

A diverse group of people of various ages and ethnicities looking on. In the foreground, a young man in a blue sweater is casting a ballot into a box decorated with the American flag. Other people, including a man with glasses and a woman, are visible behind him.

CHAPTER 19

THE ELECTORAL PROCESS

How are the candidates chosen for your school's student council elections? How do you choose from among the candidates? Do the candidates campaign for the student offices? What determines the winners of the elections?

More than likely, your class leaders are chosen in much the same way that U.S. political leaders are chosen by American citizens—through an established electoral process. In this chapter you will learn about the three steps in that process: nomination, campaigning, and election.



Government Notebook

In your Government Notebook, make a list of some of the times this school year that you and your friends or classmates have held a vote to decide a certain issue. On what kinds of things do you generally hold a vote? Explain why voting is an important part of making a decision about an issue.

SECTION 1

NOMINATING CANDIDATES

Political Dictionary



direct primary
closed primary
open primary
runoff primary
nonpartisan primary

Objectives

- ★ What is the first step in the electoral process?
- ★ In what ways may candidates be chosen for an election?
- ★ What types of primary elections are held in the states?

When casting your vote during an election, you most likely choose from among the candidates listed. But how are the official candidates for an election selected?

As noted in Chapter 7, nominating candidates is the first step in the electoral process. Nomination procedures vary according to local, state, and national election rules. Candidates are nominated in five ways:

- ★ self-announcement,
- ★ caucus,
- ★ convention,
- ★ petition, and
- ★ primary election.

Self-Announcement

To nominate by self-announcement, a person simply declares publicly that he or she is running for office. Commonly practiced in the American colonies, this procedure is the oldest means of nomination in the United States.

Today, self-announcement is used most often at the local level. By announcing his or her candidacy,

a person enters the race for office, though there is usually some kind of officially required registration procedure as well.

In some cases a candidate at the national or state level might use self-announcement if he or she is unlikely to secure the nomination of either of the major parties or does not agree with the policies they support. For example, during the 1992 election Ross Perot declared himself an independent candidate for the presidency.

Most ballots are printed with a space for write-in candidates. A write-in candidate is a person who declares that he or she will run for office and then asks people to write his or her name on the ballot when they vote. In states whose official ballots do not provide such a space, voters can request a special ballot to vote for a write-in candidate. Write-in candidates usually fail to achieve a broad base of support and thus rarely, if ever, win.

Caucus

As noted in Chapter 7, the caucus is another long-time means of nominating candidates in America. The earliest caucuses in what is now the United



POLITICAL PROCESSES *Most states stopped using caucuses as a means of nominating state and U.S. legislators by the mid-1800s. Texas, however, still uses this method. When were the first caucuses held in the United States?*

States date from around 1725. Community leaders would gather in a home or an official town building to endorse candidates for local offices. Such groups were called caucus clubs. In his diary John Adams described an early caucus:

“This day learned that the Caucus Club meets, at certain times, in the garret [top-floor room] of Tom Dawes. . . . He has a large house . . . and the whole club meets in one room. . . . There they choose a moderator, who puts questions to the vote regularly; and selectmen [council members], assessors, collectors, wardens, fire-wards, and representatives are regularly chosen before they are chosen in the town.”

Caucuses were held at the state and national levels as early as the 1790s. State legislative caucuses chose candidates for state and local office, while national congressional caucuses chose presidential and vice presidential candidates.

Eventually, as political parties developed, caucuses became functions of the parties and were run by party officials. The meetings, which were not open to the public, were dominated by party leaders. Abuses of the system were frequent, as party leaders used caucuses to further their own goals. Gradually, many voters began to criticize the closed-door caucus meetings.

Because of a rise in voter dissatisfaction, party leaders in most states stopped using the caucus for nominating candidates to the U.S. Congress by the 1820s and for nominating candidates to state office by the 1840s. Today the caucus is still used at the local level in a few states. Some states, including Iowa, still hold caucuses at the national level as well. These caucuses, however, are open to all members of a party—not just to party leaders and influential members of the community.

Convention

As noted in Chapter 7, a convention is a political party gathering held to nominate candidates, set party rules, and create a party platform. By the mid- to late 1800s, party conventions were common at the local, state, and

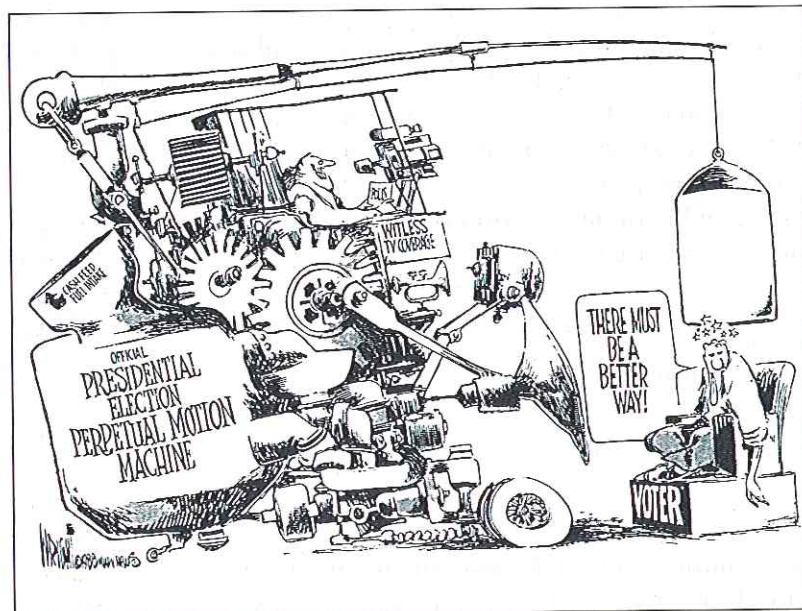
national levels. The delegations were made up of people representing their town, city, county, or state.

Delegates to local conventions chose local candidates as well as delegates to the state convention. In turn, the state convention delegates would choose candidates for state offices and delegates to the national convention. Delegates from each of the states then assembled at the national convention to choose the presidential and vice presidential candidates.

As with the caucuses, conventions eventually were subject to political corruption and control by party bosses, who tried to seat delegates favorable to their views. For this reason many states eventually gave up the convention system for nominating candidates. Today only a few states hold state and local nominating conventions, and these are heavily regulated to prevent abuses. Other states hold conventions only to nominate delegates to the national conventions. The presidential and vice presidential candidates also are still officially chosen by a national convention.

Petition

Another way that candidates are nominated is by petition. Supporters of someone seeking elected office but lacking the endorsement of a major



POLITICAL PROCESSES Some critics think that the electoral process has become too complicated and time-consuming for candidates. Why did many states stop using the convention system for nominating candidates?

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Careers in Government



Campaign Worker

Running election campaigns is a highly professional endeavor. Whether seeking the presidency or a seat on the city council, a candidate turns to professional consultants—expert advice givers—for help in running the campaign. In fact, running campaigns and consulting for them have become steady sources of employment for many people. Consider, for example, Paul Begala, a political strategist with the presidential campaign of Bill Clinton in 1992.



Prior to working on Bill Clinton's 1992 presidential campaign, Paul Begala worked on the campaigns of people running for the Senate and for governor.

Begala entered politics while a student at the University of Texas at Austin, serving as president of the university's students' association in 1982–83. After graduating, Begala went to work for politicians—first as an aide to U.S. Representative Dick Gephardt of Missouri and, in 1983–84, as a U.S. senatorial campaigner during a race in Texas. Begala later worked on campaigns for Senate seats and governorships in Pennsylvania, Georgia, and New Jersey before joining the Clinton campaign.

The work performed by Begala and other campaign workers varies. A typical day may include recruiting volunteers to call potential voters and to walk neighborhoods promoting a candidate. It also may include setting up fund-raising events, preparing speeches, coordinating direct-mail efforts, and helping develop policies and campaign strategies.

Workers may range from students to recent college graduates to seasoned veterans from the campaign trail. Candidates often look for people who have experience, education, or training in politics that might be useful to the campaign. Whatever their backgrounds, however, campaign staff members share a common passion for politics and the candidates and ideals for which they work.

political party can circulate a petition requesting that the person's name be placed on the official ballot. A nominating petition is only valid if it has been signed by a certain number of people registered to vote in the election district in question.

Nomination by petition is most common in local elections. It also is widely used by independent and third-party state and national candidates who have some support from eligible voters.

Primary Election

Today the primary election is the most common way for candidates to gain a nomination for political office. As noted in Chapter 7, primary elections are held before the general election in

order to determine the candidates for each party. The primaries give voters, instead of party leaders, the chance to do the nominating.

Nominations for the House and Senate and for state and local office occur through direct primaries. A **direct primary** is one in which the winner is named the party's nominee for the general election. Presidential primaries are not direct—they are followed by a national convention at which delegates elected in the primaries choose a candidate based on the results of the primaries.

The parties do not determine the rules for primary elections. The states do, just as they regulate other features of party organization. The states not only decide who may vote but they also regulate what party organizations may or may not

do in primary campaigns. Each state also determines what kind of primary it will hold.

How much influence parties have on the outcome of primaries is also regulated by the states. In about one third of the states, party conventions are allowed to endorse primary candidates. In some states, only candidates running for a state office who receive a certain minimum percentage of the vote at a state party convention may appear on the primary ballot. In others, candidates endorsed by state party conventions appear first on the ballot or with asterisks next to their names. California and Florida go to the opposite extreme, prohibiting party conventions from backing primary candidates.

Closed Primary Fewer than 20 states have closed primaries. A **closed primary** is one in which only the members of a political party are permitted to vote in selecting the party's candidates. Under this system, separate but simultaneous primaries are held for both the Republican and Democratic parties. Democrats wishing to vote Republican and Republicans wishing to vote Democrat must wait for a general election.

