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Interest Groups

"By a faction, I understand a number of citizens . . . united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adversed to the rights of other citizens, or to the . . . aggregate interests of the community."

—James Madison, *Federalist No.10*, 1787

Essential Question: How do citizens, businesses, and other interests influence lawmaking and policy, and how has government regulated their actions?

At any level of government, people differ on the question of how to shape the law. Some citizens naturally become part of formal groups based on their common beliefs. James Madison and other founders expressed concern about factions, groups of "interested" people motivated by the pursuit of wealth, religious beliefs, or alliances with other countries. Today, these special interests, sometimes referred to as pressure groups or lobbies, are concerned with corporate profits, workers' rights, the environment, product safety, or other issues. They are *linkage institutions* because they connect citizens to government and provide organizations through which citizen voices can be expressed. Historic and recent accounts of bribery, scandal, and other unethical tactics have shaped the public's impression of these groups. Yet, the First Amendment guarantees the right of special interests to operate and express opinions.

Benefits of Interest Groups

Since Madison wrote *Federalist No. 10* (pages 23 and 644), the United States has developed into a complex web of viewpoints, each seeking to influence government at the national, state, and local levels. The nation's constitutional arrangement of government encourages voices in all three branches of government and at all three levels. This **pluralism**, a multitude of views that ultimately results in a consensus on some issues, has intensified the ongoing competition among interests.

The three separate and equal branches of government, Madison argued in *Federalist No.10*, would prevent the domination and influence of factions or interests. The American system of government, however, with policymaking bodies in multiple branches at multiple levels, encourages the rise of interest groups. Modern interest groups have become adept at influencing policies in all

three branches. Within each branch there are people and entities—individual members of Congress, a president's appointed staff, agency directors, and scores of federal courts—that have helped to increase special interest group efforts.

The division of powers among national and state governments has also encouraged **lobbying,** applying pressure to influence government, not only in Washington but also in every state capital across the land. State governments are based on the federal model: within each state branch is a multi-member legislature, state agencies, and various courts, all of which provide targets for interest groups. County and city governments also make major decisions on school funding, road construction, fire departments, water works, and garbage collection. Many of the national interest groups, such as the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) or national teachers' unions, have local chapters to influence local decisions. Thus interests have an incentive to meet not only with national and state legislators but also with mayors, county administrators, and city council members.

BIG IDEA: This opportunity for multiple access points for people to have their voices heard and influence government policy is a key benefit of interest groups. Interest groups must compete in the "marketplace of ideas" just as products must compete in a free enterprise system. This competition tends to increase democratic participation, since people cannot take for granted that their interests will be considered. Interest groups also devote time and resources to creating practical solutions to real problems and have the power to

Source: *Dreamstime*
In September 2012, the 26,000 members of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) went on strike for the first time in 25 years in part to protest Mayor Rahm Emanuel's policy of using standardized test scores as part of teacher performance evaluations. The strike won higher wages for the teachers, but they lost the fight on the use of standardized tests for evaluation. The CTU is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and the National Education Association and is also a member of the Illinois Federation of Teachers, a part of the AFL-CIO.

get their solutions accepted. In exercising those benefits, interest groups also educate the public and use their resources to mobilize support for their point of view. They even draft legislation and work with lawmakers and government agencies to see it put into law and enforced.

Some interest groups represent broad issues, such as civil rights or economic reform. Others, such as those focusing on drunk driving or gun rights, represent very specific or narrow interests. Both types form in response to changing times and circumstances and both demonstrate the benefits of interest groups—their ability to have their voices heard, gain support for their position, and influence government policies and elections. Interest groups, along with the protest movements that sometimes brought them into being, form with the goal of making an impact on society and influencing policy.

Broad Interests

Interest groups arose in response to the dynamic changes in the United States as the nation developed from a mainly agrarian economy to a manufacturing nation. Immigrants arrived on both coasts, bringing a wide variety of viewpoints into the country. Factory workers banded together for protection against their bosses. War veterans returning from armed conflicts looked to the government for benefits. Women and minorities sought equality, justice, and the right to vote. Congress began taking on new issues, such as regulating railroads, addressing child labor, supporting farmers, and generally passing legislation that would advance the nation. As democracy increased, the masses pushed to have their voices heard.

Labor One interest group that represented a broad issue is the American Federation of Labor (AFL), organized in 1886 under the leadership of Samuel Gompers. Initially the organization had about 140,000 members. The AFL's most useful tool was the labor strike—skilled workers simply banding together and refusing to work until the company met their demands. Labor unions also entered the political arena and pushed for legislation that protected workers against unhealthy and hazardous conditions. New state (and sometimes national) laws addressed child labor, maximum workday hours, and eventually minimum wages.

The power of labor organizations reached new levels in the 1950s. In 1955 the American Federation of Labor merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), a large union composed of steelworkers, miners, and unskilled workers. The AFL-CIO became the leading voice for the working class. American union membership peaked in 1954 with roughly 28 percent of all households belonging to unions. In 1964, the nation's largest truckers' union, the Teamsters, signed a freight agreement that protected truckers across the country and increased the union's power. Union membership hovered near the levels of the 1950s until the early 1980s. Today, about 13 percent of households, or about 7 percent of American workers, belong to organized labor. (For more on the competing interests of labor and business, see page 409.)

The AFL-CIO comprises 57 smaller unions, including the United Mine Workers and United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, with about 12 million total members. After the decline in manufacturing starting in the 1960s, and the related decline in union membership, union organizers turned to the public sector. Between 1958 and 1978, public sector union membership more than doubled, from about 7.8 million to 15.7 million. Today, most states have laws allowing collective bargaining for such public employees as teachers, firefighters, and police.

Labor unions have been instrumental in achieving the 40-hour workweek, employer-sponsored health care, family and medical leave, and an end to child labor, and although their strength is diminished in comparison to the mid-1900s, labor unions as a type of interest group continue to have an influence on policy.

Business Associations Businesses soon organized in response to the growing labor movement so they could gain influence for their positions. Manufacturing and railroad firms sent men to influence decisions in Washington. As more and more influential "lobby men" roamed the Capitol, these interests became known as the "third house of Congress."

The National Association of Manufacturers (NAM) was founded in 1895. Its members include such regional organizations as the Georgia Employers' Association, New Haven Manufacturers Association, and the San Antonio Manufacturers Association. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce formed in 1912 from the many local chambers of commerce in cities across the country, as well as private firms and individuals. Heavily financed, the NAM and the Chamber became deeply involved in politics. They both backed conservative presidential candidate William Howard Taft. The number of **trade associations** grew from about 800 in 1914 to 1,500 in 1923. By 2010, that number had grown to more than 90,000.

The U.S. Chamber of Commerce seeks to protect business interests and has used its influence to oppose the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act, which regulates banking and other investment and became federal law in 2010 following the financial crisis of 2007–2008. It opposed the Affordable Health Care for America Act and spent more than $16 million to elect senators to write a competing plan more favorable to the health insurance companies among their membership. It has also opposed government action on climate change. It supported the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, sometimes called the stimulus bill, which provided government money to businesses to preserve jobs and improve the nation's infrastructure. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce has been the top spender on lobbying for many years. In 2017, the organization spent more than $1.4 billion to help promote the interests of its members. In contrast, organized labor spent only $46 million, most of it in support of the interests of public sector and transportation employees.

Social Movements The Progressive Era (1890–1920) was a fertile period of American reform. The growing country and the rise in immigration resulted in a push for greater levels of democracy and policies to assist the average American. The push for a women's suffrage amendment had been growing. African-American leaders and compassionate northern intellectuals sought to ease racial strife in both the South and the North. The Woman's Christian Temperance Union wanted to eliminate consumption of alcohol. Many believed that the nation's cities had become overcrowded, filthy denizens of vice, and various groups formed to clean them up.

The ratification of three amendments—the Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Nineteenth—contributed to interest group growth and activity. First, the **Sixteenth Amendment** (1913) empowered Congress to tax individual incomes, which enhanced the national treasury and encouraged groups to push for more services. The **Seventeenth Amendment** (1913) empowered citizens to elect their U.S. senators directly, replacing the old system in which state legislators and party caucuses picked the senators. Senators now had to consider the views of all voters, not just the elites. When the **Nineteenth Amendment** (1920) guaranteed women the right to vote, it doubled the potential voting population. Caring and civic-minded women drew attention to urban decay, child labor, alcoholism, and other humanitarian concerns.

PROGRESSIVE ERA INTEREST GROUPS

Group	Purpose	Founded
Veterans of Foreign Wars	To secure rights for military veterans	1899
National Association for the Advancement of Colored People	To advocate for racial justice and civil rights	1909
Urban League (originally called Committee on Urban Conditions Among Negroes)	To prevent discrimination, especially in northern cities	1910
U.S. Chamber of Commerce	To unify businesses and protect commercial affairs	1912
Anti-Defamation League	To stop bigotry and defamation of Jewish people	1913
American Farm Bureau	To make farming more profitable; to secure farmers' benefits	1919
American Legion	To assist war veterans, service members, and communities	1919
League of Women Voters	To assure good government	1920
American Civil Liberties Union	To guarantee free speech, separation of church and state, and fair trials	1920

After World War II, civil rights and women's equality, environmental pollution, and a rising consumer consciousness were the focus of leading social movements. Backing for these causes expanded during the turbulent 1960s as citizens began to rely less on political parties with general platforms and more on interest groups addressing broad issues but working toward very specific goals. Interest groups tied to social movements cannot match the financial resources of the Chamber of Commerce or even unions to lobby policymakers, but they have another tool to help sway opinion—grassroots movements.

Civil Rights The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and the Urban League were founded in 1909 and 1910, respectively, to seek racial equality and social fairness for African Americans. In the 1950s and 1960s, these groups experienced a dramatic rise in membership, which increased their influence in Washington. NAACP attorneys worked tirelessly to organize black communities to seek legal redress in the courts. The Urban League worked to increase membership to enhance its influence. Additional civil rights groups surfaced and grew. The Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was founded at the University of Chicago and became instrumental in the nonviolent civil disobedience effort to desegregate lunch counters. Reverend Martin Luther King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), an organization of leading black southern clergymen, began a national publishing effort to create public awareness of racist conditions in the South. And the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was a leading force in the dangerous Freedom Rides to integrate interstate bus lines and terminals. Whether in the courts, in the streets, or on Capitol Hill, most changes to civil rights policy and legislation, especially the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, resulted from these organizations' efforts.

Women's Movement A growing number of women entered public office. Federal laws began to address fair hiring, equal pay, and workplace discrimination. Both the 1963 Equal Pay Act and the 1964 Civil Rights Act addressed occupational equality but left unsettled equal pay for equal work and a clear definition of sex discrimination.

Leading feminist Betty Friedan wrote *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963 and formed the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. NOW had 200 chapters by the early 1970s and was joined by the National Women's Political Caucus and the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws (NARAL) to create a coalition for feminist causes. The influence of these groups brought congressional passage of the Equal Rights Amendment (which failed in the state ratification battle; see page 544) and Title IX (1972), which brought more focus and funding equality to men's and women's school athletics. They also fought for the *Roe v. Wade* Supreme Court decision that prevented states from outlawing abortion.

Environmental Movement As activists drew attention to mistreatment of blacks and women, they also generated a consciousness about the misuse of our environment. Marine biologist Rachel Carson's best-selling book *Silent*

Spring (1962) made a dramatic impact. Carson criticized the use of insecticides and other pesticides that harmed birds and other wildlife. Her chosen title referenced the decreased bird population that silenced an otherwise cheerful springtime. Organizations such as the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and the Audubon Society expanded their goals and quadrupled their membership. In 1963 and 1964, Congress passed the first Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act, respectively, in part through the efforts of the environmental groups. The years of disregard of pollution and chemical dumping into the nation's waterways reached a crisis point in 1969 when Cleveland's Cuyahoga River was so inundated with chemicals that it actually caught on fire. This crisis led to even stronger legislation and the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency in 1970. Earth Day became an annual event to focus on how Americans could help to preserve the environment. In 1980, environmental interest groups celebrated the creation of the Superfund under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). The Superfund taxes chemical and petroleum companies and puts the revenue into a trust fund to be used for cleaning up environmental disasters. The first disaster to use Superfund resources was at Love Canal in New York, an abandoned canal project into which a chemical company had dumped 21,000 tons of hazardous chemicals between 1942 and 1953, putting the health of residents in the area at risk.

Consumer Movement Consumers and their advocates began to demand that manufacturers take responsibility for making products safe. No longer was *caveat emptor* ("let the buyer beware") the guiding principle in the exchange of goods and services. In 1962 President Kennedy put forth a Consumers' Bill

Source: *Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection*

The Shpack Landfill in Attleboro and Norton, Massachusetts was the site of a Superfund cleanup effort to remove hazardous waste materials, including low-level radioactive waste.

of Rights meant to challenge manufacturers and guarantee citizens the rights to product safety, information, and selection. By the end of the decade, the Consumers Union established a Washington office, and activists formed the Consumer Federation of America. With new access to sometimes troubling consumer information, the nation's confidence in major companies dropped from 55 percent in 1966 to 27 percent in 1971.

Ralph Nader emerged as America's chief consumer advocate. As early as 1959 he published articles in *The Nation* condemning the auto industry. "It is clear Detroit is designing automobiles for style, cost, performance, and calculated obsolescence," Nader wrote, "but not for safety." In 1965 he published *Unsafe at Any Speed*, an exposé of the industry, especially General Motors' (GM) sporty Corvair. To counter Nader's accusations, GM hired private detectives to tail and discredit and even blackmail him. When this effort came to light, a congressional committee summoned GM's president to testify and to apologize to Nader. The publicity helped catapult Nader's book sales and his career. In 1966, Congress also passed the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act, which, among other things, required seat belts in all new cars.

After the financial crisis of 2008–2009, consumer interest groups united under an umbrella organization called Americans for Financial Reform which helped pressure lawmakers to create the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau. Its responsibilities include regulating debt and collection practices, monitoring mortgage lending, investigating complaints about financial institutions, and obtaining refunds for consumers who were owed them.

Narrow Interests

Some interest groups form to address a narrow area of concern. For example, the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), founded in 1874, wanted to eliminate consumption of alcohol. It was one of the first interest groups to have a professional lobbyist in Congress, and through its organizing efforts it succeeded in getting the Eighteenth Amendment ratified, ushering in the era of Prohibition—a time when it was illegal to make, sell, or transport alcohol. The Eighteenth Amendment was repealed in 1933 by the Twenty-first Amendment. Long before then, WCTU had branched out to cover other issues as well. However, they continue to focus on the importance of abstinence, not just from tobacco but from drugs as well.

National Rifle Association This "single-issue" group (see page 531) is the interest group most associated with narrow interest lobbying. The National Rifle Association (NRA) has gone from post–Civil War marksmen's club to pro-gun Washington powerhouse, especially in the last 30 years under the leadership of lobbyist Wayne LaPierre. Its original charter was to improve the marksmanship of military soldiers. After a 1968 gun control and crime law, the NRA appealed to sportsmen and Second Amendment advocates. Its revised 1977 charter states the NRA is "generally to encourage the lawful ownership and use of small arms by citizens of good repute." In 2001 *Fortune*

magazine named the NRA the most powerful lobby in America. Hundreds of employees work at its Fairfax, Virginia, headquarters, a short 20-minute ride to Washington, D.C. The NRA appeals to law enforcement officers and outdoorsmen with insurance policies, discounts, and its magazine *American Rifleman*. The group holds periodic local dinners for "Friends of the NRA" to raise money. The annual convention provides a chance for gun enthusiasts to mingle and view the newest firearms, and attendance reaches beyond 50,000 gun enthusiasts.

The Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act of 1993 (see page 263), which mandates automatic waiting periods and background checks for handgun purchasers, along with the 1992 election of President Bill Clinton, caused NRA membership to soar from 2.5 million to 3.4 million. The NRA endorses candidates from both major political parties but heavily favors Republicans. From 1978 to 2000 the organization spent more than $26 million in elections; $22.5 million went to GOP candidates and $4.3 went to Democrats.

