideological type positioned at the upper right in Figure 1.2. This group values both equality and order more than freedom. Its members support both affirmative action and laws that restrict pornography. We will call this new group *communitarians*. The *Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) defines a communitarian as “a member of a community formed to put into practice communistic or socialistic theories.” The term

figure

1.2

Ideologies: A Two-Dimensional Framework

The four ideological types are defined by the values they favor in resolving the two major dilemmas of government: how much freedom should be sacrificed in pursuit of order and equality, respectively? Test yourself by thinking about the values that are most important to you. Which box in the figure best represents your combination of values?



IDEALog asks you to classify yourself in one of the four categories in Figure 1.2 and then asks twenty opinion questions to test your self-classification.

is used more narrowly in contemporary politics to reflect the philosophy of the Communitarian Network, a political movement founded by sociologist Amitai Etzioni.²⁹ This movement rejects both the liberal-conservative classification and the libertarian argument that “individuals should be left on their own to pursue their choices, rights, and self-interests.”³⁰ Like liberals, Etzioni’s communitarians believe that there is a role for government in helping the disadvantaged. Like conservatives, they believe that government should be used to promote moral values—preserving the family through more stringent divorce laws, protecting against AIDS through testing programs, and limiting the dissemination of pornography, for example.³¹ Indeed, some observers have labeled President George W. Bush as a communitarian (see Chapter 12 on the presidency).

The Communitarian Network is not dedicated to big government, however. According to its platform, “The government should step in only to the extent that other social subsystems fail, rather than seek to replace them.”³² Nevertheless, in recognizing the collective nature of society, the

Network's platform clearly distinguishes its philosophy from that of libertarianism:

It has been argued by libertarians that responsibilities are a personal matter, that individuals are to judge which responsibilities they accept as theirs. As we see it, responsibilities are anchored in community. Reflecting the diverse moral voices of their citizens, responsive communities define what is expected of people; they educate their members to accept these values; and they praise them when they do and frown upon them when they do not.³³

Although it clearly embraces the Communitarian Network's philosophy, our definition of communitarian (small c) is broader and more in keeping with the dictionary definition. Thus, **communitarians** favor government programs that promote both order and equality, in keeping with socialist theory.³⁴

communitarians

Those who adhere to a viewpoint that affirms the individual's responsibility to the community and assigns to government, as agent of the community, the role of guaranteeing equality and total order. In particular, communitarians are those who belong to, or are sympathetic with, a newly-formed movement called the Communitarian Network.

By analyzing political ideologies on two dimensions rather than one, we can explain why people can seem to be liberal on one issue (favoring a broader scope of government action) and conservative on another (favoring less government action). The answer hinges on the purpose of a given government action: which value does it promote, order or equality? According to our typology, only libertarians and communitarians are consistent in their attitude toward the scope of government activity, whatever its purpose. Libertarians value freedom so highly that they oppose most government efforts to enforce either order or equality. Communitarians (in our usage) are inclined to trade freedom for both order and equality. Liberals and conservatives, on the other hand, favor or oppose government activity depending on its purpose. As you will learn in Chapter 5, large groups of Americans fall into each of the four ideological categories. Because Americans increasingly choose four different resolutions to the original and modern dilemmas of government, the simple labels of *liberal* and *conservative* no longer describe contemporary political ideologies as well as they did in the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s.

SUMMARY

The challenge of democracy lies in making difficult choices—choices that inevitably bring important values into conflict. This chapter has outlined a normative framework for analyzing the policy choices that arise in the pursuit of the purposes of government.

The three major purposes of government are maintaining order, providing public goods, and promoting equality. In pursuing these objectives, every government infringes on individual freedom. But the degree of that infringement depends on the government's (and, by extension, its citizens') commitment to order and equality. What we have, then, are two dilemmas. The first—the original dilemma—centers on the conflict between freedom and order. The second—the modern dilemma—focuses on the conflict between freedom and equality.

Some people use political ideologies to help them resolve the conflicts that arise in political decision making. These ideologies define the scope and purpose of government. At opposite extremes of the continuum are totalitarianism, which supports government intervention in every aspect of society, and anarchism, which rejects government entirely. An important

step back from totalitarianism is socialism. Democratic socialism, an economic system, favors government ownership of basic industries but preserves civil liberties. Capitalism, another economic system, promotes free enterprise. A significant step short of anarchism is libertarianism, which allows government to protect life and property but little else.

In the United States, the terms *liberal* and *conservative* are used to describe a narrow range toward the center of the political continuum. The usage is probably accurate when the scope of government action is being discussed. That is, liberals support a broader role for government than do conservatives. But when both the scope and the purpose of government are considered, a different, sharper distinction emerges. Conservatives may want less government, but not at the price of maintaining order. In other words, they are willing to use the coercive power of government to impose social order. Liberals, too, are willing to use the coercive powers of government, but for a different purpose—promoting equality.

It is easier to understand the differences among libertarians, liberals, conservatives, and communitarians and their views on the scope of government if the values of freedom, order, and equality are incorporated into the description of their political ideologies. Libertarians choose freedom over both order and equality. Communitarians are willing to sacrifice freedom for both order and equality. Liberals value freedom more than order and equality more than freedom. Conservatives value order more than freedom and freedom more than equality.

The concepts of government objectives, values, and political ideologies appear repeatedly in this book as we determine who favors what government action and why. So far, we have said little about how government should make its decisions. In Chapter 2, we complete our normative framework for evaluating American politics by examining the nature of democratic theory. There, we introduce two key concepts for analyzing how democratic governments make decisions.

★ Selected Readings

Ebenstein, William, and Edwin Fogelman. *Today's Isms: Socialism, Capitalism, Fascism, Communism, and Libertarianism*. 11th ed. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1999. This standard source describes the history of the five major "isms" and relates each to developments in contemporary politics. It is concise, informative, and readable.

Etzioni, Amitai. *The New Golden Rule: Community and Morality in a Democratic Society*. New York: Basic Books, 1996. Etzioni examines the balance between liberty and morality in government. He argues for basing order on moral commitments rather than law.

Murray, Charles. *What It Means to Be a Libertarian: A Personal Interpretation*. New York: Broadway Books,

1997. This brief book makes the case for limiting government and promoting personal freedom. Among the government functions that Murray would limit are the regulation of products and services, the development and regulation of energy, housing and urban development, and social security and Medicare programs.

Van Creveld, Martin. *The Rise and Decline of the State*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999. A thoughtful survey of the rise of the modern state in the mid-seventh century through what Van Creveld sees as its decline, beginning in 1975. He concludes that the international system is becoming more hierarchical, with more power accumulated in supranational institutions.