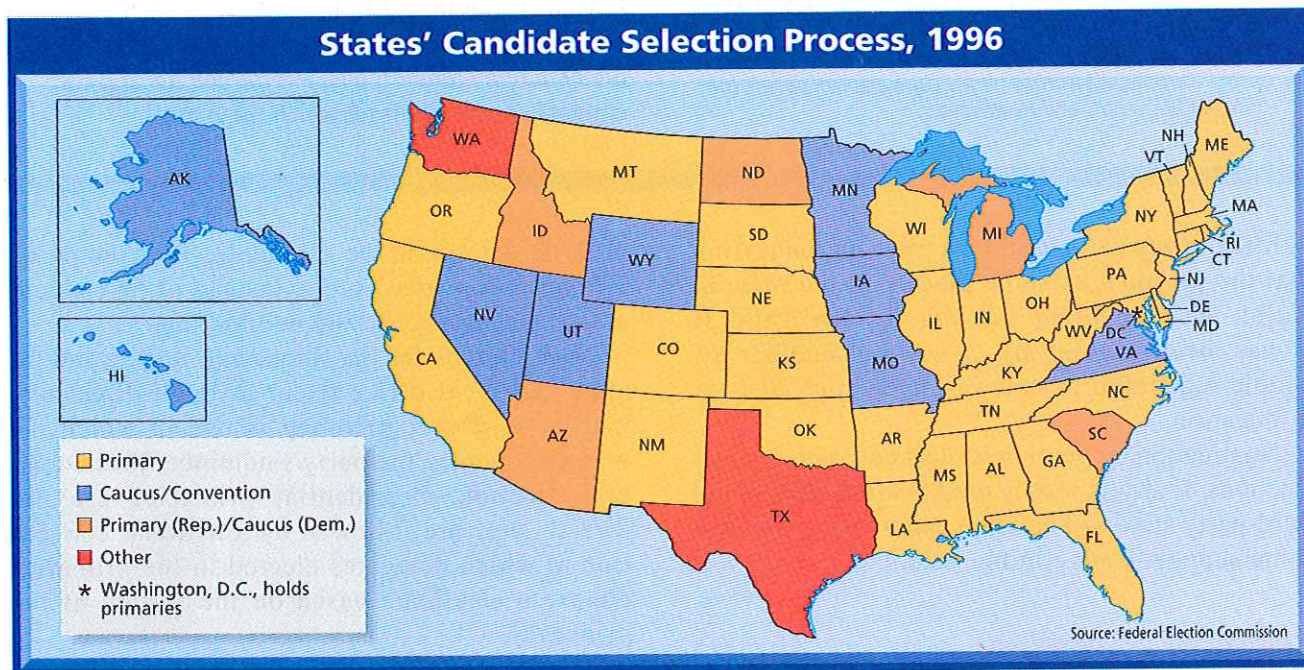
Many states with closed primaries, however, have more relaxed rules regarding party affiliation. On the day of the primary, citizens can register for

the party in whose nomination process they most want to participate.

Open Primary Most states have what are called open primaries. An **open primary** allows a registered voter to participate in either the Republican or Democratic nomination process just by choosing a party once he or she is in the voting booth. This means that a registered Republican, for example, may vote in a Democratic primary without giving up his or her Republican registration status. In some open primaries, voters may choose candidates from either party for each office open for election.

Runoff Primary Several states have a follow-up primary election if no candidate receives a majority of the votes. In these **runoff primaries**, voters choose between the top vote recipients from the first election. The winner of the runoff primary is then named the party's candidate for the general election.

Nonpartisan Primary A **nonpartisan primary** is one in which all candidates appear on the same ballot. In most cases these candidates are running for city- and county-level offices. For example,



Primary elections are the most common way for candidates to gain nomination for political office. Several states, however, use other methods. How many states use the caucus/convention system to nominate candidates?

Citizenship in



Action

Taking Part in Democracy

In a democracy such as the United States, citizens have many opportunities to get involved in the electoral process. In addition to debating issues, learning about candidates, and voting, they may choose to volunteer for campaign work. In fact, most successful campaigns might have failed were it not for the dedicated work of volunteers who kept the office operating smoothly, worked with voters, and provided other support for candidates and paid staff.

Some people choose to become directly involved in the electoral process by serving as delegates to party conventions. In some states, for example, citizens attend precinct conventions to debate issues and support particular candidates. Citizens also work to become convention delegates at county, district, state, and national levels.

Jo Ann Strickler, for example, ran her own campaign to become a delegate to the 1992

Republican National Convention in Houston. Strickler, then a 22-year-old senior at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, spoke at local county meetings, handed out buttons and signs, shook a lot of hands at the district convention, and organized a network of volunteers to help in her campaign. In the end, her work paid off and she became one of her state's national convention delegates.

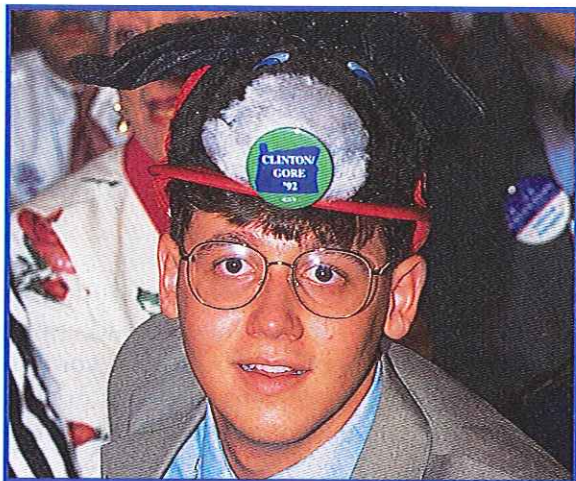
In 1992 Marc Glenn, then an 18-year-old high school graduate from Atlanta, also worked hard to become a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in New York City. "The most interesting thing that I learned was that once I decided to get involved, it was relatively easy to become an active part of the American political system," Glenn says.

Strickler and Glenn joined thousands of other delegates at the national conventions. Tens of thousands of others took part in the electoral process by attending conventions at lower levels.

Not all people who are interested in politics become so deeply involved, of course. Some people decide instead to volunteer for a candidate. Others attend debates or campaign rallies. Still others volunteer to work as clerks at polling places, to take people to the polls, or to plan small gatherings in their homes, where candidates can explain their positions on important issues.

Strickler and Glenn say that taking part means more than simply criticizing particular politicians and policies. "It is much easier to criticize from the outside than to wake up at the crack of dawn to hand out campaign literature at the polls or to follow what's going on at Capitol Hill and call your senator and congressperson to let them know how you feel about a certain issue," Strickler says.

Glenn agrees. He asserts that "if a person is bold enough to actively criticize government, then that person is not only *able* enough to take an active role in running it—they are almost *obligated* to become involved in some way."



Mark Glenn was 18 years old when he was selected as a delegate to the 1992 Democratic National Convention in New York City.

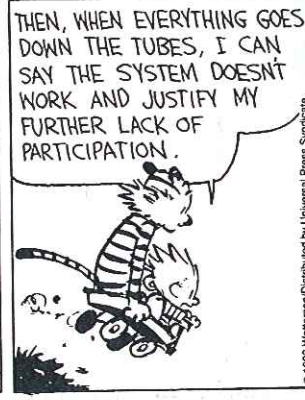
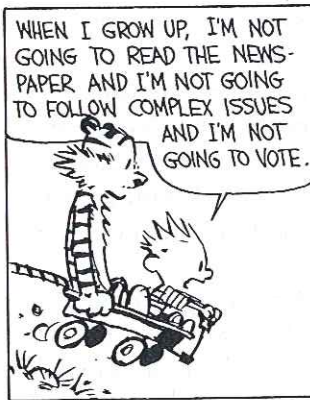
What Do You Think?



1. Do you think it is important for citizens to get involved in the electoral process? Explain your answer.
2. In what ways could you and your classmates become involved in the electoral process?

Calvin and Hobbes

by Bill Watterson



PUBLIC GOOD *Around half of the voting-age population does not vote in general elections. In general, is voter turnout greater for primary elections or general elections?*

candidates for a local judgeship in some states must first receive a nomination in a nonpartisan primary before being placed on a general election ballot.

In some states a candidate who receives the majority of the votes cast in a nonpartisan primary is automatically elected and does not have to run in the general election. If no one wins a majority in the primary, however, its two top vote recipients appear on the general election ballot.

Voter Turnout in Primaries

Turnout in primary elections is generally around one third to one half of that in the general

election. Typically, a greater percentage of well-educated, upper-income voters participate in primaries. Some people argue that primary voters also are ideologically more committed than voters in general elections—that Democratic primary voters are more liberal than Democratic voters in general, Republican primary voters more conservative than Republican voters in general. However, evidence gathered by political scientists does not consistently support this proposition. Sometimes primary voters are more extreme, other times not. Factors such as the country's economic situation might be more likely to inspire someone to vote in a primary than would his or her political ideology.

SECTION 1

REVIEW

1. Define the following terms: direct primary, closed primary, open primary, runoff primary, nonpartisan primary.
2. In what ways have candidates been chosen to run in elections?
3. What are some of the regulations states place on primary elections?
4. Describe the different kinds of primary elections.

5. Thinking and Writing Critically

How do primaries give voters more of a voice in the electoral process than did earlier means of nominating candidates? Why do you think it is important for citizens to have a greater number of opportunities to participate in the political process?

6. Applying POLITICAL PROCESSES

By what means are students in your school nominated for student offices and other positions?

SECTION 2

CAMPAIGNS AND CAMPAIGN FINANCING

Objectives

- ★ How was early political campaigning different from political campaigning today?
- ★ What is the role of the media in today's political campaigns?
- ★ How are campaigns financed?
- ★ How is campaign financing regulated?

Once candidates have been nominated, the second step in the electoral process—campaigning—begins. The fanfare surrounding political campaigns has been around for almost as long as the country itself. For example, during the 1800s supporters of both the Republicans and Democrats campaigned around the clock to promote their candidates. By day they marched with banners bearing candidates' slogans. At night they often held torchlight parades.

Why do people engage in such extravagant displays? Holding elected office is a high honor in the United States. Candidates must mount elaborate campaigns to convince the electorate that they are right for the job.

Though the reason for campaigning has not changed, the way campaigns are conducted has changed greatly since the 1700s and 1800s. During the 1900s, campaigns changed in three major ways:

- ★ candidates became more visible,
- ★ the role of the media became more pronounced, and
- ★ polling became a key tool.

In addition, campaign spending has skyrocketed to cover increasingly extensive campaigning.