Drawbacks of Interest Groups

Interest groups, as you have read, have many benefits as a way for people to have their voices heard and influence policy. They also, however, have potential problems and have been the subject of much criticism. President Woodrow Wilson (1913–1921) often expressed his frustration over the tactics lobbyists employed. "Washington has seldom seen so numerous, so industrious, or so insidious a lobby," he once lamented when corporations opposed his tariff bill. "The newspapers are being filled with paid advertisements calculated to mislead the judgments of public men ... [and] the public opinion of the country itself."

Alabama Senator Hugo Black (D, 1927–1937) investigated one utility company's 1930s lobbying effort, as recounted by Kenneth Crawford in *The Pressure Boys*. Black became suspicious when very similarly worded letters opposing a bill to regulate electric utilities began to flood Capitol Hill. Black exposed the scheme when a 19-year-old Western Union messenger testified before the investigating Senate committee. A gas and electric company had paid a group of telegraph messenger boys to persuade Pennsylvania citizens to send telegrams opposing the bill to their congressmen. The company provided the talking points for the messages. One congressman received 816 of these telegrams in two days, mostly from citizens with last names that began with *A*, *B*, or *C*. As it turned out, the young messenger had pulled the names from a phone book starting from the beginning.

"The lobby has reached such a position of power that it threatens government itself," an outraged Senator Black said in a radio address. He went on to condemn the lobby's "capacity for evil, its greed, trickery, deception, and fraud." To Black's dismay, it turned out that the utility company had done nothing illegal, and this tactic continues today with email and social media. Interest groups send members and supporters legislative alerts when an issue of concern is about to come up for a vote. Along with the alerts they send

sample messages for supporters to use a base for writing their own messages, although many just send the sample message. Some cell phone apps will even fax the message to a person's representatives.

Another potential problem is that interest groups by definition promote the interests of their members over more general interests. When groups pull in many different or completely opposite directions, compromise becomes impossible and gridlock can result. This phenomenon is called *hyperpluralism*.

In such a situation, a form of elitism can also develop. Groups with more power and resources are more likely to achieve their goals than groups with smaller memberships or more limited funding, putting interest groups on an uneven footing in the "marketplace of ideas" (see page 520).

Interest groups also have the potential to lead to corruption and fraud. In 2009, for example, the tobacco industry was found guilty of defrauding the American public about the dangers of smoking, intentionally suppressing research that showed a cause-and-effect relationship between smoking and lung cancer. As their PACs contribute to political campaigns, interest groups also apply financial pressure to lawmakers that some believe exert undue influence on lawmakers.

Interest groups also do not participate on a level playing field. Some are well funded and have much more power than smaller or relatively underfunded groups. That power gives them access to government decision makers that other interest groups may not have. Relationships between interest groups and government representatives develop, deepen, and expand over time (see page 534 on iron triangles and issue networks for more information), so the inequality of resources and access widens even more.

Groups, Members, and Resources

Interest groups fall into a handful of categories. These consist of institutional (corporate and intergovernmental groups), professional, ideological, member-based, and public interest groups. There is some overlap among these. For example, business groups want to make profits, but they also have a distinct ideology when it comes to taxation and business regulation. Likewise, citizens groups have members who may pay modest dues, but these groups mostly push for laws that benefit society at large.

The types and resources of interest groups affect their ability to influence elections and policy. For example, nonprofit interest organizations fall into two categories based on their tax classification. The **501(c)(3)** organizations, such as churches and certain hospitals, receive tax deductions for charitable donations and can influence government, but they cannot lobby government officials or donate to campaigns. By comparison, **501(c)(4)** groups, such as certain social welfare organizations, can lobby and campaign, but they can't spend more than half their expenditures on political issues. Available resources also affect the ability of groups to influence policy. Well-funded groups are usually able to wield more power and to have greater access to government decision makers than groups with fewer resources.

Institutional Groups

Institutional groups break down into several different categories, including intergovernmental groups, professional associations, and corporations.

Intergovernmental Groups The U.S. system of redistributing federal revenues through the state governments encourages government-associated interest groups. Governors, mayors, and members of state legislatures are all interested in receiving funding from Washington. The federal grants system and marble cake federalism (see page 54) increase state, county, and city interest in national policy. Governments and their employees—police, firefighters, EMTs, and sanitation workers—have a keen interest in government rules that affect their jobs and funding that impacts their salaries. This interest has created the **intergovernmental lobby**, which includes the National Governors Association, the National League of Cities, and the U.S. Conference of Mayors, all of which have offices in the nation's capital.

Professional Associations Unlike labor unions that might represent pipefitters or carpenters, **professional associations** typically represent white-collar professions. Examples include the American Medical Association (AMA) and the American Bar Association (ABA). They are concerned with business success and the laws that guide their trade. Police and teachers unions, such as the Fraternal Order of Police or the National Education Association, are often associated with the labor force, but in many ways they fall into this category. The AMA endorsed the 2010 Affordable Care Act. The ABA rates judicial nominees and testifies before Congress about proposed crime bills.

Corporations In the 1970s, the consumer and environmental movements brought an increase in business and free enterprise lobbyists. The National Association of Manufacturers and the U.S. Chamber of Commerce merged resources to form a joint effort. By the late 1970s, both groups had convinced Congress to deregulate. The Chamber's membership grew at a rate of 30 percent per year, expanding its $20 million budget and 50,000 members to $65 million and 215,000 members by 1983.

The Business Roundtable, formed in 1973, represents firms that account for nearly half of the nation's gross domestic product. New conservative **think tanks**—research institutions, often with specific ideological goals—emerged and old ones revived, such as the American Enterprise Institute and the Heritage Foundation, largely to counter the ideas coming from liberal think tanks and philanthropic foundations.

Some think tanks are associated with universities, even though their funding comes entirely from corporations, philanthropic foundations, and private individuals. For example, the Mercatus Center at George Mason University in Virginia was founded to promote free market ideas and solutions in higher education with the backing of billionaire Charles Koch and other free market proponents.

As writer John Judis explains, in 1971, only 175 businesses registered lobbyists in Washington. By 1982, there were 2,445 companies that had paid lobbyists. The number of corporate offices in the capital jumped from 50 in 1961 to 500 in 1978 and to 1,300 by 1986. By 1978, 1,800 trade associations were headquartered in the nation's capital. Today, Washington has an army of lawyers and public relations experts whose job it is to represent corporate interests and lobby the government for their corporate clients.

Member Groups

Most groups have a defined membership and member fees, typically ranging from $15 to $40 annually. (Corporate and professional associations typically charge much higher fees.) When groups seek to change or protect a law, they represent their members and even nonmembers who have not joined. For example, there are many more African Americans who approve of the NAACP's goals and support their actions than there are actual NAACP members. There are more gun advocates than members of the National Rifle Association (NRA). These nonmembers choose not to bear the participation costs of time and fees but do benefit from the associated group's efforts. This results in what is known as the **free rider** problem. Groups that push for a collective benefit for a large group inevitably have free riders.

To encourage membership, interest groups offer incentives. **Purposive incentives** are those that give the joiner some philosophical satisfaction. They realize their money will contribute to some worthy cause. If they donate to an organization addressing climate change, for example, they might feel gratified that their contribution will help future generations. **Solidary incentives** are those that allow people of like mind to gather on occasion. Such gatherings include monthly organizational meetings and citizen actions. Many groups offer **material incentives**, such as travel discounts, subscriptions to magazines or newsletters, or complimentary items such as bags or jackets.

One study found that the average interest group member's annual income is $17,000 higher than the national average and that 43 percent of interest group members have advanced degrees, suggesting that interest group membership has an **upper-class bias**. Though annual membership fees in most interest groups are modest, critics argue that the trend results in policies that favor the higher socioeconomic classes.

As opposed to special interest groups, **public interest groups** are geared to improve life or government for the masses. Fully 30 percent of such groups have formed since 1975, and they constitute about one-fifth of all groups represented in Washington.

Common Cause In 1970, Republican John Gardner, Lyndon Johnson's Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, took what he called the biggest gamble of his career to create Common Cause. "Everybody's organized but the people," Gardner declared when he put out the call to recruit members to build "a true citizens' lobby." Within six months Common Cause had more than 100,000 members. The antiwar movement and the post-Watergate

reform mindset contributed to the group's early popularity. Common Cause's accomplishments include the Twenty-sixth Amendment to grant voting rights to those 18 and over, campaign finance laws, transparent government, and other voting reforms. More recently, the group pushed for the 2002 Bipartisan Campaign Reform (McCain-Feingold) Act and the 2007 lobbying regulations in the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act, which called for better public disclosure of lobbying activities and limits gifts for Congress members. Today Common Cause has nearly 400,000 members and 38 state offices.

Public Citizen With money from a legal settlement with General Motors, Ralph Nader joined with other consumer advocates to create Public Citizen in 1971. He hired bright, aggressive lawyers who came to be known as Nader's Raiders. In 1974, *U.S. News and World Report* ranked Nader as the fourth most influential man in America. Carrying out ideals similar to those that Nader had emphasized in the 1960s—consumer rights and open government—Public Citizen tries to ensure that all citizens are represented in the halls of power. It fights against undemocratic trade agreements and provides a "countervailing force to corporate power." Nader went on to create other watchdog organizations, such as the Center for Responsive Law and Congress Watch, to address the concerns of ordinary citizens who don't have the resources to organize and lobby government.

Single-Issue and Ideological Groups

You have already read about the National Rifle Association, the best-known **single-issue group.** (See page 526.) Single-issue groups focus narrowly on one topic. Two other well-known single-issue groups are the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP).

American Civil Liberties Union Activists created the American Civil Liberties Union after World War I to counteract government's authoritarian interpretation of the First Amendment. At that time, the federal government deported radicals and threw dissenters of the war and the military draft in jail. Guaranteeing free expression became the ACLU's central mission. In 1925, the organization went up against Tennessee state law to defend John Scopes's right to teach evolution in a public school.

Over the following decades, the ACLU opened state affiliates and took on other civil liberties violations. It remains very active, serving as a watchdog for free speech, fair trials, and racial justice and against overly aggressive law enforcement. The ACLU has about half a million members, about 200 attorneys, a presence on Capitol Hill, and chapters in all 50 states.

American Association of Retired Persons AARP has the largest membership of any interest group in the nation. AARP has twice the membership of the AFL-CIO, its own zip code in Washington, and its own registered in-house lobbyists. Its magazine has the largest circulation of any monthly publication in the country. People age 50 and over can join by paying

$16 per year. The organization's main concerns are members' health, financial stability and livelihood, and the Social Security system. "AARP seeks to attract a membership as diverse as America itself," its Web site claims. With such a large, high voter-turnout membership, elected officials tend to pay very close attention to AARP.

You have also already read about a number of **ideological groups**—interest groups formed around a political ideology. On the liberal side of the ideology spectrum are groups such as the NAACP and NOW. On the other end of the spectrum, conservative ideological interest groups include the Christian Coalition and the National Taxpayers Union.

Political Action Committees

Many interest groups create **political action committees (PACs)**. Typically defined as the political arm of a labor union, interest group, or corporation, PACs involve themselves in a wide array of election season activities, such as sending direct mail, creating advertising, staging rallies, and campaigning door-to-door. Politicians and party-driven organizations can also form what are known as **leadership PACs**. Leading up to her 2008 presidential run, Hillary Clinton created Hill-PAC, a committee to raise money that she distributed to other candidates in return for support in her presidential campaign. She created a similar PAC in conjunction with the Democratic National Committee, the Hillary Victory Fund.

Interest groups, corporations, and unions are forbidden from donating directly to candidates, but their PACs can contribute up to $5,000 per election cycle ($10,000 combined for primary and general elections). Since costly television advertising dramatically impacts elections, PAC support is a valuable asset. To get a return on their investment, PACs tend to support incumbents that side with them. The 1970s campaign finance laws caused a drastic increase in the number of PACs. In 1974, 608 committees registered with the Federal Elections Commission. Ten years later, 4,009 did so. Direct contributions rose from $23 million in 1975–76 to nearly $260 million in the 1999–2000 cycle. In 2008, contributions to House and Senate candidates reached nearly $400 million. By the 2015-2016 election cycle, contributions to House and Senate candidates totaled more than $443 million.

Interest groups and their PACs can also spend money to affect the election without directly writing a check to the candidate. These soft-money contributions or independent expenditures pay for fund-raisers, meet-and-greets, ads, and other campaign activities.

The landmark decision in ***Citizens United v. FEC*** in 2010 declared that corporations and other organizations have a similar right to free speech as individuals (see page 508). Corporations, labor unions, and other organizations can now use funds from their treasuries to endorse or denounce a candidate at any time provided ads are not coordinated with any candidate.

BY THE NUMBERS GROWTH IN POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEES, 1974–2016					
Year	**Corporate**	**Labor**	**Trade/ Member**	**Other**	**Total**
1974	89	201	318	NA	608
1978	433	224	489	873	1,146
1982	1,469	380	649	873	3,371
1984	1,682	394	698	1,235	4,009
1988	1,816	354	786	1,312	4,268
1992	1,735	347	770	1,343	4,195
1996	1,642	332	838	1,267	4,079
2000	1,523	316	812	1,055	3,706
2004	1,555	303	877	1,305	4,040
2008	1,551	264	962	1,474	4,251
2012	1,851	300	1,033	2,319	5,503
2016	1,803	289	973	1,981	5,046

Source: *Federal Elections Commission. "Other" includes nonconnected, privately owned companies and leadership PACs.*

What do the numbers show? To what extent have PACs grown since 1974? When did the total PAC count peak or level off? What types have grown at the fastest rates?

Super PACs Not long after, the **super PAC**, known in legal terms as an independent expenditure-only committee, became a player in national politics. Powerful PACs receive unlimited donations, and they can raise and spend as much as they want on electioneering communication provided they disclose their donors and don't coordinate with any candidate. The 501(c)(4) groups, so named for the relevant part of the tax code, need not disclose donors but cannot spend as freely. Critics refer to them as **dark money** groups. They accounted for more than one-fourth of outside group spending in 2012. Dark money contributions in the 2016 election increased tenfold over the 2012 amount.

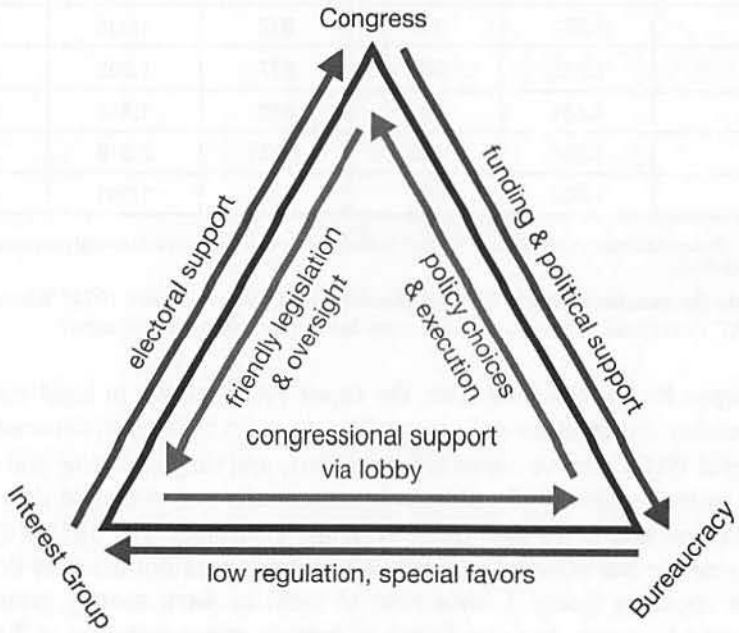
Some 501(c)(4)s are getting around the 50% expenditure limit on politics by donating to super PACs, which can take unlimited donations but have to disclose their donors—that is, the names of the contributing nonprofit organizations, not the names of the actual donors themselves.

The spending by nonparty outside groups tripled during the period 2008–2012 and topped the historic outside group record at $1 billion. Super PACs accounted for more than $600 million of that, according to information from the Center for Responsive Politics. Michael Beckel and Russ Choma from that organization report that conservative groups were responsible for 69 percent of outside spending and liberal groups for 28 percent. Only 7 percent of the money spent by American Crossroads, one of the largest and best-funded groups, went to candidates who actually won.

According to Molly Ball of *The Atlantic*, during the 2012 campaign, "groups on the left were some of the most skilled exploiters of the 2010 *Citizens' United* decision." The AFL-CIO had actually filed an *amicus curiae* brief with the court to allow unions to campaign to the general public. This action returned labor to a powerhouse position during campaigns.

Iron Triangles and Issue Networks

As you read in Chapter 5, **iron triangles** are the bonds among an agency, a congressional committee, and an interest group. The three entities establish relationships that benefit them all. Bureaucrats benefit by cooperating with congressional members who fund and direct them. Committee members benefit by listening to interest groups that reward them with PAC donations.



Follow the arrows in the above graphic so you can explain how the stages of the give and take process in an iron triangle relate to one other. How does the interest group benefit? How does the congressional committee benefit? How does the bureaucracy benefit?

Issue networks are also collectives with similar goals, but they have come together to support a specific issue and usually do not have the long-term relationships that characterize iron triangles. If and when their issue of common concern is resolved, the networks break up. Issue networks often include a number of different interest groups who share an opinion on the issue at hand but may have strongly differing opinions on other matters. For example, religious interest groups and some civic organizations might have differing views on abortion or same-sex marriage, but they may agree on the

importance of health care for children living in poverty and work together to advance that cause.

Influencing Policy

"Agitate, educate, legislate!" were the watchwords of the WCTU, neatly summarizing the ways in which many interest groups spread their influence and use it to bring about change. They agitate through public demonstrations, such as the 1963 march in Selma, Alabama after which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was arrested. Dr. King described agitation when he wrote, "Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored."

Once the issue has been brought to the surface, the education of both voters and legislators can begin. Interest groups use many different channels to educate the public and legislators on their concerns, as you will read below.

With enough public support, interest groups can help draft legislation to support their cause. This process requires ongoing relationships with legislators and others in government. To keep up the pressure on legislators to produce the desired result, interest groups mobilize their members and the public to take to the streets in demonstrations or make phone calls or in-person visits to representatives.

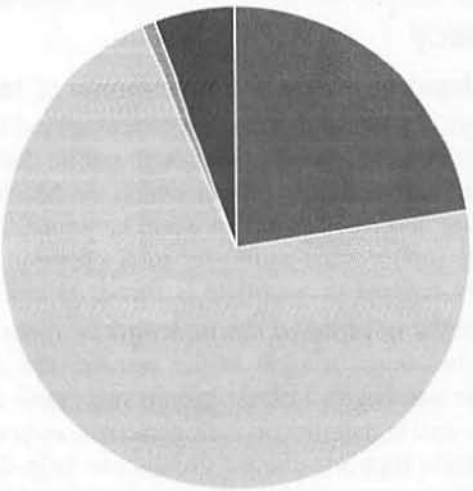
Interest groups take on a variety of activities using a variety of techniques to "agitate, educate, and legislate." **Insider strategies** quietly persuade government decision makers through exclusive access. The most common form of insider activity is **direct lobbying** of legislators. **Outsider strategies** involve lawsuits or get-out-the vote drives. Groups also try to sway public opinion by issuing press releases, writing op-ed articles for newspapers, appearing as experts on television, and purchasing print and TV advertising. They also mobilize their membership to call or write legislators on pending laws or to swing an election. Interest groups have become skilled in influencing all three branches of government.

Lobbying Legislators

The term *lobbying* came into vogue in the mid-1600s when the anteroom of the British House of Commons became known as "the lobby." **Lobbyists** were present at the first session of the U.S. Congress in 1789. As Kaiser reports, wealthy New York merchants engaged House and Senate members to delay action on a tariff bill they thought would hurt their profits. They soon employed what would become a classic tactic—a good dinner with plenty of alcohol to help create the type of warm, friendly atmosphere the favor seeker needed to make his case.

Lobbyists attend Washington social gatherings to develop relationships through their contacts who have **access** to government officials, or a way of approaching them. They monitor legislators' proposed bills and votes. They assess which lawmakers support their cause and which do not. They also help

Breakdown of Political Spending by the NRA, 1998-2017



Source: *Center for Responsive Politics*

In what category of spending does the NRA expect to see the greatest return on investment?

draft bills that their congressional allies introduce. They find which lawmakers are undecided and try to bring them over to their side. "Influence peddler" is a derogatory term for a lobbyist, but influencing lawmakers is exactly what lobbyists try to do.

Give and Take Lobbyists want access to legislators, and Congress members appreciate the information lobbyists can provide. Senators and House members represent the individual constituents living in their districts. Sometimes so-called special interests actually represent large swaths of a given constituency. A lobbyist for a defense contractor that sells fighter jets to the Pentagon represents her company but might also speak for hundreds of plant workers. Democracy purists argue that a lawmaker should disregard a heavily financed influence peddler, but most members of Congress recognize the useful byproduct—the resources lobbyists offer.

For example, imagine a North Carolina representative has a meeting with a tobacco lobbyist, who is concerned about a pending bill that further taxes and regulates the sale of cigarettes. The tobacco company sees the bill as dangerous to its bottom-line profits.

The lobbyist presents the legislator with the results of an opinion poll—an expensive endeavor—that shows 57 percent of registered voters in his district oppose the bill. The lobbyist also points out that the tax increase will lead to a rise in black market sales. The lobbyist then hands the lawmaker a complete report at the end of the meeting. Could the poll or report be bogus?

Probably not. Lobbyists have an agenda, but they are generally looking to foster a long-term relationship. "[T]hey know that if they lie, they lose," Congressman Barney Frank once declared. "They will never be allowed to come back to this office." Imagine further that the following day the lawmaker meets with a representative from the American Heart Association. He provides a medical research study about cigarette prices as a deterrent to new smokers. He also provides poll results from a nationwide survey on smoking in public places.

The elected official has now spent only a couple hours to obtain valuable information with no money spent by his office. With that information, he can represent more of his constituents while considering attitudes and factors across the country. "I help my boss the most," declared one congressional staffer, "when I can play the good lobbyists off each other."

Key Targets and Strategizing No one is more effective in lobbying a legislator than another lawmaker. In the early stages of a legislative fight, influential members of Congress, especially those serving on key committees, become interest group targets. Some legislators give cues to other members, so lobbyists target them first.

To what degree do lobbyists move legislators on an issue? Do they persuade members to change their votes? Little evidence exists, Cigler and Loomis offer, to show that lobbyists actually change legislators' votes. Most findings do not prove lobbyists are successful in "bribing" legislators. Also, lobbyists tend to interact mostly with those members already in favor of the group's goals. So the money didn't bring the legislators over to the interest group; the legislator's position on the issue brought the interest group to him or her.

ACTIVITIES OF LOBBYISTS
Client interaction: informing clients, discussing strategy
Legislative activity: providing information/researching bills/ drafting bills
Social media: monitoring congressional activity, targeting outreach
Implementation: testifying on bills/filing amicus briefs
Electoral activity: advertising, making PAC donations
Other activity: meetings, business development/media commentary, etc.

What different skills must congressional lobbyists have?

Researcher Rogan Kersh conducted a unique two-year study of corporate lobbyists. "I'm not up here to twist arms and change somebody's vote," one lobbyist told him in a Senate anteroom crowded with lobbyists from other firms, "and neither are most of them." These lobbyists seem more concerned with waiting, gossiping, and rumor trading. A separate study conveyed that lobbyists want information or legislative intelligence as much as the lawmakers do. "If I'm out playing golf with some congressman or I buy a senator lunch, I know I'm not buying a vote," one lobbyist declared before recent reforms. The lobbyist is simply looking for the most recent views of lawmakers in order to act upon them. Kersh tabulated congressional lobbyists' legislative activities. A lobbyist attempting to alter a legislator's position occurred only about 1 percent of the time.

Research and Expertise Large interest groups have created entire research departments to study their concerns. "How many lives would be saved if government raised the drinking age from 18 to 21?" Mothers Against Drunk Driving wanted to know. "What kind of a Supreme Court justice would nominee Clarence Thomas make?" the American Bar Association pondered. These are the kinds of questions that members of Congress also ask as they contemplate legislative proposals. During the investigatory phase of lawmaking, experts from these groups testify before congressional committees to offer their findings. Since they represent their own interest, researchers and experts from interest groups and think tanks will often focus on the positive aspects of supporting their desired outcomes.

Campaigns and Electioneering As multiple-term congressional careers have become common, interest groups have developed large arsenals to help or hinder a legislator's chances at election time. Once new methods—TV ads, polling, direct mail, and marketing—determined reelection success, politicians found it increasingly difficult to resist interest groups that had perfected these techniques and that offered greater resources to loyal officials.

A powerful interest group can influence the voting public with an **endorsement**—a public expression of support. The Fraternal Order of Police can usually speak to a lawmaker's record on law enforcement legislation and financial support for police departments. The NRA endorses its loyal congressional allies on the cover of the November issue of its magazine, printed uniquely for each district. Groups also rate members of Congress based on their roll call votes, some with a letter grade (A through F), others with a percentage. Americans for Democratic Action and the American Conservative Union, two ideological organizations, rate members after each congressional term.

Grassroots lobbying, generally an outsider technique, takes place when an interest group tries to inform, persuade, and mobilize large numbers of people. Originally practiced by the more modest citizens and issue advocacy groups, such as students marching against the war in Vietnam, Washington-based interests are increasingly relying on grassroots techniques to influence officials.

Grassroots lobbying focuses on the next election, regardless of how far away it might be. In 1982, soon after Republican Senator Bob Dole and Democratic Representative Dan Rostenkowski introduced a measure to withhold income taxes from interest earned on bank accounts and dividends, the American Banking Association went to work encouraging banks to persuade their customers to oppose the measure. *The Washington Post* called it the "hydrogen bomb of modern day lobbying." Banks used advertisements and posters in branch offices; they also inserted flyers in monthly bank statements mailed out to every customer, telling them to contact their legislators in opposition to the proposed law. Banks generated nearly 22 million constituent communications. Weeks later the House voted 382–41, and the Senate 94–5, to oppose the previously popular bipartisan proposal.

Framing the Issue When the debate over the Clean Air Bill of 1990 began, *Newsweek* asked how automakers could squash legislation that improved fuel efficiency and reduced both air pollution and America's reliance on foreign oil. A prominent grassroots consultant reasoned that smaller cars—which would be vital if the act were to be successful—would negatively impact child safety, senior citizens' comfort, and disabled Americans' mobility. Opponents of the bill contacted and mobilized senior organizations and disability rights groups to create opposition to these higher standards. What was once viewed as an anti-environment vote soon became a vote that was pro-disabled people and pro-child.

Use of Media Television and telephones have encouraged grassroots lobbyists and issue advocacy groups. Depending on their tax classification, some groups cannot suggest a TV viewer vote for or against a particular congressperson. So instead they provide some detail on a proposed policy and then tell the voters to call the senator and express their feelings on the issue. Such ads have become backdoor campaigning. They all but say, "Here's the congressperson's position. You know what to do on Election Day."

The restaurant industry responded rapidly to a 1993 legislative idea to remove the tax deduction for business meals. Everyday professionals conducting lunchtime business in restaurants are able to write off the expense at tax time. As Congress debated changing that deduction, special interests acted. The National Restaurant Association (sometimes called "the other NRA") sponsored an ad that showed an overworked server-mother: "I'm a waitress and a good one....But I might not have a job much longer. President Clinton's economic plan cuts business-meal deductibility. That would throw 165,000 people out of work. I need this job." Opposition to eliminating the tax benefit no longer came from highbrow, lunchtime dealmakers but instead from those wanting to protect hardworking servers, cooks, and dishwashers. At the end of the ad, the server directed concerned viewers to call a toll-free number. Callers were put through to the corresponding lawmaker's office with the push of a button. The "other NRA" successfully stopped the bill.

Interest groups increase their chances of success when they reach the masses, but they also target opinion leaders, those who can influence others. Lobbying firms try to connect with business owners or lesser officials in a community—the **grasstops**—to shape opinion on the local level. Some lobbyists charge $350 to $500 for getting a community leader to communicate his or her feelings to a legislator in writing or on the phone. They also set up personal meetings between high-profile constituents and members of Congress. Grasstops lobbying sometimes shifts public opinion in the desired direction; for example, it might cherry-pick selected opinions that create an artificial view, sometimes called "Astroturf."

Congressional lobbyists sometimes also use grassroots techniques in tandem with their Washington, D.C., operations. Once they determine a legislator's anticipated position, especially if it is undecided, lobbyists can pressure that congressperson by mobilizing constituents in his or her district. Interest group leaders send out letters that provide an outline or talking points so their member can easily create a factual letter to send to their representative. With email, this technique became easier, cheaper, and more commonly used than ever before. With the click of a mouse, interest group members can forward a message to a lawmaker to signal where they stand and how they will vote. Such organizing has also become commonplace on social media. Lobbyists are also developing ways to mine social media for data so they can create highly targeted outreach.

Connecting with the Executive

Interest groups and industry representatives also lobby the executive branch. Leaders of major organizations, from the civil rights groups of the 1960s to business leaders today, visit the White House and gain access to the president. Martin Luther King Jr., Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, and others met with Lyndon Johnson to shape civil rights legislation and enforcement. And President Obama heard from members of the Chamber of Commerce as he fashioned his health care bill. More often, liaisons from powerful interest groups connect with White House staffers to discuss policy. This practice is particularly useful in view of the fact that so much policy—legislation and enforcement—comes from the president.

Bureaucratic agencies write and enforce specific policies that regulate industries. High-level experts at television networks might connect with the Federal Communications Commission as it revises its rules. Representatives of the National Association of Manufacturers may attempt to influence the implementation of environmental legislation by meeting with officials at the Environmental Protection Agency.

In the Courts

Interest groups also shape policy in the courts. Federal judges are not elected and cannot accept donations from PACs, and lobbyists don't try to woo judges over lunch or in their closed chambers. Yet an open and honest presentation by

an interest group in a trial or in an appeals court hearing is quite common. This can be done in three major ways: representing clients in court, filing an *amicus curiae* brief, and challenging executive regulatory action.

Representing Clients Established interest groups have legal departments with expert attorneys who both seek out clients to represent—sometimes even paying their legal fees if the case seems promising for a victory in court that would promote the special interest—and accept those who request them. Compassionate groups defend those who cannot provide their own counsel or those who are wrongly accused, to assure justice. The NAACP Legal Defense Fund has represented scores of wrongly accused African-American defendants. The ACLU has defended free speech rights and regularly defends those facing the death penalty. At other times, test cases are taken to establish a higher principle or to declare an unjust law unconstitutional. If an interest group wins a case in the Supreme Court, the victory can create a new national policy.

Amicus Curiae Legal departments often file an ***amicus curiae***, or "friend of the court," brief in cases in which they have an interest but no client. The amicus brief argues why the court should side with one party in the case. In this instance, the interest group acts as a third party merely expressing an outside opinion. Groups include their research findings in these briefs as experts on matters that are important to them to persuade judges.

ACLU ACTION IN SUPREME COURT		
Year	**Case**	**Outcome**
1962	*Engel v. Vitale*	Outlawed New York's state-sponsored school prayer
1967	*Loving v. Virginia*	Ended state laws against interracial marriage
1969	*Tinker v. Des Moines*	Overturned student suspensions for protesting Vietnam War
1971	*New York Times Co. v. US*	Prevented government prior restraint of news publication
1997	*Reno v. ACLU*	Internet speech gained full First Amendment protection
2003	*Lawrence v. Texas*	Overturned state laws against same-sex intimacy

The ACLU has **represented** *clients or filed amicus briefs in the above cases.*

Challenging Regulatory Decisions Federal regulatory agencies such as the Food and Drug Administration or the Environmental Protection Agency can issue fines and other punishments to companies that violate regulations. Corporations can challenge these decisions in the U.S. District of Columbia Circuit Court of Appeals.

POLICY MATTERS: *THE INFLUENCE OF COMPETING ACTORS ON THE BUDGET PROCESS*

In recent times, new media forms and changing government customs have allowed people outside of Washington to keep abreast of the events and actions within the capital. Congress opened its committee hearings decades ago, and today these are televised via C-SPAN and other media outlets. Roll call votes are more accessible as well. This visibility enables groups and their members to monitor and understand government, which in turn allows them to find effective ways to influence it. In this process interest groups compete at key stages of policymaking and to varying degrees with professional organizations, social movements and the advocacy organizations they spawned, the military, and bureaucratic agencies. Perhaps no other issue demonstrates these interactions better than the federal budget process. That process begins with a proposal from the president, moves to each house of Congress for legislative review and debate, and ideally ends with budgetary legislation that is approved by both houses and signed by the president. Along the way, various points of entry allow for the input of citizen interests expressed by special interest groups and social movements.