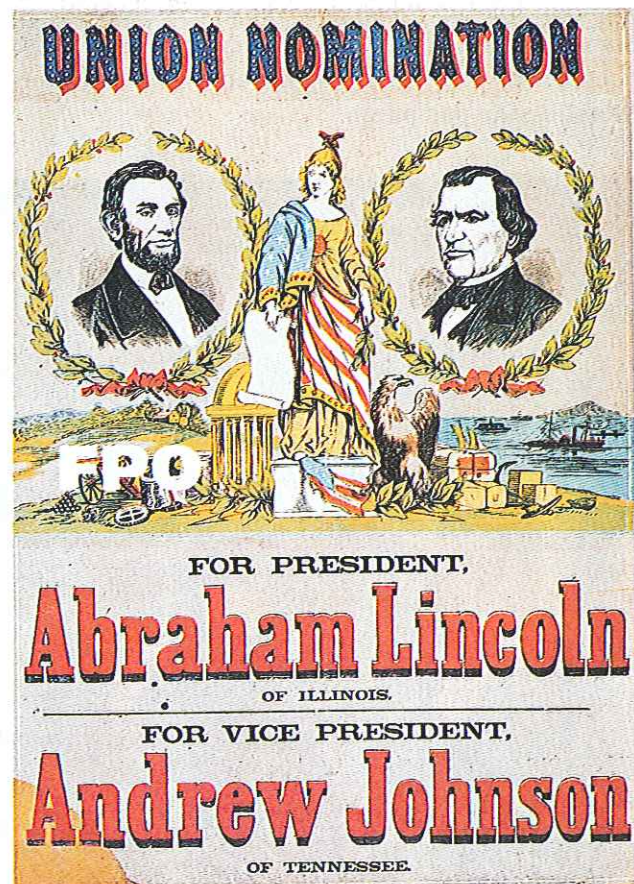
Candidate Visibility

During the 1700s and early to mid-1800s, candidates, particularly those running for president,

were expected to maintain proper form during their campaigns. The political journal *The Nation* described what was generally considered appropriate behavior for a candidate:

“Etiquette requires that the candidate shall rigidly abstain [keep] from any open efforts to promote his own election, and, indeed, from all discoverable complicity [participation] in such efforts on the part of others. Rigid propriety [properness] . . . seems even to require that he shall preserve complete silence during the [campaign] on all topics of the day, and the summit of dignity and decorum [good form] is only reached by a display of apparent ignorance that any [campaign] is going on, or if going on that he has any particular connection with it.”

Gradually, as the nation grew, this attitude began to change. In 1896 Democratic presidential



FOUNDATIONS OF DEMOCRACY *The poster above is from Lincoln's 1864 presidential campaign. Why do candidates engage in elaborate campaigns during an election year?*

candidate William Jennings Bryan undertook an unprecedented nationwide tour, giving rousing speeches along the way. A new trend in campaigning had begun.

Campaign Appearances By the first part of the 1900s, presidential candidates were engaging in stunts unheard of only a few years earlier. Woodrow Wilson, for example, got public attention by attending the yearly baby parade in Asbury Park, New Jersey. In 1924 Democratic presidential candidate John W. Davis tried to make points with voters by throwing a pitch to his vice presidential running mate at a baseball game.

Candidates toured large sections of the country by train in what became known as whistle-stop campaigning. While stopping along the way in small towns, candidates would address voters from the rear platform of a train. (“Whistle-stop” was a nickname that railroad workers gave to a town so small that the train stopped there only long enough for the whistle to blow.) According to some observers at the time, Harry Truman won the presidency in 1948 partly because of a vigorous whistle-stop campaign.

Campaigning in Person Today Campaigning today is a grueling activity that calls for constant travel, speaking, and handshaking. Candidates, particularly those running for president, often spend weeks away from home, traveling from city to city. It can be exhausting—most candidates catch very little sleep, especially during the intense campaigning right before an election. In the final week of the 1996 presidential campaign, for example, Bob Dole stayed up for 96 hours straight to speak at as many campaign rallies as possible before the election. Bill Clinton traveled the country by plane, train, and bus in the 1992 and 1996 campaigns, greeting supporters along the way.

Media Involvement

The early 1900s also brought a greater use of the media in promoting candidates. Presidential campaign organizations began pouring major resources into what were called literary bureaus, working units that generated literature and speeches, explored important issues, and maintained press relations.

With the introduction of new technology, campaigns could rely on not only print but also radio,



PUBLIC GOOD During his 1952 presidential campaign, Dwight Eisenhower traveled to Mount Holyoke College to meet with students. Which presidential candidate of the late 1800s helped to change people's attitudes about campaigns?

film, and television. When Woodrow Wilson ran for president in 1912, for example, his campaign team produced movies and recordings about him. Radio and television have become a very popular means of advertising in political campaigns.

Early Campaign Advertising Presidential candidates first used television advertising during the 1952 campaign. Dwight D. Eisenhower ran 30- and 60-second political ads, hoping that they would capture viewers' interest much like commercials for household goods, cars, and other products did. In contrast, Adlai Stevenson—Eisenhower's opponent—took a more traditional approach: he simply used television to air half-hour speeches. Unlike Eisenhower's shorter spots, these speeches failed to take advantage of a key feature of television—its ability to quickly and dramatically convey simple ideas and a sense of personality.

Media Campaigning Today Today presidential and senatorial campaigns are conducted largely through the media. The reason is simple: it is far easier to reach millions of voters through media messages than in person. A candidate for national or statewide office can never hope to meet or speak before more than a tiny fraction of a large state's voters, even during an extensive campaign. As political consultant Frank Luntz noted in 1988, "If the two Senate candidates in Florida . . . made ten speeches a day to audiences of 100 persons, it would take eight years to reach every voter."

Because the use of the media increases a candidate's reach, it has become a central campaign strategy. Political media consultants carefully tailor radio and television ads for targeted audiences and plan events whose primary purpose is to gain the candidate coverage on the evening news. In fact, candidates spend an increasing amount of time appearing at events that are staged solely for coverage by the media.

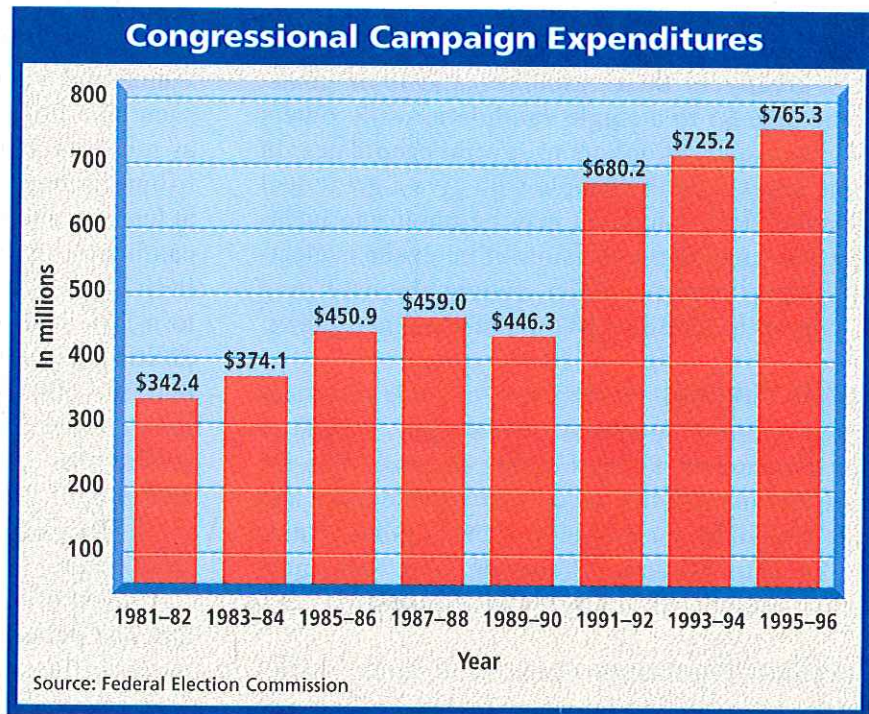
Polling

Polling also became a popular tool of political campaigns during the 1900s. As noted in Chapter 16, polling involves surveying a population on an issue. A major goal of campaign polling is to gain insight into voters' attitudes about a candidate's campaign and views.

For example, suppose that a campaign worker asks voters who oppose Senator Chen a series of questions, such as "Would learning that Senator Chen supports cuts in Social Security benefits lead you to vote for him?" By finding out which of his or her views generate the most voter support, a candidate can create a more effective campaign.

Campaign Financing

Today's extensive campaigns have become very expensive. Bumper stickers, campaign appearances, yard signs, direct mail, buttons, flyers, and above all, television advertising are just some of the campaign tools on which candidates spend money. During the 1996 presidential race the campaigns for Bob Dole and Bill Clinton spent \$113 million on advertising in just 13 months.



The amount of money spent on political campaigns increases each year to keep up with the rising costs of financing a campaign. How much money was spent on political campaigns in 1991-92?

As you can see, campaigning today requires huge sums of money. This is particularly true for a candidate challenging an incumbent—a person who already holds the elective office. How can a candidate raise this money? Political parties, political action committees, private donors, and the government supply most of the needed campaign funds. In addition, some candidates spend their own money on their campaigns.

Party Assistance As noted in Chapter 18, one duty of political parties is to raise funds for candidates and their campaigns. Parties do not give equally to all candidates. Rather, they concentrate most of their funds on helping those in the closest races. National party organizations, for example, generally give the most to strong challengers facing incumbent members of Congress or to candidates running for open seats, where the incumbent is not running for re-election.

Political Action Committees Also as noted in Chapter 18, political action committees (PACs) give funds to political parties and their candidates. A PAC contributes money to campaigns in hopes that a candidate who takes office will support the PAC's agenda.

Private Donors Private donors to campaigns vary greatly in their resources and their goals. Some give \$5 to a single candidate, while others give thousands of dollars to several candidates. In some cases, wealthy people who give a great deal of money to a campaign may be hoping to influence the candidate's decisions if he or she is elected. In most cases, however, people are just trying to support a candidate who represents their views.

Public Funding Government in some instances provides public money for campaigns, though in limited amounts. Public funding occurs at both the state and the national level. Only presidential and vice presidential candidates receive public funds at the national level, however, and they must follow established fund-raising guidelines.

Personal Financing Some candidates, particularly those running for state and local office, use money out of their own pockets to finance their campaigns. In 1992 Texas billionaire Ross Perot spent about \$59 million of his own money on his independent presidential campaign.

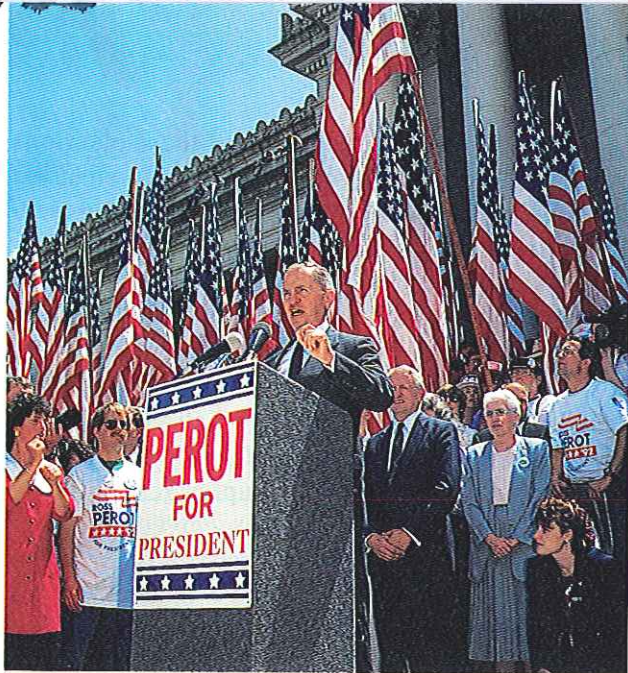
Regulation of Campaign Financing

With such large amounts of money changing hands during political campaigns, regulations are needed to make sure that funds are handled properly. These regulations were laid down in the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1972, which has since been amended several times. This act is enforced by the Federal Election Commission (FEC). Regulations that campaigns must follow include financial disclosure, contribution and spending limits, and donor restrictions.

Financial Disclosure Campaign committees are required by law to submit extensive financial reports explaining how much money they have raised and how it was spent. In federal elections these reports are submitted to Congress and the FEC. In state and local elections they are sent to the appropriate state officials. These reports enable officials to make sure that the money is being spent only for legitimate campaign reasons and that candidates do not receive any improper contributions.

Contribution Limits Contributions to a federal candidate's campaign, whether for a primary or general election, are limited to \$1,000 for an individual and \$1,000 or \$5,000 for an organization such as a PAC. Organizations able to contribute as much as \$5,000 must have more than 50 contributors, have been registered with the FEC for at least six months, and contribute to five or more candidates in the election at hand. In addition, an individual can give no more than \$5,000 a year to a PAC and no more than \$20,000 a year to a political party. Individuals can contribute no more than \$25,000 overall in a given year, though PACs have no such limit. An important loophole in these restrictions is the ability to donate unlimited amounts of "soft money"—money that is given in support of a party that may not be used for candidates.

Contribution limits are established to prevent any one person or organization from gaining too much influence over candidates, and therefore over government. A person or an organization able to contribute vast amounts to a candidate or party might be able to influence government to promote the interests of a few at the expense of the public good.



PUBLIC GOOD *Ross Perot spent millions of dollars of his own money on his 1992 presidential campaign. In the 1996 presidential primary, what was the spending limit for candidates who received matching funds?*

Spending Limits Presidential candidates can receive federal funds if they meet certain requirements, including staying within set spending limits. In a presidential primary campaign, candidates may receive federal funds if they raise \$5,000 or more in each of at least 20 states. The federal government matches funds for the first \$250 of each contribution received. For example, if a candidate receives two contributions, one for \$100 and one for \$1,000, he or she would get \$350 in matching funds. The federal government does not match PAC or political party donations. The spending limit for candidates receiving matching funds in the 1996 primary campaign was \$30.9 million.

A candidate who wins a party's nomination is eligible for public funds for the general election campaign as well. Major-party candidates may not accept private contributions, however, if they receive public funding. A spending limit also applies to the general election campaign—for the 1996 election the limit was set at \$61.8 million. The limits are adjusted for inflation. If a presidential candidate does not accept public funds, he or she is not bound by campaign spending restrictions.

Public funding is financed exclusively by a voluntary “check-off” on individual income tax returns, where taxpayers may indicate that \$3 of their taxes be set aside for this purpose. (This donation does not increase someone's total tax bill.)

Unlike presidential campaigns, no spending limits have been set for congressional races. Congressional candidates, however, do not receive any public funding.

Donor Restrictions Several restrictions exist on the source of donations to an election campaign. Corporations are forbidden to give money directly, as are labor unions and government contractors. Corporations and other organizations, however, have been able to sidestep this restriction. They donate money to the PACs representing their industries, and the PACs are allowed to spend money on campaigns.

Finally, no campaign may accept donations from a foreign source. During the 1996 presidential election, the Democratic Party came under fire for accepting money from foreign sources. The questionable donations were returned, but led Congress to undertake a broad investigation of political fund-raising practices.

SECTION 2

REVIEW

1. How were political campaigns that were held in the 1700s and 1800s different from campaigns in the 1900s?
2. How has the media changed the way campaigns are run?
3. How do candidates pay for campaigns?
4. What might happen if campaign financing went unregulated?

5. Thinking and Writing Critically



In your opinion, do laws requiring campaign committees to submit financial reports promote the public good? Explain your answer.

6. Applying POLITICAL PROCESSES

If you were running for office and could spend \$60 million on your campaign, what percentage would you spend on advertising? on appearances? Explain your reasoning.

SECTION 3

ELECTIONS AND VOTING

Political Dictionary

single-member district
secret ballot
absentee ballot
suffrage



Objectives

- ★ What are the different types of elections?
- ★ What determines where, how, and when people vote?
- ★ What factors determine if a person may vote?
- ★ What influences the way in which people vote?

Campaigns run right into the final step of the electoral process—the election itself. Even on the day of the election, candidates and their workers continue to hand out flyers, call voters, make appearances, and run advertisements. State laws, however, regulate campaigning on election day as well as throughout the election. Laws made by the states and the federal government also determine the types of elections that may be held, how elections are administered, and who can vote.

Types of Elections

Besides primary elections, in which citizens nominate candidates, there are two main types of elections. These are the general election and the special election.

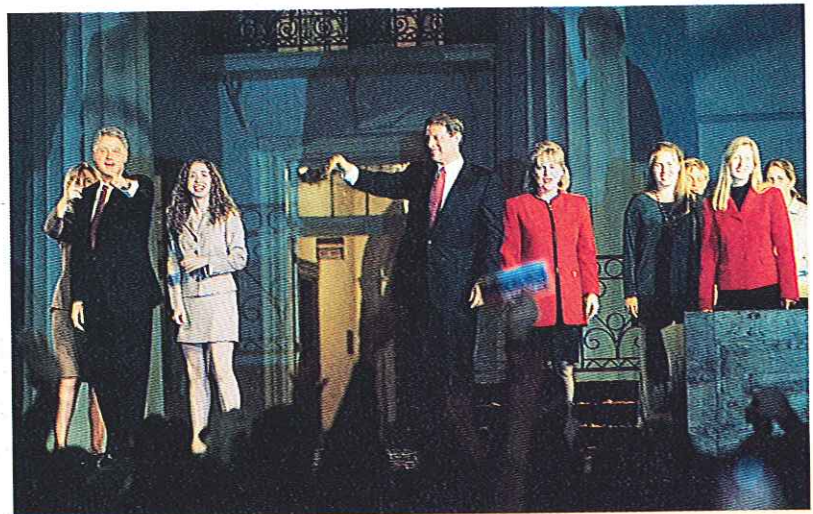
General Elections As you have learned, U.S. citizens elect their local, state, and national leaders in

general elections. The majority of these elections take place in **single-member districts**—electoral districts in which only one candidate can win election to a particular office. For example, in a city, several people from a particular ward or precinct might run for a place on the city council. Only one of the candidates, however, may be elected to the position.

In almost all single-member district elections, the candidate who receives a plurality of the votes is the winner. As noted in Chapter 7, a plurality is the largest number of votes received by a candidate in an election. Whereas races with only two major candidates are decided by a majority, races that typically have more than two candidates are decided by a plurality.

General elections are held on specific days determined by state or federal law. The winner of a general election takes office when the current officeholder's term expires.

Special Elections In addition to general elections, special elections are sometimes called at the state or local level to make a decision by popular vote. Such decisions include whether to institute a tax increase and whom to put into office to replace an official who has died or resigned before the end of his or her term. In some cases, special elections are called to give voters the opportunity to remove an elected official from office. (This process is more fully explained in Chapter 20.)



POLITICAL PROCESSES Bill Clinton and Al Gore celebrate their 1996 victory with their families at the state house in Little Rock, Arkansas. When does the winner of the general election take office?

Administration of Elections

What determines the types of elections that will be held? Local, state, and federal laws decide not only the types of elections but also when and how they are conducted.

When Elections Are Held Congressional elections take place every even-numbered year. Congress determined that congressional and presidential elections will both be held on the first Tuesday following the first Monday in November. Presidential elections are held every four years.

The states set the dates for state and local elections. All states but Louisiana hold their statewide elections on the same date as that for federal elections. Several states, however, hold their elections on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November in *odd*-numbered years. More than half of the states hold elections at the local level on the same date as that for federal elections. A few states hold these elections in other months.

How Elections Are Conducted On election day, citizens go to their precinct's polling place—or voting site—to vote. Generally, two election judges, or inspectors, and several clerks oversee the election. These officials verify that each voter's name appears on the list of officially registered voters and then either distribute blank ballots or show voters to a voting machine.

Origins of the Ballot System The United States has not always had the kind of ballot system it has today. Citizens indicated their votes verbally at a public meeting, and their selections were recorded. Later, officials set rules dictating that ballots be printed for elections. However, each political party printed its own ballots. Because these ballots typically differed in size and shape according to party, anyone could tell at a glance for which party's candidates a citizen was voting. This system led to corrupt voting practices, as each political party could pressure voters into choosing its candidates.

Secret Ballot The ballot system changed in 1888 with the introduction of the secret ballot. Also called the Australian ballot because it originated in Australia, the **secret ballot** allows voters to choose candidates in private. After stepping into a private voting booth, voters can record their votes on a paper ballot or by means of a voting machine.

Absentee Ballot A person who is seriously ill or unable to go to the polls for some reason can vote by absentee ballot. An **absentee ballot** is a ballot requested by a voter prior to election day. The voter fills out this ballot and mails it in by a certain date. The main use of absentee balloting is by people in the military who are not living in their home district.



PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY In 1996 Bob Dornan and Loretta Sanchez ran against each other for the congressional seat in California's 46th district. **How often do congressional elections take place?**

Voting by Mail In a few states, such as Oregon, certain types of elections are conducted through the mail. Citizens receive their ballots in the mail, fill them out, and then mail them back to election officials.