Influence on the President's Proposal Preparing a spending plan for an entire department or just one federal agency is a complex process in itself. The FBI, the Navy, and all other agencies create annual operating budgets to cover federal employees' salaries, equipment, services, new initiatives, and many more expenses. As a yardstick, these agencies consider their spending in the prior year. If their goals are similar, and inflation has not taken off, they will require about the same amount. They submit their spending requests up to their department secretaries. The 15 departments consider these requests, perhaps tweak them, and then send these up to the president's Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review. The budget director, in consultation with the president, his Council of Economic Advisors, and the Treasury Secretary, draft what becomes the president's budget proposal to Congress.

During the period of review by the OMB, which includes a public comment period, interest groups can play an influential role. Since an executive order by President Reagan in 1981, the public can comment directly to the OMB, expressing views on budgetary and other regulations before the final draft moves on to Congress. Much more of this public input comes from interest groups than from individual members of the public. For a time, powerful lobbyists could meet in private with OMB

officials, arguing for the interests of the group they represented. In 1993, President Clinton signed an executive order requiring that all lobbying to the OMB be publicly recorded so that the influence from special interest groups could be transparent. Most of the interest group influence at this stage of the budgeting comes from businesses.

The OMB, as a representative of the president, uses public input to gauge the popularity of the administration's priorities, and studies have shown that interest group influence has resulted in changes at the this stage of the process, especially if the interest groups tend to agree on broad objectives.

Influence on Congress The president's final draft of the budget proposal moves to Congress for its consideration. Congressional budget committees in both houses, created by the **Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974**, examine the president's budget. The Act was a response to the practice of some presidents of impounding funds, refusing to spend monies Congress had appropriated if they disagreed with the policy. President Nixon, particularly, impounded funds in an attempt to curb spending. Yet, saving federal dollars by refusing to spend what Congress deemed necessary was seen as undemocratic and a violation of separation of powers. The Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act outlawed such impoundments.

The various legislative committees (those with jurisdiction over particular areas, such as education, transportation, or the military) hold public hearings to listen to the concerns of constituents. Both business interest groups and nonprofit interest groups use these hearings to press the budgetary needs of their group. They might send experts to testify before congressional committees to educate the legislators. Nonprofits might highlight the plight of a person in the community they serve—a homeless veteran, for example—by bringing that person in to tell a personal story to a committee to show legislators why the interests of their organization need funding. Organizations representing the needs of people with mental illness might call on their members to contact their representatives and senators during this period to urge them to increase spending for mental health treatment. Organizations such as the Natural Resources Defense Council, an outgrowth of the environmental movement, might send experts to argue for renewed funding for the National Environmental Policy Act, a key piece of legislation that ensures public safety and the participation of citizens. After listening to public input, these committees take up appropriations bills for the coming fiscal year, ideally staying within the guidelines set by the budget resolution.

A relevant player in the congressional budgeting process is the **Government Accountability Office (GAO)**, an independent, nonpartisan arm of Congress. The GAO serves as a watchdog of congressional funds and keeps track of where and how money is spent. Sometimes viewed as Congress's accounting firm, it is headed by the U.S. Comptroller General. The comptroller is a presidential appointee chosen from a slate of nominees recommended by a nonpartisan, bicameral congressional commission and confirmed by the Senate. The GAO's work is based on requests from committees and committee chairs. The agency audits federal spending, examines efficiency, and in many ways acts as policy developer in the spending process.

After each of these committees considers and passes these appropriations bills, and after Congress passes the overall budget bill—by this time the result of the competing interests of input from interest groups, professional organizations, social movements, the military, and bureaucratic agencies—it then goes back to the president for signing.

Interest Group Pressure on Political Parties

Political parties and interest groups are both linkage institutions, creating connections between people and government. Political parties and interest groups also have connections between them. Some interest groups align with political parties that share their ideology and goals and endorse candidates in that party, encouraging their membership to vote for those candidates. However, interest groups can also exert pressure on political parties in areas of disagreement, and sometimes the result is that the official party ideology shifts in the direction of the interest group pressure.

Republican Party's Pull to the Right Several examples in recent history show the power of interest groups to influence policy positions of political parties. For example, as early as 1940, the Republican Party declared in its platform, "We favor submission by Congress to the States of an amendment to the Constitution providing for equal rights for men and women," and with that statement set the stage for becoming the first party to endorse the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) after Congress proposed submitting it to the states for their ratification in 1972. By 1980, however, the Republican platform expressed a different stance to the ERA: "We acknowledge the legitimate efforts of those who support or oppose ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment." What happened during the eight years between those statements to shift the Republican position?

Phyllis Schlafly (1924–2016) was a lifelong Republican, playing an active role in the party and even running for office. She founded a conservative interest group, now called the Eagle Forum, in 1972, but refocused her energy on stopping the Equal Rights Amendment by founding the interest group STOP ERA (STOP stands for "Stop Taking Our Privileges"). By this time the ERA had won overwhelming support in Congress and ratification of 30 of

the required 38 states. Schlafly's organization took the position that the ERA would disadvantage women—that it would deprive them of certain spousal rights, require them to serve in the armed forces and in combat, force them to use unisex bathrooms—and lead to same-sex marriage. Against the backdrop of the Supreme Court's 1962 ban on school prayer in *Engel v. Vitale* (page 254) and the legalization of abortion in *Roe v. Wade* in 1973 (page 288), women from a variety of backgrounds, especially conservative and Christian, feared that their traditional values were under attack, and they feared the consequences of the ERA that Schlafly predicted.

Source: *Florida Memory Project, State Archive of Florida*

A solemn group of anti-ERA women line the wall of the Florida Senate Rules Committee room in Tallahassee, where standing room only was available. The Senate Rules Committee defeated, then tabled consideration of, the Equal Rights Amendment, virtually killing the bill for the 1979 session.

The anti-ERA movement gained so much strength that the Republican Party could not ignore its influence, and it withdrew its support for the ERA from its platform. STOP ERA and other anti-ERA interest groups, including Concerned Women for America, Women for Constitutional Government, the John Birch Society, and Daughters of the American Revolution, carried out well-organized efforts and were successful in halting the ratification of the amendment and at the same time in pulling the Republican Party toward more conservative policy positions.

When President Nixon resigned in 1974 under the shadow of impeachment, only 18 percent of Americans identified as Republicans. STOP ERA and similar groups revitalized the Republican Party, and by 1980, Republican Ronald Reagan won the presidency by a landslide.

In a similar way, after President Obama's Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act passed in 2010, the Tea Party ("Tea" stands for "Taxed Enough Already") movement appeared on the scene to combat it and other government spending considered to be handouts to undeserving people. A number of interest groups arose as a result of this movement, and they helped elect very conservative replacements for more moderate Republicans at every level of government. Once again, the Republican Party was pulled to the right as a result of pressure from interest groups.

Democratic Party's Push to the Left The Democratic Party had experienced a similar shift in policy positions. Until the 20th century, it was more conservative than the Republican Party (the party of Abraham Lincoln) and was opposed to civil rights. However, during the administration of Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1930s and 1940s, African Americans aligned with the Democrats. During the administration of Lyndon Johnson in the 1960s, powerful interest groups such as NAACP exerted pressure for progress in civil rights legislation, and the Democratic Party welcomed more African American and other minority voters, as well those favoring the ERA and opposing war, as its policy positions became more liberal in the party's shift to the left.

Other interest groups have also greatly influenced the Democratic Party. In 1984, the National Organization for Women (NOW) made its first-ever presidential endorsement when it endorsed Democratic candidate Walter Mondale, and the Democratic Party made history by nominating Geraldine Ferraro as his running mate, the first woman to be nominated for vice president by a major party. In 1985, EMILY's List was founded to help Democratic women to office. (EMILY stands for "Early Money Is Like Yeast," referring to the importance of securing donations early in a candidate's campaign in order to ensure donations later as well, to help a campaign rise as yeast makes dough rise.) Its first victory was the election of Senator Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, who became the longest-serving woman in the history of Congress. EMILY's List has gone on to help many Democratic women, including women of color and openly gay women, get elected. These strong associations between women's interest groups and the Democratic Party influenced the party's stand on women's issues.

The Sierra Club, a large environmental interest group, also carries influence with the Democratic Party. Many of its resources go to lobbying for environmental protection, and nearly all of its super PAC money goes to Democratic candidates.

Ethics and Reform

Lobbyists work for many different interests. The Veterans of Foreign Wars seeks to assist military veterans. The Red Cross, United Way, and countless public universities across the land employ lobbyists to seek funding and support. Yet the increased number of firms that have employed high-paid consultants to influence Congress and the increased role of PAC money in election campaigns have given lobbyists and special interests a mainly negative public reputation. The salaries for successful lobbyists typically outstrip those of the public officials they seek to influence. Members of Congress and their staffs can triple their salaries if they leave Capitol Hill to become lobbyists. This situation has created an era in which careers on K Street—the noted Washington street that hosts a number of interest group headquarters or lobbying offices—are more attractive to many than careers in public service. Still, old and recent bribery cases, lapses of ethics, and conflicts of interest have led to strong efforts at reform.

Scandals Bribery in Congress, of course, predates formal interest groups. In the 1860s Credit Mobilier scandal, a holding company sold nominally priced shares of railroad stock to congressmen in return for favorable votes on pro-Union Pacific Railroad legislation. A century ago, *Cosmopolitan* magazine ran a series entitled "Treason in the Senate" that exposed nine senators for bribery. In the late 1940s, the "5 percenters," federal officials who offered government favors or contracts in exchange for a 5 percent cut, went to prison. Over the years, Congress has had to pass several laws to curb influence and create greater transparency.

CONGRESSIONAL ACTS ON LOBBYING

- Federal Regulation of Lobbying Act (1946)
- Lobbying Disclosure Act (1995)
- Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (2007)

The high-profile cases of congressmen Randall "Duke" Cunningham and William Jefferson and lobbyist Jack Abramoff created headlines in 2006 that exposed lawlessness taking place inside the lawmaking process. Cunningham, a San Diego Republican representative, took roughly $2.4 million in bribes to direct Pentagon military defense purchases to a particular defense contractor. A California contractor supplied Cunningham with lavish gifts and favors such as cash, a Rolls-Royce, antique furniture, and access to prostitutes. He was convicted in 2006. In Louisiana Congressman William Jefferson's case, an FBI probe uncovered $90,000 in cash hidden in his home freezer, which led to his bribery conviction.

A more publicized scandal engulfed lobbyist Jack Abramoff, whose client base included several Native American casinos. He was known to trade favors—fancy dinners, golf trips to Scotland, lavish campaign contributions—for legislation. He pled guilty in January 2006 to defrauding four wealthy tribes and other clients of nearly $25 million as well as evading $1.7 million in taxes, and he went to jail.

Recent Reform Congress responded with the Honest Leadership and Open Government Act (HLOGA) in 2007. New rules banned all gifts to members of Congress or their staff from registered lobbyists or their clients. It also banned members from flying on corporate jets in most circumstances and restricted travel paid for by outside groups. The 2007 law also outlawed lobbyists from buying meals, gifts, and most trips for congressional staffers. Lobbyists must now file reports quarterly instead of twice a year. The new law also requires members to report the details of any **bundling**—raising large sums from multiple donors for a candidate. Lobbyists who bundle now have to report it if the combined funds equal more than $15,000 in any six-month period. Also, for the first time ever, lobbyists who break ethics rules will face civil and criminal penalties of up to $200,000 in fines and five years in prison. The Abramoff scandal brought an end to former House

and Senate members' Capitol Hill gym privileges. Many of those former members had become lobbyists, and the gym had become a place where both heavy lifting and heavy lobbying took place.

Revolving Door However, the HLOGA had loopholes that have been repeatedly exploited. One relates to the problem of the **revolving door**—the movement from the job of legislator or regulator to a job within an industry affected by the laws or regulations. Many officials leave their jobs on Capitol Hill or in the executive branch to lobby the government they departed. Some members of Congress take these positions after losing an election. Others realize they can make more money by representing industry instead of citizens.

While serving in the House or Senate, legislators gain hands-on understanding of the legislative process. When they leave office, they have the phone numbers of key committee chairs already in their cell phones. Later as lobbyists, they can serve their clients with both expertise and immediate access. Congressional staffers, too, are known for seeking jobs as lobbyists—especially if they have worked on key committees. The average term for a congressional staffer is about two years. Many who work under the president also find it lucrative to leave the Pentagon to lobby for defense contractors or to leave the Department of Agriculture to lobby for large agricultural firms.

A Public Citizen study found that half the senators and 42 percent of House members who left office between 1998 and 2004 became lobbyists. Another study found that 3,600 former congressional aides had passed through the revolving door. The Center for Responsive Politics identified 310 former Bush and 283 Clinton appointees as lobbyists working in the capital. As of late 2014, 143 former members of Congress serve as registered lobbyists.

As author Robert Kaiser explains, when former Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott abruptly announced his retirement, it soon became clear why. He wanted to leave within a year of his new six-year term to avoid the impact of a 2007 law and join friend and former Louisiana senator John Breaux to start a lobbying firm. Recent reform requires outgoing senators, their senior aides, and officials in the executive branch to wait two years before becoming lobbyists. House members must wait only one year. This period is meant to at least slow down the revolving door. Lott got around the requirement by leaving office just before the new reform law took effect. Others follow the letter of the law but work in the shadows—cultivating relationships that will pay off when their waiting period expires.

The problems with powerful interest groups have led some critics to wish to silence their voices. However, these critics need look no further than the First Amendment to understand why they can't. Interest groups are legal and constitutional because the amendment protects free speech, free association, and the right to petition the government. In response to escalating lobbying efforts over the years, however, Congress began in 1946 to require lobbyists to register with the House or Senate. The Supreme Court upheld lobbyists' registration requirements but also declared in *United States v. Harriss* (1954) that the First Amendment ensures anyone or any group the right to lobby.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *How do citizens, businesses, and other interests influence lawmaking and policy, and how has government regulated their actions?* On a separate paper, complete a chart like the one below to gather details to answer that question.

How Groups Influence Lawmaking	Government Regulations

THINK AS A POLITICAL SCIENTIST: *DETERMINE RELATIONSHIPS, PATTERNS, OR TRENDS*

To contextualize historical and present-day events and ideas, researchers need to be able to determine relationships, patterns, and trends among them over time. To do so, they use both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Qualitative research is a type of exploratory research that helps researchers understand human motivations and other underlying factors and reasons for how and why events, problems, or ideas take shape. It is subject to interpretation. Qualitative research presents a broad, mostly verbal view of a research topic. Examples of qualitative research include focus groups and one-on-one interviews. It typically uses only semistructured research techniques and small sample sizes.

Quantitative research, on the other hand, generates data that can be charted numerically to arrive at relevant statistical information. It is used to narrow a qualitative research topic. Quantitative research most often relies on surveys and polls and data collected by the Census Bureau and American National Election Studies. The surveys and polls can be given in person, online, or by telephone.

Practice: Choose two well-known super PACs—one liberal and one conservative—such as Americans for Prosperity (Koch brothers) or Workers' Voice (AFL-CIO). Use quantitative information from online sources and/or print media to track and compare the issues and causes these super PACs support and the levels of funding they apply to influence American politics. Illustrate your findings in a graph or chart.

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

access/535
amicus curiae/541
Budget and Impoundment Control Act (1974)/543
bundling/547
Citizens United v. FEC (2010)/532
dark money/533
direct lobbying/535
endorsement/538
501(c)(4)/528
501(c)(3)/528
free rider/530
Government Accountabiity Office/544
grassroots lobbying/538
grasstops/540
ideological group/532
insider strategies/535
intergovernmental lobby/529
issue networks/534
iron triangles/534
leadership PACs/532
lobbying/520
lobbyists/535
material incentives/530
Nineteenth Amendment (1920)/523
outsider strategies/535
pluralism/519
political action committees (PACs)/532
professional associations/529
public interest group/530
purposive incentives/530
revolving door/548
Seventeenth Amendment (1913)/523
single-issue group/531
Sixteenth Amendment (1913) /523
solidary incentives/530
Super PAC/533
think tanks/529
trade associations/522
upper-class bias/530

MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Questions 1 and 2 refer to the table below.