Voting by mail has both pros and cons. On the up side, more people tend to vote in an election if they do not have to go to a polling place. Voting by mail might also reduce costs and streamline the voting process. This method does, however, raise the possibility that someone might tamper with the ballots. People might also mistake the ballots for junk mail and throw them away without realizing what they are. In addition, because some voters do not maintain permanent mailing addresses, not all ballots will reach their desired destinations.

Contested Elections Sometimes, once the ballots have been counted and the results are announced, someone challenges, or contests, the results of the election. For example, a candidate might contest an election if he or she suspects that the votes were miscounted or that the election was conducted improperly. A dispute over an election may be settled in court or by a legislature. In some cases the votes may be recounted.

Voting Requirements

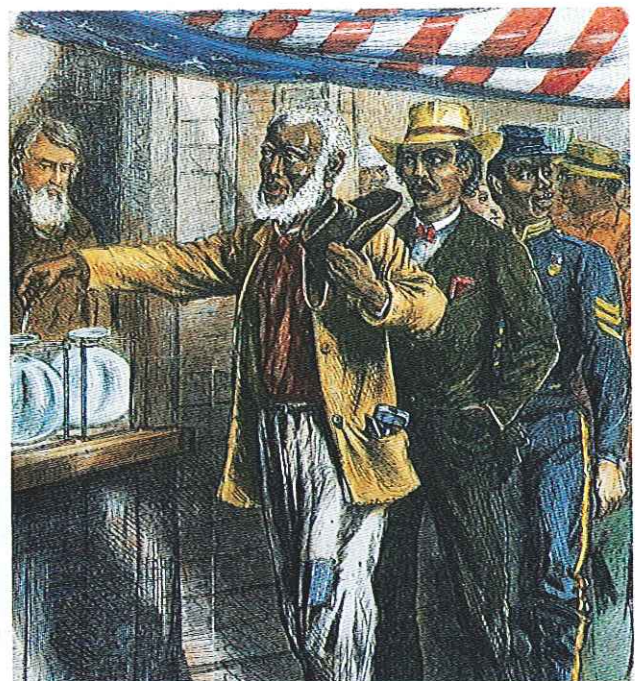
Today, laws regarding who can vote are based on factors such as age, citizenship, residence, and registration status. This has not always been the case, however. At different times in U.S. history, people's **suffrage**, or right to vote, was restricted according to their ownership of property and their ability to pay a poll tax, as well as their race and sex.

Property and Tax Requirements When the Constitution was adopted, all 13 states had laws declaring that in order to vote, a person must own property. Political leaders thought that people had to have a stake in society, or concern for their property, to make wise choices about how the country should be governed. In addition, most states required that eligible citizens pay a poll tax—money paid to cast a ballot—before they could vote. Thus, voting in the late 1700s was restricted to fewer than one fourth of all adult white males.

During a period of political reform in the early 1800s, many states dropped their property requirements. In fact, by 1843, all states had removed all property requirements for voting, allowing almost all of the adult white male population to vote.

African Americans' Right to Vote Laws limiting suffrage to adult white males lasted until several years after the Civil War. Then, in 1870, the Fifteenth Amendment was passed, guaranteeing African American males the right to vote. However, white-run state governments, mostly in the South, made it increasingly difficult for blacks to participate in politics.

Southern leaders typically located polling places far away from where African Americans lived, drew election districts that prevented black majorities, created literacy tests that many blacks could not pass, and in many instances required voters to pay poll taxes. Legal loopholes allowed most adult white males to vote without passing such tests or paying poll taxes. Blacks who opposed the unfair restrictions placed on them were subject to harassment or worse by



CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT African American males were guaranteed the vote with the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment. In what ways did some states make it difficult for blacks to vote after this amendment was passed?



CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT *Women parade through New York City in 1917 carrying a sign quoting President Woodrow Wilson's support of the suffrage movement. Which constitutional amendment guaranteed women the right to vote?*

white supremacist groups such as the Ku Klux Klan. As noted in Chapter 15, barriers to black voting were not overcome until the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s.

Women's Suffrage Women also were denied the right to vote for much of U.S. history. The movement for women's voting rights gained force after the Civil War. Supporters of women's suffrage, including Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, organized parades, demonstrations, and protests to bring attention to the issue. These supporters often were criticized, arrested, and even imprisoned for their actions. Their opponents believed that women had no business being involved in politics and that they were not educated enough to vote.

During the late 1800s the Idaho and Colorado state constitutions were amended to give women the vote. By that time, Wyoming and Utah had already written women's suffrage into their territorial constitutions. These victories had little effect on the status of women's voting rights in the rest of the country, however. In 1911 an intense campaign for women's suffrage in California narrowly resulted in an amendment to

that state's constitution. Many people, however, continued to push for an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

In 1918 President Woodrow Wilson announced his support of the proposed Nineteenth Amendment to guarantee women's suffrage. A year later Congress passed the amendment. It was ratified by the required number of states in 1920.

Voting Requirements Today

Today voting requirements are based on four factors. These are

- ★ age,
- ★ citizenship,
- ★ residence, and
- ★ registration status.

Age Until 1971 all but four states (Alaska, Georgia, Hawaii, and Kentucky) set the minimum voting age at 21. During the 1960s, many people had argued to change the voting age. They said that if 18-year-olds could legally marry, as well as be drafted to serve in the armed forces, they should be allowed to vote as well.

In 1970 Congress passed a bill lowering the voting age to 18, but the Supreme Court ruled that the law was constitutional only for federal elections. Congress then proposed a constitutional amendment—the Twenty-sixth Amendment—establishing the voting age at 18. The amendment was quickly ratified and applies to *all* elections. In addition, some states allow 17-year-olds to register and vote in primary elections if they will turn 18 before the general election.

Citizenship All states have laws keeping non-citizens from taking part in elections. No voting laws, however, distinguish between native-born and naturalized citizens. On the other hand, many states do bar citizens convicted of serious crimes and those with serious mental illnesses from voting.

Residence Residency requirements for voting vary from state to state, but all states have them. The most common of these requirements says that a person must have been a legal resident in a state for at least 30 days to vote in its elections. Congress also determined in the Voting Rights Act of 1970 that 30-day's residence in a state was sufficient to allow people to vote in a presidential election.

Registration States do not allow any citizen to vote in elections unless he or she has registered. This requirement keeps citizens from voting twice. As voters come to cast their ballots, election workers officially record their names.

To register, citizens fill out a form that provides information about themselves, such as their age and where they live. After the state checks to see that all voter eligibility requirements have been met, the person is registered.

Some states require that citizens reregister every few years. In most states a voter's registration remains valid unless he or she moves, dies, or does not vote in several consecutive elections.

C A S E S T U D Y

Motor Voter Law

POLITICAL PROCESSES Many people have long argued that simplifying the voter registration process would encourage more citizens to go to the polls. In 1993 those supporters helped persuade Congress to pass and President Clinton to sign the National Voter Registration Act, which made it easier for people to register to vote.

The law, sometimes referred to as the Motor Voter Law, requires states to allow citizens to register to vote, or to update their registration information, when they apply for or renew their driver's licenses. In addition, the law requires that citizens be allowed to register at designated government agencies. These include public assistance agencies and agencies that provide services to people with disabilities. The law also states that citizens must be allowed to register by mail.

Supporters of the bill pointed to the potential benefit of boosting voter turnout. Opponents, on the other hand, argued that looser procedures for registering would make voter fraud easier. Officials in some states also objected to the law in part because Congress did not provide the funding to make the required changes in the registration process.

Nevertheless, supporters have hailed the Motor Voter Law as a success. A total of about 15 million people either registered to vote or updated their registration information in the first 18 months after the law went into effect in January 1995.



PUBLIC GOOD *The Motor Voter Law was passed to allow eligible voters to update their voter registration information in more convenient locations, such as at public assistance agencies. How might this law encourage greater voter participation?*

Party Identification of U.S. Voters

Year	Democrat	Republican	Independent	Apolitical
1952	57%	34%	6%	3%
1960	52%	36%	10%	2%
1962	54%	35%	8%	4%
1970	54%	32%	13%	1%
1972	52%	34%	13%	1%
1980	52%	33%	13%	2%
1984	48%	39%	11%	2%
1988	47%	41%	11%	2%
1990	52%	36%	10%	2%
1992	50%	38%	12%	1%
1994	47%	42%	10%	1%

Source: National Election Studies, University of Michigan

The chart above shows party identification of U.S. voters during different periods. At what point between 1952 and 1994 did the largest percentage of voters identify themselves as Democrats?

Nearly half, or 8.8 million, of the registration or updating transactions took place in locations where people apply for or renew driver's licenses. Supporters estimated that 15 million new voters would be added to the rolls within two years after the law went into effect.

What effect has the Motor Voter Law had in increasing voter turnout? It is still too early to tell, but turnout during the 1996 general election was not encouraging. Fewer than half of all eligible voters went to the polls that year, down from just over 55 percent in the 1992 presidential election. Still, supporters of the Motor Voter Law say that turnout should increase as more people register.

Voting Behavior

Now that you know how elections are conducted, you may be wondering why people vote the way they do. There are four main factors that influence the way people vote: party identification, personal opinions about the issues, a candidate's record and image, and the voters' personal background.

Party Identification Political party identification is one factor that influences how people

vote. Some people absorb their family's political opinions and preferences as children. The party loyalties that are developed early in life may never change.

For others, however, party identification may change as they evaluate the performance of officeholders, or as they respond to certain events. Research now suggests that even voters who have supported one party for a long time may change their party loyalty if they are dissatisfied with their party's performance.

Yet other people choose not to back a particular political party. These people are called independents. (Independent voters are similar to independent candidates in an election. An independent candidate is one who does not represent a political party.)

Research shows that the number of people who identify themselves as independents has risen significantly since the 1940s. According to statistics gathered by a series of National Election studies, in 1994 around 35 percent of those polled identified themselves as independents.

Issues People's opinions on certain issues are another factor in how they vote. The issues that are "hot topics" change from decade to decade. Important issues of the 1990s, for example, include abortion rights and taxes. As you probably know, many citizens feel strongly about these two issues and their views about them can affect their party identification and choice of candidates.

Candidate's Record and Image A third factor influencing how people vote is a candidate's record and image. His or her past performance is particularly important. For example, in a presidential election, if people feel the country is headed on the right track, they are more likely to have a positive opinion of the incumbent candidate. If the economy is in a slump or unemployment has risen, however, voters are more likely to have a negative opinion of the incumbent.