INTEREST GROUP INFLUENCE ON SELECT POLICY ISSUES, 1945–2012

Issue Area	Percent of policy enactments with interest group influence	Type of interest group credited
Agriculture	63.2	Advocacy groups*
Civil Rights and Liberties	67.2	Advocacy groups
Criminal Justice	30.8	Advocacy groups
Energy	36.4	Business interests
Environment	69.1	Advocacy groups
Science and Technology	36.8	Business interests
Transportation	57.8	Business interests

**Advocacy groups include public interest groups, single-issue groups, and representatives of identity groups, such as African Americans, Hispanics, LGBT persons, and women*

Source: Matt Grossman, "Interest Group Influence on US Policy Change." *Interest Groups & Advocacy,* Oct. 2012, Vol 1, 2, p. 181.

1. Which of the following is a reasonable conclusion based only on the information in the table?
   (A) Advocacy groups appear more effective at influencing policy than business interests.
   (B) Business interests are the main interest groups for agriculture.
   (C) Environmental issues draw the most support from interest groups.
   (D) There are more advocacy groups than business interest groups.
2. Which of the following issue areas would have more grassroots reach with conservatives?
   (A) Transportation
   (B) Civil Rights and Liberties
   (C) Criminal Justice
   (D) Environment

Questions 3 and 4 refer to the passage below.

> [T]he largest empirical study of actual decisions by our government in the history of political science, published last year, related what our government did to the attitudes of the economic elites, organized interest groups, and the average voter. What they found was, what our government actually did was strongly correlated with the views of the economic elites. If zero percent of the elites support something, very low chance it's going to pass, if 100% support something, very high chance it's going to pass. Same thing for organized interest groups. But for the average voter, it's a flat line. Which says it doesn't matter whether zero percent of the public believes something or 100% of the average voters believe something—it doesn't affect the probability that that thing will be enacted. . . .
>
> There's a whole raft of studies that look at the voting behavior of Senators. And they relate their voting behavior to the average views of voters in their district, to the party view, and to the funders' or donors' view. What they find is: almost no relation to what the average voter wants, some relation to what the party wants, but a very tight relation to what the donor wants.
>
> —Lawrence Lessig, Democratic candidate for president, October 2015

3. Which of the following best reflects Lessig's argument in this passage?
   (A) Organized interest groups have little actual effect on policy.
   (B) The economic elites and organized interest groups share policy priorities.
   (C) If people want to influence policy, they should support interest groups whose ideas they share.
   (D) Unlike interest groups, the economic elites buy their power through lobbying efforts and campaign contributions.

4. Which of the following legislative initiatives would Lessig be most likely to support?
   (A) Congressional term limits
   (B) Reform of nonprofit tax status
   (C) Campaign finance reform
   (D) Automatic voter registration

5. Which interest group action would most greatly influence rulings in the courts?
   (A) Rating senators and representatives based on roll call votes
   (B) Directly lobbying House and Senate members
   (C) Filing an *amicus curiae* brief
   (D) Purchasing an ad in a newspaper

6. Which statement about recent trends in grassroots lobbying is true?
   (A) Only citizen groups employ grassroots lobbying.
   (B) Grassroots lobbying uses mail and telephone, but not television.
   (C) This technique is often used to target particular congressional districts.
   (D) The average citizen and the grasstops are of equal value to a lobbyist.

7. Which of the following statements about interest groups and lobbying is true?
   (A) Lobbying is protected by the Fourth Amendment.
   (B) Lobbyists spend most of their time persuading lawmakers to change their political views.
   (C) A Capitol Hill lobbyist's most precious asset is access.
   (D) Free riders rarely benefit from interest group activity.

Questions 8 and 9 refer to the table below.

PAC CAMPAIGN DONATIONS (IN MILLIONS)			
	2000	2004	2008
Incumbents	$195.4	$246.8	$304.7
Challengers	$27.5	$22.3	$48.8
Open Seats	$36.9	$41.3	$32.4

Source: *FEC*

8. Which trend does the table on the previous page support?
   (A) PAC donations tend to change legislators' votes.
   (B) PAC donations to challengers have diminished in recent years.
   (C) Republican candidates receive more donations from labor PACs than do Democrats.
   (D) Interest group PACs tend to donate to incumbents more than challengers.

9. What implication can be drawn from the information in the table?
   (A) To be effective, PACs need to spend more on challengers than on open seats.
   (B) Issue networks have incumbents at their center.
   (C) Iron triangles depend on longstanding relationships that challengers can't provide.
   (D) Open seats provide the opportunity for a new access point for interest groups.

10. Which statement reflects the perspective of the cartoonist?

Source: *Nick Anderson, Cartoonist/Group*

   (A) Interest groups working together improve legislation.
   (B) Health care reform has been threatened by special interests.
   (C) Special interests make surgically precise changes to proposed policy.
   (D) Government involvement in health care is unwise.

1. "Most Nevadans don't have a choice. We don't get to decide how much our health care costs go up. No one's asking us if older Americans should be charged five times more for coverage than everyone else. And it's not our decision if Congress cuts Medicaid, leaving millions of seniors without the care they need . . . Just one vote could be enough to stop this bill. And Senator Heller, that vote is yours. Call Senator Heller today. Tell him to vote NO on the healthcare bill."

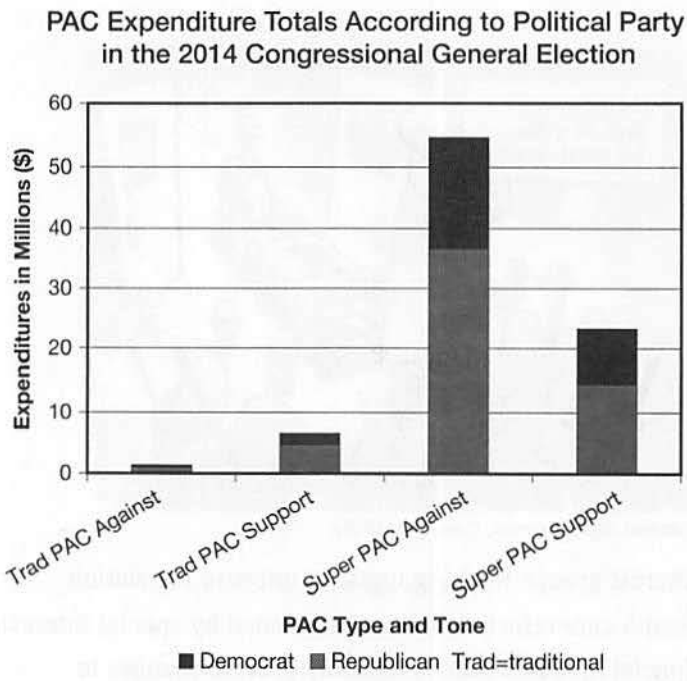
—AARP Radio Ad, June 20, 2017

After reading the above scenario, respond to A, B, and C below.

(A) Describe the goal of this interest group's radio ad.

(B) In the context of such radio ads aired by interest groups, explain the strategy AARP used to achieve the goal described in part A.

(C) Considering government interactions, explain one factor that could inhibit the success of this radio ad.



Source: *Federal Election Commission*

2. Use the information in the graphic on the previous page to respond to the tasks below.
   (A) Identify the most common type and tone of super PAC spending.
   (B) Describe a difference between traditional PAC and super PAC spending, and draw a conclusion about the cause of that difference.
   (C) Explain how the information in the graphic may demonstrate a factor in the public's view of Congress as a whole.

3. In June 1985, the Michigan State Chamber of Commerce wanted to run a newspaper ad in support of a candidate in the special election to fill a vacant seat in the Michigan House of Representatives. Although the organization had a separate political fund, it wanted to use money from its general treasury to pay for the ad. However, the Michigan State Campaign Finance Act prohibited the use of general treasury funds for political purposes. The Michigan State Chamber of Commerce argued that it was "nonprofit ideological corporation" and as such should not be bound by the Michigan law, which it argued suppressed the Chamber's First Amendment rights to free speech. A Michigan court upheld the application of the law; an appeals court reversed that decision, and the case came before the Supreme Court.

   In 1990, in *Austin v. Michigan Chamber of Commerce,* the Supreme Court once again reversed, upholding the Michigan law that prohibited corporations from spending general treasury funds for political purposes. The Court disagreed with the designation of the organization, noting that most of its members were corporations. It reasoned further that since corporations are allowed to make political expenditures through their separate political funds their right to free speech is not unduly burdened.

   (A) Identify a similarity between *Austin v. Michigan* (1990) and *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010). (See page 508.)
   (B) Given the similarity identified in part A, explain why the reasoning in *Citizens United v. FEC* led to a different holding than the holding in *Austin v. Michigan.*
   (C) Describe the effect of the ruling in *Citizens United* on corporate influence in policymaking.

4. Develop an argument that explains whether or not interest groups help achieve the type of representative democracy the founders envisioned.

   In your essay, you must:

   - Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning
   - Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information:
     - At least ONE piece of evidence must be from one of the following foundational documents:
       - *Federalist No. 10*
       - First Amendment
     - Use a second piece of evidence from another foundational document from the list above or from your study of interest groups
   - Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis
   - Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

WRITING: ***ESTABLISH A LINE OF REASONING***

An effective claim carries within it the direction your argument will take. For example, if you are arguing that the school day for teenagers should start later, you might develop this thesis:

School days should begin later to allow students to get the sleep they need to function at their physical, intellectual, and social best.

This claim establishes that the evidence you will provide will follow the line of reasoning that physical, intellectual, and social performance improve if students get the recommended amount of sleep.

16

The Media

"Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter."

—Thomas Jefferson, letter to a friend, 1787

Essential Question: How do changes in the media as a linkage institution influence political institutions and behavior?

Soon after Johannes Gutenberg created the printing press, reporting and commenting on government became commonplace. In late colonial America, pamphleteers and newspaper editors printed ideas that helped bring about the American Revolution. The media have since evolved from those hard-copy publications intended for elite audiences to instant reporting and citizen interaction via the Internet. Governments have a love-hate relationship with the press, because journalists and commentators can affect public opinion, government operation, and policy. In fact, the media wield power that rivals that of the three branches of government. For that reason, the media are often referred to as the "Fourth Estate," or the fourth branch of government. They have the power to influence society and politics almost as effectively as government itself.

Media as a Linkage Institution

In 1734, New York writer and publisher John Peter Zenger faced an American colonial court on a charge of seditious libel. Zenger had criticized the royal governor in his weekly *New York Journal*, which constituted an illegal action at the time. Zenger's attorney argued that the truth, which was not a legitimate defense under the law at the time, should be an absolute defense. The jury agreed and found Zenger not guilty. This radical verdict, at odds with legal standards in England, marked the beginning of an American **free press**—an uninhibited institution that places an additional check on government to maintain honesty, ethics, and transparency—later enshrined in the First Amendment.

No matter what form it takes, the free press serves to link citizens to their government. Newspapers and television report on citizen concerns and what their government does. Web-based news organizations provide constant updates as news develops. Social media has become a chief way for citizens

and government to exchange information. All media ultimately help shape how people engage with government, including voting, and how the government acts.

Traditional News Media

Colonial newspapers served a major function during the American Revolution. Later, they fostered a spirit of unity for the new nation's course. Only large cities could maintain a regular newspaper, however, and most of them were only four pages and printed weekly. The first daily paper did not appear until 1784.

President Washington and Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton wanted a newspaper to convey Federalist Party ideas. They hired a printer to create the *Gazette of the United States*, which became a tool of the Washington administration and the developing Federalist Party. Thomas Jefferson's followers responded by publishing the *National Gazette*. The warring political factions debated and sometimes attacked each other through these printed journals.

The partisan press ceased to dominate national media as newspapers expanded their circulation with mass-production and the creation of national news organizations. The 1860 opening of the **Government Printing Office (GPO)**—a permanent federal agency to print government publications—broke the patronage relationship between government and publishers. The GPO prints only government documents, not news stories or editorials.

In 1833, the *New York Sun* became the first successful daily newspaper to be priced moderately. The paper cost one penny per copy and was sold at outdoor city markets. It consisted primarily of human-interest stories and recipes, which were what the average reader desired. Government activity no longer dominated the front pages. Other similar papers also began to thrive as America's readership grew and newspaper owners sought a mass audience.

Associated Press Wire Service The telegraph altered communication even further. In 1841, Congress funded inventor Samuel Morse's telegraph line from Washington to Baltimore. This was the first direct government involvement in private-sector telecommunications. In 1848, New York's leading editors gathered in the *New York Sun* offices to finalize plans for a formal news organization, the **Associated Press (AP)**. By pooling resources, the editors could gather, share, and sell the news beyond their respective cities. By expanding the telegraph lines, reporters could send information quickly from anywhere in the world to AP headquarters in New York. Editors could then shape the story and send it out to client newspapers in cities across the country.

During its first year, the AP covered a presidential campaign, a women's rights convention, and other national stories. It established **news bureaus**, or offices beyond a newspaper's headquarters, in Albany, New York, and Washington, D.C. Because it wrote for a national audience in so many different newspapers, the AP standardized unbiased reporting in order to appeal to a

range of customers. The wire service set the standard for other news outlets to follow. Today, other wire services such as United Press International and Reuters compete with the AP, but they all follow the same standards of reporting.

Investigative Reporting In the early 20th century, Washington became a common dateline—the locale listed atop an article in a newspaper. Dispatches from the capital described such major news stories as the progress of the pure food and drug legislation, the efforts at trust busting, and the controversy over railroad rates. Progressive Era (1890–1920) journalism fostered integrity in reporting and a publication's ability to create real change. Magazines such as *McClure's*, *The Nation*, and *The New Republic* employed aggressive reporters to offer in-depth stories on national issues. **Investigative reporting** became a new genre, as reporters dug deep into stories to expose corruption in government and other institutions. Reporter Ida Tarbell wrote a damaging exposé of John D. Rockefeller's Standard Oil monopoly. Others such as Lincoln Steffens and Jacob Riis wrote stories and published photos that revealed the tragic conditions in cities. These journalists changed the national mindset to bring about reforms. For example, breaking up monopolies became easier once the public was aware of the harsh and sometimes illegal business practices of some industries. Newspapers were serving as a link between citizens and their government by reporting situations that called for new legislation.

Theodore Roosevelt shared the progressive spirit of these investigative journalists, though he did not always appreciate how they threatened his image or that of the United States. He dubbed the journalists muckrakers, a derogatory term that compared them to "the man with the muck rake" in the novel *Pilgrim's Progress*. They were too busy looking down and stirring up filth to gaze upon the stars. Lincoln Steffens proudly reflected on the label years later, "The makers of muck . . . bade me to report them."

Modern Print Media New media have emerged recently, profoundly influencing how citizens receive news. Yet, national newspapers such as the *Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, New York Times,* and *USA Today* remain influential, even if they've had to adapt to new modes of delivery. These newspapers continue to set the tone for national reporting, even if a majority of citizens no longer receive a hard copy on their front step every morning.

For decades, magazines such as *Time*, *Newsweek,* and *U.S. News and World Report* dominated in-depth news coverage with middle-of-the-road perspectives. These publications still operate today, though now they compete with news magazines that originated online. Other magazines cover national and international politics with a particular editorial slant. Some of the more liberal publications—*The New Republic*, *The Nation*, and *The Progressive*—have been around since the Progressive Era. Others, like *National Review* and *The Weekly Standard*, attract a conservative readership.

LEADING IDEOLOGICAL POLITICAL MAGAZINES	
Liberal	**Conservative**
The Nation	*National Review*
The New Republic	*Human Events*
The Progressive	*The Weekly Standard*
Mother Jones	*American Spectator*

New Communication Technologies

In the 20th century, radio and television both emerged as powerful new communication technologies. Citizens became fascinated with headlines and brief reports coming to them through the air. Broadcast stations developed news departments to shape an industry that competed with—and later surpassed—print media. Citizens began to rely on and become influenced by information relayed through sound and moving images.

Radio The first new form of technology was radio, which appeared shortly after World War I. The concept of a **broadcast network**—the broadcasting from one central location to several smaller stations called **affiliates**—was in full force by 1926, just seven years after the end of the First World War. Early newscasts included readings from *Time* magazine and news dramatizations featuring narrators and voice-over artists playing the parts of world leaders.