PUBLIC GOOD Typically, voters evaluate a candidate according to his or her personality and character. Why might a candidate believe that meeting with voters in person would help present a positive image?

Voters in this situation are making their choices based on an overall evaluation of the state of the country rather than just focusing on the incumbent's opinions on certain issues.

Research shows that voters' evaluations of a candidate's personality and character also are critical to voting decisions. Voters typically evaluate

candidates according to a perception of their effectiveness, integrity, and leadership ability. In many cases a voter's feeling about the candidate's age and "style" also can affect his or her vote. A younger candidate might receive a greater number of votes from younger voters, for example.

Voters' Background

Studies of voting behavior show that a person's background is another important factor in how he or she votes. As noted in Chapter 16, people develop political opinions over the course of their lifetimes in a process called political socialization. People's individual backgrounds—their age, income, sex, race, education, and

family beliefs—affect how they choose candidates. For example, people who have higher incomes may vote against a candidate who supports higher taxes for the middle to upper classes. Or, as noted above, younger voters might not support an older candidate if they feel he or she cannot relate to their concerns.

SECTION 3

REVIEW

1. Define the following terms: single-member district, secret ballot, absentee ballot, suffrage.
2. What are the two types of elections besides primary elections?
3. Imagine that it is election day. List the steps you would have to take to vote for the candidates of your choice.
4. How was suffrage limited in early U.S. history? What voting requirements exist today?
5. Name the factors that influence the way you might vote.

6. Thinking and Writing Critically

In your opinion, is a candidate's image an important consideration in an election? How much would issues such as age affect your vote? Why?

7. Applying POLITICAL FOUNDATIONS

Conduct an Internet search for information on voting, ballots, elections, and voter registration. Write a paragraph describing the information you find. Be sure to include a list of Internet sites you visit in your search.

SECTION 4

CAMPAIGNS AND THE PUBLIC GOOD

Objectives

- ★ Why do some people criticize the media's role in campaigns?
- ★ What are the possible effects of negative campaigning?
- ★ What are some of the benefits of political campaigns?

As you have seen, elections serve an important role in U.S. government. By voting, citizens in effect give their opinions on how the country should be run and who should run it. Many critics, however, question the means by which candidates try to influence voters' opinions to win elections.

A campaign is meant not only to influence voters and get them more interested in an election but also to inform them about the candidate so that they can make educated choices. Critics believe, however, that campaigns' single-minded goal—to win—has led them to misinform more often than inform. In addition, many believe that this drive to win, along with registration requirements and the weakness of political parties, may reduce the level of voter turnout.

It can be argued, however, that campaigns bring issues to the attention of voters in a way that no other political events do. By presenting information about political issues in a format that will attract wide interest, campaigns promote the public good.

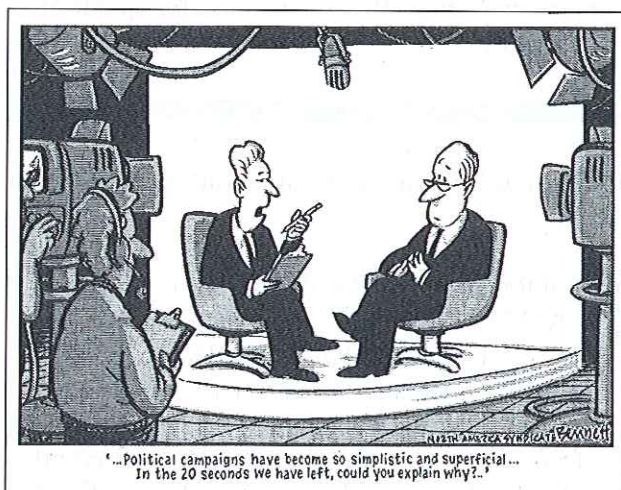
Criticisms of Election Campaigns

Campaigns are criticized chiefly for two reasons. First, many people believe that advertising in the media plays too strong a role in campaigns. Second, critics believe that there is too much negative campaigning in today's elections.

Role of Advertising in the Media Much of the criticism of the media's role in campaigns focuses on campaign advertising. In today's world of expensive airtime, campaigns choose to advertise most often in 30-second television and radio spots. How much substance, critics argue, can be communicated in a 30-second spot? A half-minute ad does not really argue a position; it only presents it. Furthermore, a commercial rarely gives a balanced account of what is involved in an issue.

Longer speeches allow for more substance, but they may lose some of the audience. A short spot, on the other hand, can make a point quickly without giving the viewer as much time to tune out. Many viewers, however, tuned in to watch a number of 30-minute infomercials, complete with charts and graphs that candidate Ross Perot ran to present his ideas in the 1992 presidential campaign. These segments differed a great deal from the typical spot format, and yet they received ratings that were competitive with regular network programs.

Negative Campaigning Negative campaigning is nothing new. Even during the country's early years, campaigns printed flyers and banners displaying the claimed faults of the opposing candidates. For example, during the election of 1796, Republicans in Pennsylvania supported



Courtesy of Clay Bennett, North America Syndicate.

PUBLIC GOOD Some critics think that 30-second campaign ads do not contain much substance to help voters make an informed choice about a candidate. Why are long speeches not included in campaign advertisements?

Comparing

Governments

Media and Elections

Some people believe that the broadcast media, particularly television networks, should provide free airtime to political candidates. They think that this would make U.S. election campaigns more fair and more informative for voters.

Such is the case in Russia, where in the early 1990s the government passed a law requiring state-owned television and radio stations to provide one hour of free time each workday to political candidates. Government-subsidized mass media and mass media funded by public institutions must provide equal opportunities for candidates running for office in Russia's State Duma, or lower legislative branch. Political groups have the right to one appearance on state television and one on the state radio. These appearances are scheduled during the three weeks just before election day.

Although political groups each receive the same amount of free airtime, candidates and groups may purchase more. The fees for purchased time are regulated by the government to prevent bias. Even so, Russian political candidates continue to face the problem of unequal media coverage that occurs in U.S. political campaigns.

Thomas Jefferson by passing out a leaflet that read:

“THOMAS JEFFERSON is a Firm REPUBLICAN, JOHN ADAMS is an avowed [a self-declared] MONARCHIST. . . . Thomas Jefferson first drew the declaration of American independence;—he first framed the sacred political sentence that all men are born equal. John Adams says this is all a farce [an empty display] and a falsehood; that some men should be born Kings, and some should be born nobles. . . . Adams has sons who might aim to succeed their father; Jefferson, like Washington, has no son.”

Negative campaigning has become more prominent in recent decades. Although most voters tell pollsters that they oppose negative campaigning, it seems to work. Candidates subjected to it find themselves on the defensive, having to take time and effort away from presenting their own campaign themes in order to fend off attack.

Because of the success of negative campaigning, in many instances campaign workers search for embarrassing quotations, unethical behavior, or contradictory votes that could be used against opponents. By taking particular statements or votes out of context, this practice draws attention away from the opponent's record as a whole.

In many instances campaigns use this information to create negative ads (sometimes called attack ads) to run on television and radio. Some of these ads refer to a candidate's “flip-flops,” pointing out how he or she has changed positions on an issue. “Not-on-the-job” ads point out missed legislative votes, while “negative-on-positive” ads dispute something positive an opponent has said about him- or herself, such as a claim about opposing special-interest groups. In recent years, candidates have even run negative ads attacking an opponent for negative campaigning.

Nonvoting

What effect do advertising and negative campaigning have on voters? Many critics feel that today's campaign techniques, along with registration procedures and the weakened condition of the political parties, have caused a decrease in voter turnout. In the 1992 presidential election, for example, only 55 percent of the voting-age population voted. By 1996 this number had shrunk to below 50 percent. This percentage has been decreasing steadily over the past few decades. Turnout is even lower for congressional elections that do not coincide with presidential elections (about 39 percent in 1994).

Voter Alienation Many nonvoters say that they feel alienated by the political system in this country. They feel powerless to change the system and think that their vote does not make a difference in the political process. In addition, some say that the strength of interest groups and contributions of the wealthy play too big a role in the political system.

Furthermore, although negative campaigning is intended to sway voters' opinions, one study reports that some people become less likely to vote after hearing and seeing negative ads. This result might occur because negative campaigning makes them distrust politicians and politics in general, not just the candidates being attacked. By causing fewer people to vote, negative ads detract from the contribution to the public good that campaigns otherwise make.

Registration Requirements Some people believe that registration requirements discourage some citizens from voting. Before registration procedures were set up, some state governments maintained lists of eligible voters, but others allowed voters to just show up on election day and ask to vote. Registration makes the voting process more difficult because a person must take the time to register beforehand. Up to 30 percent of the voting-age population fails to register by election day.

In 1993, however, Congress passed and President Bill Clinton signed into law the Motor Voter Law, which requires states to make registering to vote easier (see the case study on page 444). To meet the law's mandates, a state must permit citizens to register by mail or when applying for a driver's license or federal or state benefits.

Weakened Political Parties Another reason for low voter participation is the apparently weakened state of the major political parties. During the late 1800s, when political parties were strong, voter participation was high in campaigns and elections. As political parties grew weaker, however, citizens became less involved in the electoral process. Statistics show that high levels of positive competition between the political parties increase voter turnout for the election in question. Increased competition sparks voters' interest.

VOTER REGISTRATION CARD
(Please type or print)

Date

1. Name
Last First Middle Initial

2. Address
Street (Ward No.)
Town/City Zip Code

3. Mailing Address if different than in 2.
Street
Town/City (Ward No.) Zip Code

4. Place and Date of Birth
Town/City/State Date

5. If a naturalized citizen, give name of court where and date when naturalized:

6. Place last registered to vote
Street/Town/State (Ward No.)

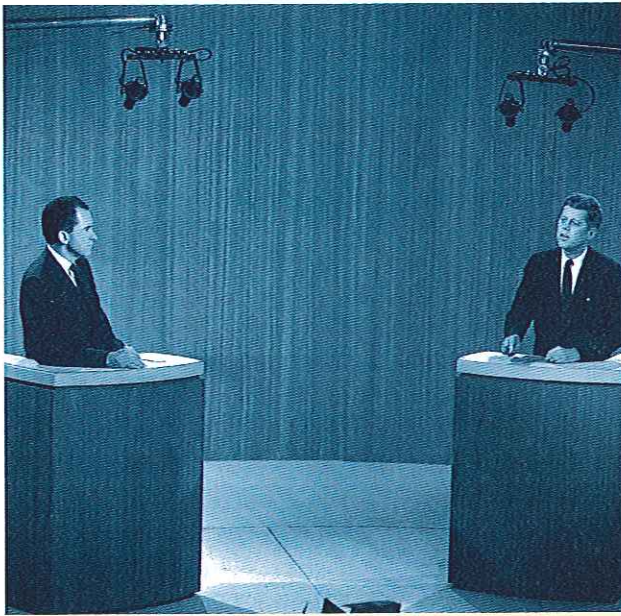
7. Name under which previously registered, if different from above:

8. Party Affiliation (if any)

I hereby swear, under penalty of perjury, that my permanent established domicile is at the above address, that I am a United States citizen, and that I am 18 years of age or older, and that the information above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge and belief.