Radio journalism transitioned into more fact-based reporting as journalists moved from print to broadcast media. Edward R. Murrow was a key pioneer of this style. In 1940, Murrow broadcast from a rooftop in London in the midst of the Second World War, reporting on Germany's massive bombing efforts. The bombing had stopped temporarily, but radio listeners could still hear anti-aircraft weapons and air raid warnings. Films of the war appeared in movie theaters at the time, but, as Murrow biographer Bob Edwards put it, "Newsreel footage of the Blitz is in black and white; Ed's radio reports were in color." By the end of World War II, Murrow's voice was the most familiar in radio.

In the postwar period, broadcast companies shifted efforts toward television. By 1951, six years after the end of the Second World War, 10 million American homes had a television. Networks worked to develop news departments, and they covered the 1948 Democratic and Republican conventions. Television reporters wore headsets, carried 30-pound transmitters on their backs, and roamed the convention floor to interview delegates. Presidential contenders highlighted their credentials in front of the television cameras. Citizens were introduced to candidates for a live look at the individuals vying for each party's nomination. How a politician looked on television suddenly mattered.

Big Three Networks Over the next few years, the **Big Three networks** of ABC, CBS, and NBC set the tone for television journalism that is still largely followed today. Developing technology encouraged the networks to create in-depth programming that examined national affairs, international relations, and the lives of celebrities.

Edward R. Murrow moved from radio to television in 1951 to host *See It Now*, a precursor to *60 Minutes*. Murrow exposed Senator Joseph McCarthy by presenting examples of McCarthy's abusive tactics toward alleged American communists, which ultimately helped bring about McCarthy's downfall. Citizens trusted the voice—and now the image—of a trusted World War II reporter over an aggressive and corrupt politician. Television journalism had asserted itself as a watchdog, which made it an even more influential medium and strengthened its linkage function.

Television President In 1960, Senator John F. Kennedy became one of the first politicians to use the power of television to his advantage. The televised presidential debates between Kennedy and his opponent, Richard Nixon, began a new era of campaigning. Those who viewed the debates on television felt Kennedy won, while those who listened to the debates on the radio felt Nixon won.

Once elected president, Kennedy proved a master of the television medium, working with reporters and holding the first televised live press conferences. In 1963, CBS extended its 15-minute newscast to 30 minutes when Walter Cronkite interviewed President Kennedy. On November 22, 1963, Cronkite announced the president's death to the nation on live television. Coverage of Kennedy's assassination and funeral became the largest television event to date, and it remains embedded in the nation's collective memory.

Cable News In 1980, Atlanta TV station owner Ted Turner created the **Cable News Network (CNN)**. Americans had access to national news 24 hours a day for the first time. Cable companies added MSNBC and the Fox News Channel in the mid-1990s. These three cable news networks changed television news from a daily cycle with one evening peak to an all-day cycle with updates and analysis on the hour.

This change explains why President Bill Clinton's White House affair with Monica Lewinsky was so widely reported and why previous presidential affairs had not. Veteran White House reporter Helen Thomas noted how news reporting changed in the wake of the Lewinsky scandal: "Although gossip was also rampant about previous presidents, it remained just that—gossip—and reporters did not attempt to verify it."

Today, Fox, MSNBC, and CNN lead in viewership of cable TV news channels, though others like Bloomberg and BBC America have also become sources of 24-hour news delivery. Viewership of the top three channels peaked in 2008 at 4.3 million viewers per evening, and has declined somewhat as more channels are offered and as people turn to the Internet for news and entertainment. The Pew Research Center reported in 2016 that about 3.1 million combined viewers tune into those channels nightly. Though viewership has dropped, ad revenues for the cable's big three have steadily increased.

The original Big Three's (CBS, NBC, and ABC) 30-minute evening news broadcasts even today lead as America's key venue for political news consumption, hovering between 23 to 25 million combined viewers each night. These news sources have been around the longest, strive more for

objectivity, provide short but inclusive top stories, and are still free for those citizens who get their broadcasts through the air. It should also be noted that though local TV news has lost some of its audience over the past decade, it still has more viewers than the chief national networks or cable TV channels. More Americans turn on the local news for traffic and weather than the national news for politics.

The Internet The Internet was created and developed by the U.S. military as a tool to connect its vast network of computers. The technology became generally available to the public in the early 1990s. It is now an ever-present source of news, information, and entertainment.

In the early days of the Internet, journalists and news-savvy citizens scoffed at news traveling across the web. Because the Internet is mostly free and accessible, skeptics originally feared merging the news business with the new medium because they could not see how to make money. But major news magazines, dailies, and other traditional media outlets have now followed their audience to the Internet. While some people still receive a daily subscription of their favorite printed newspaper, the newsprint rolling off the presses for home delivery has shrunk drastically. Today, nearly all Americans (93 percent) rely on the Internet somewhat to get their news. People under 30 have made the web their preferred news source. Pew reports about 38 percent of people primarily get their news from a digital platform, versus about 20 percent from print.

Internet news sources can be divided into those outlets that were "born on the web," and "legacy" news sources. In the first category, websites such as *Huffington Post* and *Politico* are setting the standards for online political reporting. These and other digital media organizations, such as Yahoo News and BuzzFeed, have spent millions to bring well-known print and TV journalists into their ranks.

Meanwhile, traditional news outlets, the legacy sources, have developed strong and popular Internet platforms for reporting, such as nytimes.com and the *Wall Street Journal's* platform, wsj.com. These organizations have turned to digital platforms to compete and remain afloat financially. Promoting their mobile apps, hiring full-time online editors and graphic designers, and selling digital versions of their newspapers has helped ease the transition from print to digital somewhat, though the number of full-time journalists has dropped from almost 55,000 in 2007 to just under 24,000 in 2015.

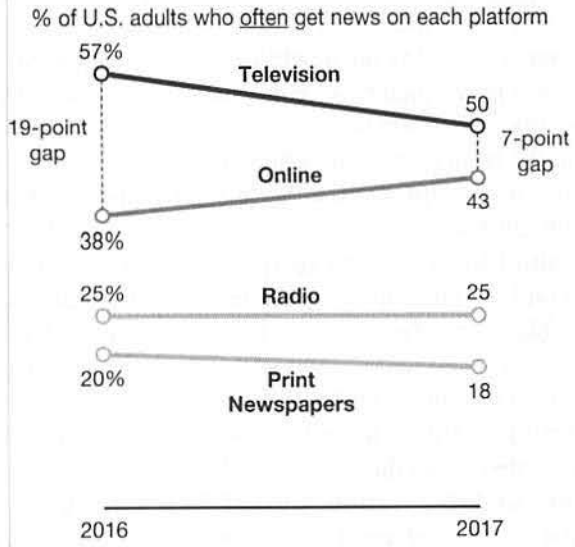
The shift from print to electronic journalism and the intense competition to "scoop" competitors in a fast-paced news environment has sped up publishing, shortened stories, enabled sloppy reporting, and caused journalists to seek out anything unique on an almost hourly basis to grab attention. This shift has not only encouraged sensationalism, but it also has increased the number of errors and after-story corrections.

Social Media Advances

In 2004, Harvard student Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook, originally a campus social networking site that has since grown into a multibillion dollar corporation that engages as many as 400 million users daily worldwide. Competitors and other social media sites soon followed until social media became a primary vehicle for a vast number of Americans to consume their news. In 2018, about 86 percent of 18- to 29-year-olds used social media, and about 34 percent of senior citizens did. Of people who say they use Facebook, 76 percent use it every day.

Social Media and News This social media interaction between consumers and news outlets has encouraged the outlets to use social media to their advantage. Even the Big Three networks now have a strong social media presence. News outlets engage readers online, allowing direct conversations between journalists and consumers. Consumers also produce citizen-journalism by posting on-the-scene videos or other consumer-created content. Consumers also use social media to help organize newsworthy events, such as the nationwide Women's March in January 2017 and the student-organized March for Our Lives in March 2018. Social media therefore plays an increasingly large role in shaping news presentation and consumption.

Television and Online News Consumption, 2016–2017



Source: *Pew Research Center*

What do the numbers show? From what media platform do Americans often obtain news the most? What portion of citizens often obtain news via the Internet? What percentage often read a printed newspaper?

Media and Political Participation

Various types of media coverage—reports of our three branches, breaking news, election coverage, and commentary—influence political participation and policy as they inform the public to make educated decisions and sometimes sway parts of the public to their way of thinking or problem solving.

Political Reporting

Government and its leaders have always been topics of interest to the press and the public, and much of the coverage of a topic in the press takes the form of **political reporting**, standard "just-the-facts" kinds of stories.

Using media is an efficient and free way for government officials to make announcements, to test the popularity of ideas (sometimes called "trial balloons"), or to assist in operating the government. Politicians try to interact with the press in a way that paints themselves and the government institutions they run in a positive light. The press's ability to influence public opinion has always kept government officials on their toes, and the sometimes adversarial relationship between journalists and government officials creates a rift between the two. Though candidates and officeholders cannot do without the press, an unfavorable headline can sometimes make or break an official's reputation. Today, an unfortunate snapshot or video clip suddenly available on YouTube can ruin a politician's career.

This dynamic has created a love-hate relationship between the government and the press. Candidates and officeholders will frequently contact reporters to offer up a news story about themselves, their platforms, or their new programs, which in reality may be nothing but a public-relations campaign. Depending on the day's events and how much news is happening, a reporter may be grateful for the easy story that will result in a "puff piece" highlighting the positive side of a politician on the front page. The same reporter, weeks later, might have to explain allegations of corruption made toward the same politician.

Reporters sometimes have their own agenda or bias, and how they present information in **sound bites**—short excerpts edited from a longer remark that are especially vivid in presenting an issue—can have drastically different effects on the public depending on how they are worded. A politician or his communications chief may deem a reporter as hostile and not return calls if the reporter seems to be painting the politician in a bad light. This tenuous and sometimes confusing relationship between government and media influences how the Fourth Estate covers the three branches of government.

The **Freedom of Information Act (FOIA),** signed into law in 1966, allows the public to gain access to nonclassified federal documents. This law has helped journalists uncover information that was otherwise not released. However, there are many exemptions to this act. The president, for example, can request that certain documents remain sealed for a number of years and can redact content.

Congress and Press Coverage The House of Representatives voted during the first Congress to open its doors to the public and the press. In the late 1800s, many reporters preferred to cover Congress instead of the White House. In the 1950s, Americans became familiar with Congress during Senator McCarthy's televised committee hearings and in the 1970s during the Watergate hearings.

Congressional stories include members' roles on committees and in the legislative process—these are typically technical story lines, not easily conveyed in short headlines or brief TV news segments. Yet those interested in lawmaking continue to monitor the legislature closely. Two traditional print outlets that cover Congress, *Roll Call* and *The Hill*, have gained national popularity with their websites. Large newspapers and most TV news services have at least one Capitol Hill correspondent. On the Sunday talk shows—such as *Meet the Press* and *Face the Nation*—hosts will commonly have a lawmaker from each party at the table to debate the issues.

In the late 1970s, the cable industry created **C-SPAN**—the Cable Satellite Public Affairs Network—a privately funded, nonprofit public service. Cable and satellite affiliates pay fees that in turn fund the network. C-SPAN began covering the House in 1979. The Senate decided to allow cameras into its chamber in 1986, which gave rise to C-SPAN 2. Congress owns and controls the cameras in the two chambers, but C-SPAN receives the feed and can broadcast House and Senate floor debates. When Congress is not holding debate in its respective chambers, the network covers committee hearings, seminars at university campuses and think tanks, public meetings, and political rallies.

Presidents and Press Coverage Significant media resources are assigned to cover the president. The press delves into the president's mind, relations with fellow policymakers, the first family, and interactions with other world leaders. Beyond the regular 100 or so top reporters who might cover the president in person daily, another 2,000 have White House press credentials. Some travel on *Air Force One* (the president's plane) or on the chartered press plane that follows it.

John F. Kennedy did the first live televised press conferences in the early 1960s. By President Richard Nixon's term (1969–1974), the dynamic between president and press had changed drastically. Nixon's paranoia, complicated by the release of the Pentagon Papers and the Watergate scandal, pitted him directly against the press. He had offending reporters' phones tapped, his vice president spoke publicly about "disloyal" reporters, his Department of Justice tried to subpoena reporters' notes, and a White House aide threatened antitrust lawsuits against TV networks if they did not let more conservatives on the air.

In recent times, a full-time White House press secretary has served the president. The press secretary holds regular **press conferences** in the James Brady Press Briefing Room (named for President Reagan's press secretary, who was shot in an assassination attempt against President Reagan in 1981). The White House controls these media events. TV networks and wire services get preferential seating, as do the other major outlets, such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. The more senior reporters are called on first, and the

press secretary typically signals the close of the session by calling on the senior wire service reporter.

Presidents appear at a podium to field questions much less frequently than their press secretaries do, usually only a few times each year. In their first year, Presidents George W. Bush, Barack Obama, and Donald Trump held 19, 27, and 21 overall press conferences respectively.

Donald Trump's candidacy and his first year in office led to tense relationships with the press. While on the campaign trail, Trump encouraged crowds at his rallies to rough up reporters. From his inauguration onward he and his team have misled and battled with the press. The pattern started with a combative first press conference when Press Secretary Sean Spicer offered exaggerations of the actual crowd size at Trump's swearing-in ceremony but otherwise did not take questions from the reporters present at the press conference.

Media coverage of President Trump's initial year reflected some of the adversarial relationships between the president and the press by tending to include more stories on personality, character, and leadership than on policy. The Pew Research Center found that two-thirds of the coverage during his first year concentrated on the president's political skills, immigration, his appointees, U.S.-Russia relations, and health care. Another finding was the more sources a reporter quoted, the more negative the story. And about one in six stories on the president included a direct tweet from Trump's Twitter account.

Courts and Press Coverage The press covers crime, lawsuits, courtroom activity, and appeals court decisions. The Sixth Amendment requires that trials be public and thus makes regular press coverage possible. At the national level, major newspapers and television news typically assign a legal affairs correspondent to cover the Supreme Court and high-profile trials throughout the country. Viewers often see footage of a trial from the state level, especially one involving celebrities or a horrific crime. In the federal courts, however, cameras are generally not allowed. Instead, pastel drawings depicting courtroom people and events usually appear on screen during TV news coverage.

Attempts to bring cameras into the Supreme Court for increased understanding and transparency will likely fail. For every person who sees court coverage on C-SPAN gavel-to-gavel, the late Justice Antonin Scalia once warned, "10,000 will see 15-second take outs on the network news, which, I guarantee you, will be uncharacteristic of what the court does."

Political Commentary

Journalism in the late 20th century made distinctions between fact and opinion. In print newspapers, the front pages offered more of an Edward R. Murrow-style of objectivity, while subjective views were kept on the editorial or Op-Ed pages, where the organization's editorial board would publish **editorials**—the organization's opinion pieces—including endorsements of political

candidates. Television newscasters and newsroom editors would occasionally go on the air and read their written **commentary** as the word "Commentary" appeared on the screen, meaning opinion and interpretation rather than "just-the-facts" reporting.

As more media outlets have appeared and as the political conversation has widened to include more extreme positions, at times the lines between objective and slanted presentations have blurred. Though the solid wall between newsrooms and editorial departments remains in the offices at some news outlets, in other places the wall between what is news and what is commentary is not strong or apparent.

Ideologically slanted websites and TV channels compete with and are often as powerful and present as those following traditional standards of journalism. Born-on-the-web ideological outlets and cable TV networks hire partisans, political strategists, and former Congress members and give them prominence on their web pages and in their studios. Many columns and blogs are not clearly labeled as "opinion," and thus the nondiscerning reader may not immediately realize the voice of an ideological extremist and may accept those views as if they were coming from the old-guard reporter dedicated to objectivity. CNN's *Anderson Cooper 360,* for example, often provides a panel of four commentators on each side of the political spectrum, competing not only to express their political goals but perhaps also for a more-permanent position with the network or a higher-paying offer from another channel. In other words, their statements are unlikely to be purely objective.

In a news environment of frequent commentary, observers have noticed two major trends. "One is a fixation on small concerns that have little or nothing to do with official actions of governments, such as whose statues should be displayed in public and what NFL players do during the national anthem," Josh Barro of *Business Insider* has pointed out, referring to controversies about the statues of confederate leaders in the South and the practice during the 2017 football season of some NFL players to kneel during the national anthem as a sign of protest. The other trend is how fixated these commentators are on concerns "so large and amorphous they cannot obviously be addressed by public policy."

Cable networks have employed more and more commentators, in part because of so many expanded outlets but mainly to draw audiences. The basic news can be presented in only so many unique ways, but commentators often have their own colorful personalities or backgrounds that serve to draw viewers looking for something different.

"Make politics boring again," says Noah Rothma, oddly enough in *Commentary* magazine. His bland solution might help Americans have a realistic understanding of governmental functions and would allow the press to neutralize politicians who incite controversies that exacerbate tensions. He admits, however, that his approach "would murder a lucrative industry that has turned societal divisiveness into a sport."

Political Analysis

A form of journalistic expression that explores and provides opinions on a topic in depth is called **political analysis**. This form offers explanations on topics, usually by experts, which help readers understand complex subjects. Political analysis is valuable as a way to educate news consumers on likely causes, effects, and implications of proposed legislation, court rulings, or budget proposals. Experts examine the topic from a variety of angles but do not include their own opinions on the subject.

For example, in 2014, there was discussion in the Senate about a constitutional amendment to limit campaign contributions that would have undone both *Citizens United v. FEC* (2010) (page 508) and *Buckley v. Valeo* (page 505). No one expected the amendment to come into being, but it provided an opportunity to reexamine the extremely complex issues intertwined in those cases. Mark Schmitt, Director of Political Reform at New America, a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank, wrote an analysis for the *Washington Post* that explored what would happen if such an amendment were to be ratified ("A constitutional amendment wouldn't really limit the power of money in politics," May 29, 2014). He used his decades of policy experience to write his analysis. Pieces such as these provide important information and explanations for engaged citizens who want to take seriously the consequences of government actions.

New America is a think tank that "does not engage in research or educational activities directed or influenced in any way by financial supporters," according to its website, so its political analysis is likely objective. Other think tanks, however, have strong ideological bases, liberal and conservative, and analysis from such a think tank would be likely to have a biased perspective.

Election Coverage: Media as Scorekeeper

As you read in Chapter 10, public opinion polling becomes a major news item during elections, a situation that casts media in the role of **scorekeeper**. As scorekeepers, the media track political successes and failures. During campaign seasons, reporters update readers and viewers nonstop on the ups and downs of competing candidates. The result is **horse-race journalism**, in which reporters find new ways to discuss who is leading and who is falling behind. As a result, they tend to over-emphasize public opinion polls, mainly because these are the only data that tend to change day to day. Candidates' ideas, policies, or biographies remain fairly static, so once those are reported, they are no longer considered newsworthy. The scorekeeping continues after an election by examining an elected official's approval rating or by crediting or blaming the successes and failures of government proposals and programs.

Scorekeeping, especially before an election, can be criticized for many reasons. When the media devotes time and emphasis to polling, it is not sharing candidates' proposals or examining the intricacies of a bill. When it delves into approval ratings, it is not properly evaluating government delivery of services.

When numbers and statistics dominate the conversation and the analysis, the media sacrifice time that could be used to publicize ideas that could affect real change. This constant—often circular—style of reporting also causes media outlets to turn political events into popularity contests, rather than contests in which voters make decisions based on candidate qualifications and platforms.

Bandwagon Effect Constant reporting on poll numbers may also cause a **bandwagon effect**, or a phenomenon in which people do something only because other people are doing it. (See page 375.) If Candidate A is ahead in the polls, undecided voters may begin to favor Candidate A because others do. Citizens may also jump on the bandwagon because they trust the wisdom of the masses or because they simply accept an inevitability and want to vote for a winner. Citizens may even start to genuinely admire the person who they believe will likely win.

What Gets Covered: Media as Gatekeeper

Much more is happening in the world than can fit into a 30-minute broadcast of the evening news or even fit onto a single online news magazine. Most news outlets have an **editorial board**, a group of veteran journalists who guide the editorial philosophy of the organization.

The editorial boards of news media therefore act as a **gatekeeper** by determining what is newsworthy and therefore deciding what information the public will receive. Print and radio editorial boards fulfill the same function by setting their own news agenda. What the media decide to publish directly influences the issues people regard as important. From what they learn through the media, citizens will contact their member of Congress, write letters to the editor, and assemble in support of a cause.

For example, a 2017 news story that implicated powerful filmmaker Harvey Weinstein as a serial womanizer and sexual assault offender sparked a movement for women to speak out against sexual aggression and rape. Before, such accusations may have resulted in powerful people in the film industry scoffing at them or ending the accuser's movie career. The coverage of Weinstein and many more sexual victims of powerful men followed. As the media accurately portrayed these women as victims, the news spread quickly and encouraged additional victims (recent and old) to make similar accusations. With what became the #MeToo Movement, the press had directly or indirectly facilitated an organized effort to stop sexual aggression in the workplace. This effort was highlighted at the end of 2017 when a special U.S. Senate election pitted Alabama Republican Roy Moore against Democrat Doug Jones. As the election approached, several women alleged that Moore had propositioned them or had a relationship with them back when he was a prosecutor in his 30s and they were teenagers. In a usually reliable Republican state, Jones defeated Moore for the Senate seat. Had the accusations against Moore been in isolation or barely covered, it is hard to imagine those accusations having the same political impact, and it might have been difficult for Jones to win.

Digging for the Truth: Media as Watchdog

Journalists' obligations to keep an eye on government or industry is part of the press's function as a **watchdog**. Investigative reporters look for corruption, scandal, or inefficiency. In fact, Congress may not even decide to address an issue until after the press has brought it into the light of day. In the age of Teddy Roosevelt's muckrakers, *McClure's* magazine published a series entitled "Railroads on Trial" that ultimately led Congress to strengthen train regulations. More recently, the Pulitzer Prize for Investigative Journalism, the industry's top honor, was awarded to journalists who investigated the flood of opioids into West Virginia counties with the highest overdose rates in the nation; the responsibility of the state of Florida for violence and neglect toward mental patients in state hospitals; the influence of lobbyists on congressional leaders and state attorneys general to favor the rich; and a rigged system orchestrated by doctors and lawyers to deny benefits to coal miners with black lung disease. The investigative work on the coal miners led to changes in the law.

Investigative Reporting in Vietnam Several investigative journalism efforts have become iconic examples of the power of the press to bring about change. One involves reporting from Vietnam during the war (1955–1975). Unlike the patriotic press corps of both world wars and the Korean War, journalists stationed in Vietnam began to question information presented by the United States military and diplomats. Television images brought the war into citizens' living rooms, and journalists did not hold back on showing the tough realities of the war. Roughly 10 American journalists were assigned to Vietnam in 1960. By 1968, about 500 full-time correspondents representing print, television, and radio were in South Vietnam. "Government's interpretations of events did not coincide with what we learned on our own," said NBC Vietnam Bureau Chief Ron Steinman. "We listened, hoping to discover a kernel of truth in a fog of lies." The reporting from Vietnam helped inspire the mass protests against the war that eventually led to U.S. withdrawal. In early 1968, after a trip to Vietnam, CBS anchor Walter Cronkite—known as the "most trusted man in America"—closed the evening news with an opinionated report that had big consequences. "We have been too often disappointed by the optimism of American leaders, both in Vietnam and Washington, to have faith any longer in the silver linings they find in the darkest clouds." President Lyndon Johnson, commander in chief at the time, reportedly remarked that if he had lost Cronkite, he had also lost America.

The Watergate Scandal A few years after the conflict in Vietnam waned, President Nixon sought reelection. *Washington Post* reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein served as watchdogs by uncovering the Watergate burglary scandal. In 1972, while reporting on a burglary of the

Democratic National Committee office in the Watergate Hotel, Woodward and Bernstein eventually discovered that the burglars stole information in order to help Nixon's reelection campaign. These investigative reporters kept the story alive throughout a congressional investigation and the eventual resignation of the president.

Torture at Abu Ghraib When the U.S. Army discovered its soldiers were mistreating Iraqi prisoners at Abu Ghraib, a prison in Iraq, journalist Seymour Hersh reported the horrific abuses in *The New Yorker* magazine in 2004. The TV show *60 Minutes* aired the story with photographic evidence. The terrible abuses, which occurred halfway around the world, would never have reached the American public if not for the Fourth Estate's check on government. A number of military personnel were charged and sentenced, and, in 2008, the military instituted reforms in its Iraqi prisons.

Media Ownership and Bias

The increasingly diverse options presented by so many media outlets have altered how citizens rely on the media. The around-the-clock demand for information has created a fast-paced, competitive market of outlets. They constantly vie for readers, viewers, and consumers, becoming increasingly partisan in their efforts to do so. As a result, demand for more media content also encourages the growth of media outlets with a specific political agenda and a targeted audience—a concept known as **narrowcasting.**

The rapid surge of new media outlets has therefore altered the political landscape. The lifting of the **Fairness Doctrine**—a former federal policy that required radio and television broadcasters to present alternative viewpoints—has allowed broadcasters more leeway and freedoms in what they air. A generations-long reputation of the news media having a liberal bias has allowed for conservative alternatives to succeed. For example, Sinclair Broadcast Group, reaching 40 percent of American households, is known for its conservative slant. Cable television has given birth to a variety of unique outlets that have altered news delivery to specialized audiences. The Internet has also created seemingly endless choices. All of these changes have redefined the roles and relationships between media and citizens.

For example, conservative radio talk show host Rush Limbaugh emerged as a national conservative voice and gained a strong following in the early 1990s. One reason he succeeded was because he created a sense of community among people already inclined to agree with one another. By 2008, this pioneer of the new medium had as many as 20 million listeners. Over the same period, **talk radio**—those syndicated political shows that air at stations coast-to-coast—grew apace and became a common way for Republicans to get political news. Without the Fairness Doctrine, there was no need to provide other viewpoints to challenge the community's beliefs, which became self-reinforcing on both the right and left.

Media Ownership

In 1934, Congress passed the Federal Communications Act, which created the **Federal Communications Commission (FCC)**. The FCC regulates electronic media, and it has authority over the content of radio, television, wire, and satellite broadcasts. It also regulates ownership by attempting to prevent monopolies. In 1941, for example, the FCC forbade NBC from operating two networks. NBC sold one of its two networks, which led to the establishment of ABC. In the last years of the 20th century, the popularity of cable news exploded, the Internet became a viable news source, and the entire landscape of media ownership changed.

The Influence of Fox Though Ted Turner and CNN invented cable news in general, the **Fox News Channel (FNC)** drastically altered it when it started in 1996. As media critic David Folkenflick claims in his book *Murdoch's World*, "No other news organization has done more in recent years to reshape that terrain than Fox." The time was ripe for an alternative news channel. The Republicans had gained control of Congress. A longstanding conservative disdain for the media had reached its zenith. And an era of polarization had begun. Media mogul Rupert Murdoch hired Nixon ad man and longtime Republican media strategist Roger Ailes to launch the endeavor.

Ailes assembled a team of capable journalists, many who leaned to the right or desired the breathing space an alternative news channel might offer. And Ailes knew there were enough viewers in middle America who thirsted for that alternative. On its maiden broadcast, Fox host Bill O'Reilly asked, "How did television news become so predictable and in some cases so boring?" After emphasizing too many news channels had become "politically correct," he offered, "Well, we're going to try to be different, stimulating and a bit daring, but at the same time, responsible and fair." It was code for "we're not going to be the typical liberal TV news." Sharper graphics, more dramatic show introductions, noticeable red-white-and-blue patriotism, and a nightly lineup dominated by conservative hosts, conservative guests, and attractive reporters became the hallmarks of the Fox model.

The news at Fox is presented in ways, Folkenflick shows, "that reflect and further stoke a sense of grievance among cultural conservatives against coastal elites." Since its early days, the motto "Fair and Balanced" has suggested that the other networks are not and Fox is here to correct that. Another catchphrase, "We Report, You Decide," suggested that the others—the liberal media elite—are indoctrinating viewers.

The risk paid off. After September 11, 2001, and the initial years of the George W. Bush presidency, Fox took the number one slot as the most-watched of the cable TV news channels and it has never lost it. In fact, after the 2016 election year, Fox became the most-watched cable TV channel of any kind.

A 2014 study showed that Fox had edged the Big Three networks as the "most trusted" news overall, though not likely due to Fox's journalistic standards. When lining up several TV news outlets, right-leaning citizens from

the sample consistently back Fox News, while moderates and liberals list as their top choice those from a variety of other not-conservative networks as the most trustworthy. Among self-described conservatives, Fox was trusted by 48 percent. Among self-described liberals, the Big Three led as most trusted, with CNN and PBS essentially tied for second.

Since America has such an ideologically diverse audience, producers, viewers, and TV journalists responded. As Fox News was born and developed, so too were other cable news networks. MSNBC was also established in 1996. Over time, it became the liberal alternative to Fox. However, the world of cable television is more fragmented than having a simple split between two networks. Channels as varied as ESPN and The History Channel have found ways to draw shares of viewers to them, seeking niche audiences to sell their product. CNBC is a 24-hour news channel that focuses on financial news. Large numbers of social conservatives tune into the Christian Broadcasting Network. Some networks, like Univision, have Hispanic audiences. Bloomberg News is yet another up-and-coming news channel that broadcasts much political news.

Impact of Ownership This market fragmentation has only encouraged network owners to find more potential viewers to turn to their channel. For those presenting political news while in search of profits—competing for viewers in order to attract advertisers—Fox, CNN, and MSNBC have each gone further away from objectivity and have revealed their bias. Studies show that 24-hour news channels actually show little substantive news, repeat sensational stories over and over all day often with nothing new to add, have reporters do more general talking about their story than traditional reporting on it, and the journalistic drive to answer the hard questions is spotty. The regular newscasters and anchors tend to ignite tempers, employ sarcasm, stoke fear, and conduct their presentations with a sense of moral righteousness. Sometimes their partisan guests deliver ad hominem attacks.

Politically savvy citizens in search of more than what the main networks offer turn to their choice of cable media, especially during election season. More Americans watch the evening Big Three in general, but during campaign season, more Americans say they turn to one or more cable channels for election coverage. In 2016, all news channels advanced in the ratings. Fox led all basic cable networks with an average of 2.5 million viewers during its prime-time lineup, up 36 percent from the previous year. CNN went up 77 percent to 1.3 million viewers and MSNBC increased at the same rate to 1.1 million.

As Pew Research Center confirms, "Those on the right and left have significantly different media diets." In a study done in late 2016, Pew found about 40 percent of Trump voters relied on Fox News as their "main source" for news. Clinton voters, on the other hand, listed CNN as their main source, but only 18 percent did so. MSNBC was second, and Fox didn't make it into their top ten.

Fox viewers include a high number of self-described conservatives, 60 percent. Meanwhile both CNN and MSNBC viewers claimed to be split with roughly one-third conservative, liberal, and moderate.

Media Bias

With the explosion of niche cable networks and online news sources, there is no longer any doubt as to whether bias in the media exists. Now, it is merely a question of where it exists and which way it leans. In fact, bias has become essential to the business model of several news outlets. Meanwhile, what is sometimes termed the **mainstream media**, or the collection of traditional news organizations, still operates an objective news model. Conservative critics have called the media liberal for nearly two generations, and researchers have found liberal tendencies in the media both in its membership and less obviously in its delivery. But to understand bias in the media, one has to ask, "Which media are you talking about?"

Traditional Bias Label The media have been accused of a liberal bias since the early 1970s, when the press hounded President Nixon. But that is a simplistic characterization that circumvents the real challenges of measuring bias. Today, with thousands of national reporters for every entity from Fox News to the *Huffington Post*, a sound method to determine the question of bias is challenging. One measurement is to examine the professionals who report the news. Overwhelmingly, national reporters who shape political coverage vote with the Democratic Party, and they have for some time. A 1972 poll showed that 70 percent of reporters voted for Nixon's opponent, George McGovern. A 1992 election study discovered that 89 percent of reporters voted for Bill Clinton, who received only 43 percent of the popular vote.

Studies that examine ideological slants also find that leading news outlets describe Republican and Democrat officials differently. David Brady and Jonathan Ma found that the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* tend to treat liberal senators as cooperative bipartisans and malign conservative senators. Their study saw a distinct difference in favorable or unfavorable adjectives that preceded "liberal" or "conservative" in their reporting. These outlets too often painted liberal senators as bipartisan lawmakers and iconic leaders of a noble cause but portrayed conservatives as hostile, combative, and out of the mainstream.