E-80552
 Signature of Applicant

PUBLIC GOOD *Voter registration helps the government keep the electoral process fair, but it also makes the voting process more difficult. Approximately what portion of the voting-age population is not registered?*



PUBLIC GOOD *John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon participated in a televised debate during the 1960 presidential campaign. How does political debate help voters make more informed decisions?*

Benefits of Campaigns

In spite of the criticisms of campaigns, they do provide services that are necessary to the political process. Among these benefits are the encouragement of political debate and the information they provide to the electorate. Debate and readily available information promote the public good.

Encouraging Debate For voters to make decisions about political issues and candidates, they

must be able to weigh conflicting points of view. Political campaigns expose people to opposing viewpoints, thus prompting them to debate the issues. Some campaigns include public debates between the candidates, further fueling discussion among the citizenry.

Providing Information Political campaigns also provide information about candidates and their backgrounds. Some political ads even expose information about an opposing candidate that he or she might not wish to have revealed. Though some of this injurious information may not relate to the issues, in many cases, campaigns do provide facts that voters need in order to be well informed.

Political campaigns provide information to voters in a variety of ways. Many candidates campaign in person—knocking on doors to speak with voters, distributing brochures, and speaking to small groups in homes or clubs. Candidates also send out hundreds of letters directly to voters. These letters usually contain information about a candidate’s experience in government office and his or her position on key issues. They may also point out the differences between a candidate’s views about the issues and the views of his or her opponents.

Finally, campaign ads provide voters with a significant amount of information in a short period of time. Advertisements often focus on how a candidate’s views differ from those of the opposition. By using a variety of campaign tools, a candidate can inform a wide cross section of voters on key campaign issues.

SECTION 4

REVIEW

1. Why is the role of the media in campaigns sometimes criticized?
2. What is negative campaigning, and why do campaigns use it?
3. What are some of the reasons that people might not vote? Why is nonvoting a problem in a democracy?
4. Why are campaigns important to the political process?

5. Thinking and Writing Critically

Imagine that you are running for office. Write a 30-second advertising spot describing your beliefs about key issues of the day. Do you feel that 30 seconds is enough time to convey the main points about your views? Explain your answer.

6. Applying **PUBLIC GOOD**

Have you ever witnessed negative campaigning during an election year? How does it affect your opinion of the political process?

SECTION 1

The first step in the U.S. electoral process is nomination. There are five ways a candidate can be nominated—by self-announcement, caucus, convention, petition, and primary election. There are different types of primaries: direct, closed, open, runoff, and nonpartisan.

SECTION 2

The second step in the electoral process is the campaign. Since the early years of the United States, supporters of political candidates have conducted elaborate campaigns during election years to try to sway citizens' votes. Though the goal of campaigning has remained the same, its methods have changed a great deal. During the 1900s, candidates became more visible, media involvement became more pronounced, and polling became a key tool. With these new developments came an increase in campaign spending.

Today, campaigns receive funds from several sources: political parties, political action committees (PACs), the government, private donors, and candidates' personal finances. As spending increased, regulation was needed to ensure the proper handling of funds. Thus, campaigns are now required to submit financial reports. Limits have been placed on both how much money individuals and groups can contribute to campaigns and on who can contribute.

SECTION 3

Local, state, and federal laws determine the types of elections that are held, how elections are administered, and who can vote. Besides primary elections, there are two main types of elections: general and special.

Congress determines when congressional and presidential elections are held. The states determine when state and local elections are held. To vote, a citizen goes to a polling place and casts a ballot. In the United States the secret-ballot system protects voters from outside pressures when voting. Citizens who are unable to go to the polls may use an absentee ballot.

Today voting requirements are based on citizenship, age, residence, and registration status. At other times in U.S. history, suffrage has been determined by property ownership and ability to pay a poll tax, as well as by race and sex. African Americans received the vote with the Fifteenth Amendment; women received it with the Nineteenth Amendment.

Voters must be 18 years of age as well as U.S. citizens. Many states also maintain residency requirements that a citizen must meet before voting. States also require that citizens register before participating in an election.

The way people vote is affected by several factors. These include party identification, opinions on issues, the candidate's record and image, and voters' personal backgrounds.

SECTION 4

Election campaigns are criticized for two main reasons: for the role that advertising in the media plays in them and for the negative campaigning that takes place during them. Some critics believe that, in addition to difficult registration procedures and the weakened condition of the political parties, today's campaigning techniques have caused a decline in voter turnout.

Campaigns provide two major benefits, however. They encourage debate within the political system, and they provide information to the electorate. Although some of this information may be part of a negative campaign, in many cases, campaigns do provide facts that voters need in order to be informed.

**Government Notebook**

Review the list you made in your Government Notebook at the beginning of the chapter. Why is it important that you have a voice in the decisions that you and your friends or classmates make? Write your answer in your Notebook.

REVIEW

REVIEWING CONCEPTS

1. Name the three steps in the electoral process.
2. What is the most common means of nominating candidates today? What are the other means of nominating candidates?
3. How are campaigns financed?
4. How did campaigns change during the 1900s?
5. Why does government regulate campaigns? What rules must they follow?
6. Describe the different types of elections.
7. What are the requirements for voting in the United States today?
8. What limitations existed on voting in the past?
9. Why are campaigns sometimes criticized?
10. What factors might influence a person's vote?

THINKING AND WRITING CRITICALLY



1. **PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY** How were local concerns represented in the national conventions in the 1800s and early 1900s? Do you think local and state conventions should still exist? Explain your answers.
2. **POLITICAL PROCESSES** In campaigning for office, candidates of the past were much less visible than candidates today. How important is it for a candidate to campaign in person? If you were running for office, would you go on a campaign tour? Why or why not? Would you be more or less likely to vote for a candidate you have seen in person? Explain your answers.
3. **PUBLIC GOOD** Describe some of the discriminatory voting regulations in U.S. history. Do

you think age requirements are discriminatory? How is the public good promoted by the elimination of discrimination in voter registration? Explain your answers.

4. **PUBLIC GOOD** Imagine that you are running for political office. Is your goal to win at any cost or to inform the public about your platform? Do you think these two goals could go hand in hand? Explain your answers.

CITIZENSHIP IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Imagine that you are the campaign manager for someone in your school who is running for class president or student council representative. Write short speeches or advertisements to read aloud over the public address system, draw posters to display in the school, and create campaign buttons and ribbons to pass out to students. What tactics do you think will be most effective? Why?

INDIVIDUAL PORTFOLIO PROJECT



Two factors that influence the way people vote are party identification and their opinions on the issues. Make a list of some important issues in the 1990s, such as education, taxes, and a balanced budget. Then write your answers to the following questions: What do you think about each issue? Are the current laws concerning each issue effective? (You may need to conduct some outside research about these issues to find out what current laws specify.) What laws do you think should be in place concerning each issue? Based on your answers to these questions, determine whether your answers are more in line with Democratic, Republican, or independent views.

PRACTICING SKILLS: CITIZENSHIP



To register to vote, a person must contact the state or local election office to request a registration form. Most registration forms require basic information such as name, age, residence, and citizenship, as well as a signature to affirm that the information given on the form is correct. Study the voter registration card on page 449, and answer the questions below.

1. What do you think is the main purpose of the Place of Birth section?
2. Why must naturalized citizens provide information about their naturalization?
3. Why might election officials need to know party affiliation?
4. Why is it necessary to know the name under which a citizen was previously registered?

THE INTERNET: LEARNING ONLINE



Conduct an Internet search for information about the Women's Rights Convention held in Seneca Falls, New York, on July 19 and 20, 1848. Who organized the convention? How was it publicized? Who attended? What was accomplished at the convention? Begin by typing in search words such as *Seneca Falls*, *Women's Rights Convention*, and *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*. With others in your class, re-enact the convention by using the information you gather. Be sure to record the addresses of the Web sites you find.

ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCES



EIGHTY YEARS AND MORE

Elizabeth Cady Stanton is a well-known women's rights advocate of the 1800s. She helped organize a women's rights movement. Read the excerpt below, from her book *Eighty Years and More*, which describes a time when Stanton attempted to cast her vote before the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment, which gave women the right to vote. Answer the questions that follow.

“November 2 being election day, the Republican carriage, decorated with flags and evergreens, came to the door for voters. As I owned the house and paid the taxes, and as none of the white males was home, I suggested that I might go down and do the voting. . . . Accompanied by my faithful friend, Miss [Susan B.] Anthony, we stepped into the carriage and went to the poll. . . . When we entered the room it was crowded with men. . . .

The inspectors [men] were thunderstruck. I think they were afraid that I was about to capture the ballot box. One placed his arms round it, with one hand close over the aperture [slot] where the ballots were slipped in, and said, with mingled surprise and pity, ‘Oh, no, madam! Men only are allowed to vote.’ I then explained to him that, in accordance with the Constitution of New Jersey, women had voted in New Jersey down to 1801, when they were forbidden the further exercise of the right by an arbitrary act of the legislature, and, by a recent amendment to the national Constitution, Congress had declared that ‘all persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside’ and are entitled to vote. I told them that I wished to cast my vote, as a citizen of the United States, for the candidates for United States offices. Two of the inspectors sat down and pulled their hats over their eyes, whether from shame or ignorance I do not know. The other held on to the box, and said ‘I know nothing about the Constitutions, State or national. I never read either; but I do know that in New Jersey, women have not voted in my day, and I cannot accept your ballot.’”

1. On what grounds did Stanton base her right to vote?
2. Why were the men so surprised that a woman would attempt to cast a vote in an election?
3. What forbade women to vote in New Jersey after 1801?

YOUR ASSIGNMENT

Campaign Consultant for a Day

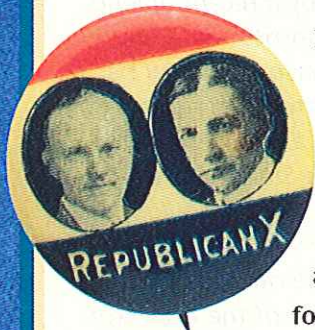
You and other members of your group are campaign consultants, or expert advisers, who hire out your services to candidates for national office. It is 2000 and presidential candidates, the Democratic nominee and the Republican nominee, are campaigning tirelessly around the country. In addition, they have agreed to a nationally televised debate next month, two weeks before the general election. To help them prepare for their debate, the two candidates are searching for consultants such as yourselves.

On the following pages is information you have gathered on the campaign. This information should guide you in assessing the campaign's important issues. It also should provide some insight into the candidates' positions on those issues. Answer the questions that accompany the information in your Government Notebook.

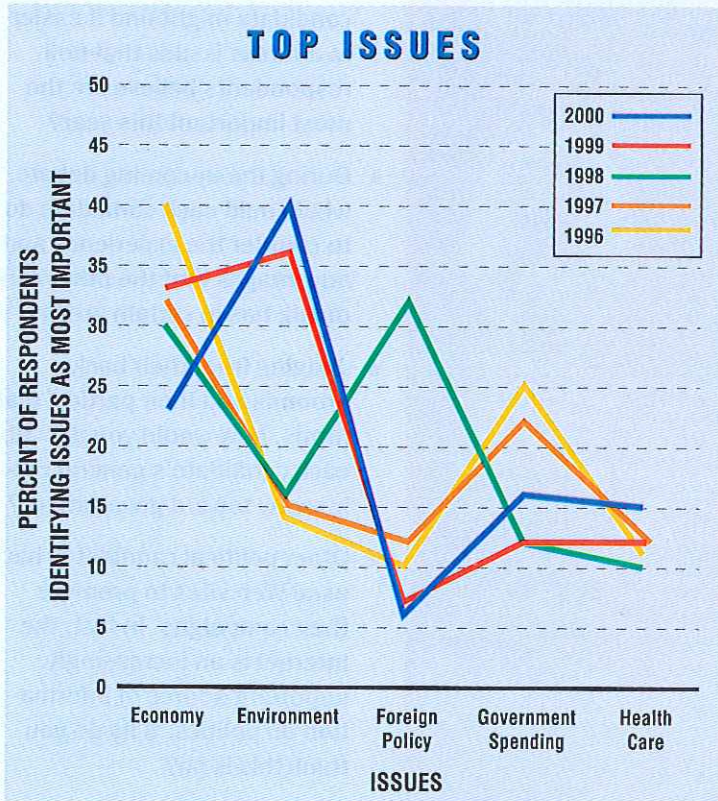
After you have finished reviewing the information, divide your group into two camps: consultants who will join the Democratic nominee's campaign and those who will join the Republican nominee's campaign. Students on each side must then put together a debate preparation paper for their candidate.

The paper should address three areas: likely debate questions and issues, your opponent's position on those issues, and suggestions for how your candidate can answer the possible questions and persuade the debate audience that his or her positions on the issues are superior. For example, your candidate might emphasize how his or her background would be helpful in tackling tough issues. In addition, you might encourage your candidate to explain to the debate audience how his or her overall philosophical beliefs are revealed by positions taken on specific issues.

When you have finished, share and discuss your debate preparation paper with members of the opposing nominee's campaign.



Each year, PollStats, a national polling firm, conducts 1,500 telephone interviews, asking respondents to identify the country's most important issue. Each annual poll has a sampling error of plus or minus 5 points. The most recent poll was conducted last month in anticipation of the upcoming general election.



“Of these five issues, which do you believe is the most important facing the United States this year?”

▲ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- ★ Using the polling data as a guide, how have U.S. citizens attitudes changed over the last four years regarding which issues they believe are most important?
- ★ Why is the *Daily Post* editorial writer concerned about government spending?
- ★ Using the polling data and the editorial as guides, on what issues do you think the presidential nominees are most likely to be questioned in their upcoming debate? What might some of the questions be?

THE DAILY POST

Candidates Should Focus on Spending

As the general election approaches, we hope the Democratic and Republican nominees for president will focus their campaigns on issues that U.S. voters find important today. In addition, however, the nominees should focus on some issues that likely will become more important over the next four years.

A recent PollStats survey indicates that roughly 40 percent of potential voters believe that the environment is the most important issue facing the United States this year. Support for environmentalism began rising significantly last year, reflecting growing concern over air and water pollution. Congress has since been debating stricter regulations designed to lessen pollution.

At the same time, concern over foreign affairs is low, as it has been since U.S. intervention in the Ziberian civil war ended two years ago. Even the economy is of relatively low concern to respondents, although nearly a quarter of them still identify it as the nation's top issue. As the economy continues to recover from the recession that preceded the Ziberian intervention, U.S. citizens should continue to feel better about their financial situation.

Unfortunately, Democratic presidential nominee George Jenkins and Republican nominee Jeanne Stern have all but ignored another issue we believe will be a bigger concern over the next four years: government spending. After important progress was made toward a balanced budget in the late 1990s, leaders in both parties moved on to other issues. That was a mistake.

With many people in the baby boom generation soon reaching retirement age, government spending—particularly on programs for the elderly—is likely to rise rapidly. In their debate next month we hope the two major party nominees will tell the voters how they plan to address this difficult problem in the coming years.

PUBLIC POLICY LAB

Democratic Presidential Nominee **GEORGE JENKINS:** Keeping America Working!



Find out more about the Democratic Party and how **GEORGE JENKINS WILL KEEP AMERICA WORKING!**

About the Democratic Party

Join the Democratic Party

Vice Presidential Nominee
Olympia Martinez

Bills Sponsored by
George Jenkins

Democratic Youth
Organizations

Congressional Elections

State Elections

MEET U.S. SENATOR GEORGE JENKINS, the Democratic nominee for president of the United States. Here is a little background information on the senator who will keep America working!

★ Born: July 4, 1951

★ U.S. Senator, 1991–Present

★ Senate committees: Environment, Public Works, and Budget

★ Author of best-selling book: *The Environment: Making It Work for All of Us*



DEMOCRATIC PARTY PLATFORM

Delegates to the Democratic National Convention this summer adopted a party platform that serves the interests of all Americans. The platform calls for important measures designed to keep our environment clean and to keep workers on the job. These measures include:

- ★ stronger regulations designed to prevent air and water pollution;
- ★ a tax cut for the middle class;
- ★ more federal funding to improve roads, bridges, and railroads that need repair after years of neglect;
- ★ increased financial aid for students seeking college degrees to help them compete in the economy of tomorrow; and
- ★ laws that will make it easier for people to purchase health insurance.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- ★ Judging from their backgrounds, on what issues does each candidate appear to have the most experience? Judging from their experience, which candidate might find it easier to address issues that poll respondents believe are the most important this year?
- ★ During the upcoming debate, what could each candidate do to counter the experience and advantages that the other candidate has in certain areas?
- ★ Judging from their backgrounds and their parties' platforms, how would you describe each candidate's general philosophy toward government?
- ★ Other political candidates have used Web sites to promote their campaigns. In fact, the Internet is an increasingly important source of information on politics. Why do you think this is so?

Republicans for **JEANNE STERN:** Standing Up for **AMERICA!**



JEANNE STERN

- ✓ Former U.S. SECRETARY OF STATE
- ✓ Former U.S. TRADE REPRESENTATIVE
- ✓ Former U.S. congresswoman and chair of the House Foreign Affairs Committee
- ✓ Author of *Free Trade and Foreign Policy and Business and Environment: Finding Solutions Together*

JEANNE STERN AND THE REPUBLICAN PARTY ON THE ISSUES:

- ✓ Increase funding for a strong national defense.
- ✓ Empower the United States to act in its own interests internationally, without interference from foreign governments.
- ✓ Pass a balanced budget and keep a tight hold on overall government spending.
- ✓ Cut taxes for the middle class.
- ✓ Pass fewer regulations that tie the hands of business and hurt the economy.
- ✓ Encourage business and government to cooperate in finding solutions to pollution problems.

OTHER REPUBLICAN PARTY LINKS:

Vice Presidential Nominee & U.S. Sen. Danny O'Reilly

History of the GOP

Contacting the Republican Party

College Republicans

Young Republicans

Links to Local GOP Organizations

COALITION FOR A CLEAN ENVIRONMENT

The Coalition for a Clean Environment (CCE) works to promote policies that prevent air and water pollution and the wasting of our natural resources. To help inform U.S. voters about the major presidential nominees, we asked the candidates their positions on various environmental issues. Their responses are included in the following voter's guide.

Voter's Guide

The Environment



JENKINS



STERN

1. Do you support stronger federal rules requiring carmakers to build automobiles that cause less pollution?
2. Do you favor tougher federal penalties for businesses that dump toxic wastes in rivers and other waterways?
3. Would you join other world leaders in seeking a ban on the manufacture of products that release gases damaging the earth's ozone layer?
4. Would you support a summit of international leaders to agree on other ways to prevent the pollution of the world's air and water?

YES

NO

YES

NO

YES

NO

YES

NO

◀ WHAT DO YOU THINK?

- ★ Review the answers attributed to the candidates in this voter's guide. Which candidate would you expect the Coalition for a Clean Environment to support?
- ★ The Coalition for a Clean Environment is sending this voter's guide to members across the country. Why do you suppose the organization decided to send out this information?
- ★ What does this voter's guide really tell you about the candidates' positions? For example, does it tell voters what specific laws and actions Stern opposes and why? What might be some of Stern's reasons for opposing some of the proposals presented here? Does such opposition imply that Stern opposes a clean environment?

THINGS TO DO

1. Divide your group into consultants who support Jenkins and consultants who support Stern.
2. With other consultants for your candidate, discuss the information you have reviewed in this activity.
3. Work with your other consultants to write a debate preparation paper for your candidate. The paper should include a list of questions and issues your candidate can expect during the debate, the opponent's position on those issues, and suggestions for how your candidate can answer those questions and persuade the debate audience that his or her positions on the issues are superior.
4. Finally, share your debate preparation paper with the other consultants. Then consider the following questions. What were the most reliable sources of information about candidates' positions on issues? What other sources of information about the candidates might be available? What are the strengths and weaknesses of each side's debate preparation suggestions? How do you believe your candidate would fare in a debate against his or her opponent?