In a study of 20 major print and TV news outlets, researchers found that only two leaned conservative, Fox News and *The Washington Times*, but the other 18 ranged from slightly to substantially left of center.

Contemporary Bias While professional journalists may still strive for objectivity, the increasing choices of media driven by writers and broadcasters of different ideological persuasions have in some cases made objectivity a minor concern at best. Slanted media predated the Internet, but now legacy outlets—*The New Republic*, *Slate*, and *Salon* on the left; *National Review* and *The Weekly Standard* on the right—mesh with other news sites, and readers may or may not discern source bias as they read their stories. Newer, born-on-the-web outlets, such as *Red State* or *Huffington Post*, are noticeably ideological. They and the nightly cable broadcasts provide diametrically opposite presentations and narratives of the same basic stories.

One Pew study at the end of the 2012 presidential election found President Obama received far more negative than positive coverage on Fox. About 46 percent of Fox stories on Obama were negative, while only 6 percent were positive (the remainder being neutral). The same study found MSNBC was harsher on Republican nominee Mitt Romney, where 71 percent of election stories were negative and only 3 percent were positive. Based on the viewership differences and where citizens are going to get their information online, people on the left and right have distinctly different information streams from those of people with mixed political beliefs.

Meanwhile, as "news sources" are playing fast and loose with journalistic norms, citizens are communicating more frequently via the Internet, and people are choosing more selectively what they read. People of like mind are supplying one another with a tailored diet of news and commentary that only confirms what they already believe. While the exercise of First Amendment rights allows people to read or not read what they want, the self-reinforcing and isolated loop of "news" is not helpful in developing consensus policy or in finding the best solutions for America's problems, nor is it helpful in understanding the alternative viewpoints.

Media and Democratic Debate

Scholar and political expert Cass Sunstein calls the phenomenon of people remaining in echo chambers of their own creation "cyberpolarization." He believes public life would be better served if people relied on what he calls "the general interest intermediary," streams of information from those traditional, objective outlets. Without these, the level of political knowledge of citizens is reduced, and the result is a decline in the quality of public debate. At least four factors affect the quality of public debate and level of political knowledge: increased media choices, ideologically oriented programming, consumer-driven media and technology, and the credibility of news sources.

Increased Media Choices

In 1960, the average American home received three television stations. By 2014, Nielsen Research estimated that the number had risen to nearly 200. Evening news telecasts on the Big Three networks changed very little from Presidents Kennedy to Clinton. Viewers could expect the time slots around the dinner hour and before bedtime to be reserved for news broadcasts. But

Media consumers have more choices than ever before as a result of producers appealing to niche markets. These often one-sided media outlets have also popped up in new media through podcasts, streaming content on YouTube, and social media outlets such as Twitter. The line between traditional journalistic content and uninformed citizen editorialization is often blurred.

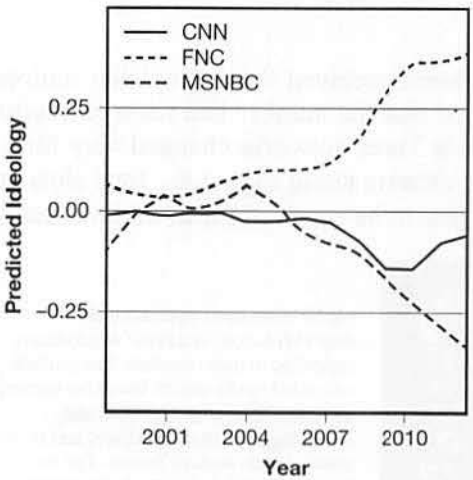
the explosion of cable news channels and their wide variety of programming have given consumers many more choices for their time in front of the TV. While at one time viewers were regularly exposed to the news no matter what channel they tuned to, now they can choose to watch entertainment of a seemingly endless variety instead. Studies have shown that while some people use the increased amount of news broadcasting to try to deepen their understanding of politics, others simply tune out news and politics by choosing to watch entertainment. This situation creates a gap not only in political knowledge but also in political participation because people with greater political knowledge turn out to vote more than people with less political knowledge. Public debate is diminished by the uneven distribution of political knowledge as well.

Ideologically Oriented Programming

Fox News is by far the most-watched cable news channel, outpacing its more centrist or liberal competitors CNN and MSNBC by a significant margin. The ideologically oriented programming on cable news channels has made the outlets a subject of great interest to political scientists, who ask a number of questions about their influence on voters and public debate. How much influence do the ideologically oriented news programs actually have on viewers, especially if viewers are attracted to a channel because they already share that channel's ideology?

A 2017 study by Emory University political scientist Gregory Martin and Stanford economist Ali Yurukoglu found that Fox News has a sizable influence on viewers' political attitudes, which in turn influence how they vote. They estimate that if Fox News hadn't been on the scene, John Kerry would likely have won the 2004 presidential election instead of George W. Bush.

Ideological Shifts in Cable News



Researchers Martin and Yurukoglu studied the changes over time of the liberal or conservative slant of CNN, FNC, and MSNBC. Their study focused on the choice of phrases used in broadcasts that convey different connotations. For example, does the broadcaster refer to the "war in Iraq" or the "global war on terrorism"? The researchers studied transcripts of broadcasts from 1998 to 2012 and then analyzed the results using a system for interpreting similar statistics on speech by members of Congress, whose voting records show their political slant. The higher the score, the more conservative the slant.

Source: Adapted from Martin and Yurukoglu 2017

They also found that CNN tried to develop its political ideology to match it to the maximize number of viewers it could attract, while Fox took a different approach. The political views of Fox are more conservative than those of their viewers, but Fox has had the effect of shifting their viewers' attitudes to the right. Fox is more successful at persuasion than the other cable news outlets and in this way is a major political agent.

As people are drawn to ideologically oriented programming, they demonstrate **confirmation bias,** the tendency to seek out and interpret information in a way that confirms what they already believe. They have no incentive, then, to consider opposing views, and yet the clash of ideas is vital for democratic debate and the democratic process. Sunstein writes, "Unplanned, unanticipated encounters [of ideas] are central to democracy itself. Such encounters often involve topics and points of view that people have not sought out and perhaps find quite irritating—but that might nevertheless change their lives in fundamental ways."

Consumer-Driven Media and Technology

Confirmation bias is evident on social media as well, where more than 60 percent of Americans get news. On Facebook, for example, people exchange political links and memes in a circle of like-minded friends, in the process reinforcing their own and other group members' beliefs and even accepting as true statements that have been proven false as long as they fit in with their beliefs.

While people are creating their own "bubbles" for information sharing, usually without critical evaluation, professionally trained journalists are being laid off and printing presses are shutting down. Reliable, ethical news outlets are disappearing. Cities that once had multiple newspapers that kept one another in check as they competed to provide the best news possible may now have only one paper.

Information outlets—newspapers, television stations, and radio stations—have always had to make decisions about what issues to cover, exercising their gatekeeper function. They considered what issues they believed would be most important to their consumers and assigned their resources to cover those issues accordingly. They always had to attract readers or go out of business. In today's highly competitive media environment, however, consumer-driven media has entered a new dimension. **Consumer-driven media** refers to media whose content is influenced by the actions and needs of consumers.

While at one time experienced professionals with a commitment to ethical journalism decided what to cover based on their best understanding of their consumers' interests and concerns, today such decisions are strongly influenced by the data that technology provides—what stories do people click on and read the most?

Now news companies and tech companies figure out what the average consumer will click on and generate stories from there. In other words, the role of gatekeeper has been passed on from experienced journalists to average

online surfers. Responsible news outlets still try to balance the forces of genuine newsworthiness and popular interests. But in the competitive media world, too often the citizen-gatekeepers, perhaps more interested in the Kardashians than foreign policy, have become the gatekeepers. When more trivial topics are covered at the expense of serious issues, the level of political knowledge and public debate declines.

Continuously monitored ratings provide similar data for television news stations, which now have to compete with not only other news stations but also a wide array of other programming—including on-demand services such as Netflix and Amazon Prime Video. Some analysts believe the hunger for ratings contributed to Donald Trump's rise to the Republican presidential nomination among a field of experienced politicians. As journalist and Fox contributor Michael Goodwin explains, at first the media treated Donald Trump's candidacy as a publicity stunt, until "television executives quickly made a surprising discovery; the more they put Trump on the air, the higher their ratings climbed." Cable news shows started devoting hours to simply pointing the cameras at Trump as he gave off-the-cuff speeches at his rallies. By one estimate, Goodwin notes, Trump received so much free airtime that if it had been purchased, it would have cost $2 billion.

Managers of legacy news organizations are changing their business model and operating differently to survive. "Dependence generates desperation," laments Franklin Foer, former editor at the *New Republic*. "A mad, shameless chase to gain clicks through Facebook, a relentless effort to game Google's algorithms," has altered the role of one of progressive journalism's century-old magazines. When Google changes an algorithm—such as the rules by which autocomplete fills in possibilities after a user enters a few words to start, or the rules determining the order in which search results appear—web traffic can change significantly, benefiting some media companies and hurting others. In this way, tech companies can influence the ethics and ethos of an entire profession.

Credibility of News Sources

While Americans have more media choices and more control over what information to seek, consumers are simultaneously sent information from people with an agenda: friends and family who are of like mind, media sources with the goal of gaining more clicks, American political groups trying to impact public opinion, or American adversaries trying to stoke the flames of discord or to influence an election. The result is an era of dubious credibility and impulsive clicks.

Pew discovered when citizens access political news digitally, most often (46 percent of the time) they go to a news organization's website. Social media is the second most frequently used source, 31 percent of the time; 20 percent go through a search engine such as Google; and 24 percent seek out news links after receiving email alerts from a news organization or friend. Those who willingly go to a reliable news organization are more likely to get credible information.

Consumers are not always as responsible in their consumption of news as an informed and engaged citizenry would require. For example, this same Pew study found that citizens who received an article via social media could recall and name the original news outlet only 56 percent of the time. Another finding was that fully 10 percent cited "Facebook" as the news outlet, when of course Facebook is not a news outlet at all.

If indeed this is an era of consumer-driven media, then consumers demanding credibility and objectivity would have influence in the content news outlets provide. Author Clay Johnson in *The Information Diet* compares consumers' intake of news to their consumption of food and argues that the problem is not that people consume too much information but rather that they take in too much "junk" information. Just as people have to consciously make choices about healthy eating, they need to make responsible choices about news consumption. He advocates for education in media literacy so people can develop the critical evaluation skills needed to make informed choices about information.

THINK AS A POLITICAL SCIENTIST: *EVALUATE SOURCES*

Political scientists carefully consider the source of all the information they acquire. The following checklists will guide you as you evaluate your information sources and distinguish genuine from "fake" news.

Checklist for Evaluating Books

- ✓ What is the publication date? Is the book likely to include up-to-date information?
- ✓ What are the author's credentials? Read the book jacket, online catalog entries, or a biographical reference work to get information about the author.
- ✓ Is the author a recognized expert? See if other people frequently cite this author.
- ✓ Is there anything in the author's background or associations that might suggest a biased viewpoint?
- ✓ Who is the publisher? Major publishers, including university presses and government agencies, review what they publish and are likely to be reputable sources.

Checklist for Evaluating Print Articles

- ✓ When was the article published? Is the article likely to include up-to-date information?
- ✓ Who is the author? What are his or her credentials? You can find these in a note at the beginning or end of the article.

- ✓ Does the magazine or newspaper appeal to a special interest group that may have a biased viewpoint on the subject? For example, a magazine called *Free Enterprise* would probably have a conservative leaning and appeal to free market advocates who want only minimal government in people's economic lives. A periodical called *Equal Justice*, on the other hand, might appeal to liberals who expect the government to intervene when needed to guarantee equality.

Checklist for Evaluating Websites

- ✓ If you receive a link through social media, consider the views of the person or organization that sent it. What bias might that sender have?
- ✓ When you follow the link, start by identifying the top-level domain name. Is the site maintained by a for-profit company (.com) that might be trying to sell something? Is it an educational institution (.edu), which tends to be more reliable, or an independent organization (.org)? If it is an organization, is it one whose name you recognize or is it one that you have never heard of before? Be aware that ".org" sites are often owned by nonprofit organizations that may support a particular cause.
- ✓ If the website contains an article, is it signed? If it is not signed, you should be skeptical of its credibility. If you do not recognize the author's name, you can do a web search using the author's name as the keyword to get more information.
- ✓ Does it use reasonable and sufficient facts and examples from reliable sources to make its points?
- ✓ Is it free from obvious errors?
- ✓ Do the language and graphics avoid sensationalism?
- ✓ Has the site been recently updated? Is the information still current? Look for a date on the main web page indicating the last time it was updated.

Whether you are evaluating print or online sources, you will need to verify information by finding corroboration in a number of sources. Some errors may be obvious, but unless you check the facts and find an agreement about them among sources, you might miss some bias, misinformation, and outright untruths.

Practice: Choose several links you have received through one or more of your social media accounts and evaluate the information in the link by using the checklist for evaluating websites. Write your comments to each point on the checklist and share your comments with the class as your teacher directs.

REFLECT ON THE ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Essential Question: *How do changes in the media as a linkage institution influence political institutions and behavior?* On separate paper, complete a chart like the one below to gather details to answer that question.

Changes in the Media	Influence of the Media

KEY TERMS AND NAMES

affiliates/560
Associated Press (AP)/558
bandwagon effect/569
Big Three networks/560
broadcast network/560
Cable News Network (CNN)/561
commentary/567
confirmation bias/577
consumer-driven media/577
C-SPAN/565
editorial boards/569
editorials/566
Fairness Doctrine/571
Federal Communications Commission (FCC)/572
Fox News Channel (FNC)/572
Freedom of Information Act (FOIA)/564
free press/557
gatekeeper/569
Government Printing Office (GPO)/558
horse-race journalism/568
investigative reporting/559
mainstream media/574
narrowcasting/571
news bureaus/558
political analysis/568
political reporting/564
press conferences/565
scorekeeper/568
sound bites/564
talk radio/571
watchdog/570

Questions 1 and 2 refer to the passage below.

> Shortly after Richard Nixon resigned the presidency, Bob and I were asked a long question [which] we answered with a short phrase that we've used many times since to describe our reporting on Watergate and its purpose and methodology. We called it the "best obtainable version of the truth." It's a simple concept for something very difficult to get right because of the enormous amount of effort, thinking, persistence, pushback, removal of ideological baggage and the sheer luck that is required, not to mention some unnatural humility. Underlying everything reporters do in pursuit of the best obtainable version of the truth, whatever our beat or assignment, is the question "what is news?" What is it that we believe is important, relevant, hidden, perhaps, or even in plain sight and ignored by conventional journalistic wisdom or governmental wisdom?
>
> I'd say this question of "what is news" becomes even more relevant and essential if we are covering the president of the United States. Richard Nixon tried to make the conduct of the press the issue in Watergate, instead of the conduct of the president and his men. We tried to avoid the noise and let the reporting speak.
>
> —Reporter Carl Bernstein, White House Correspondents Dinner, 2017

1. Which of the following statements best summarizes Bernstein's views?
   (A) Journalists' egos often get in the way of determining what stories to cover.
   (B) For a variety of reasons, most journalism is unfortunately shallow.
   (C) Reporters use professional judgment about what to cover as they filter out a variety of distractions and follow the facts.
   (D) Partisan spokespeople color the facts and are not reliable sources of information.

2. Which of the following reasons likely explains why Bernstein thinks the question of "what is news" is especially important when covering the president?

(A) The question of "what is news" is easier to determine when covering Congress than the president.

(B) The president can get a strong message out to the public asserting his interpretation of events.

(C) The Freedom of Information Act provides access to virtually unlimited presidential documents.

(D) News reports about the president help increase a newspaper's circulation.

3. During political campaigns before an election, the news media is said to cover the campaigns like a horse race. Which of the following statements best explains the reason for this analogy?

(A) The press relies heavily on measurements like poll numbers as a constant comparison of candidates' relative success in a campaign.

(B) The results of an election, like the results of a horse race, can't be predicted until the very end.

(C) The candidates are groomed and trained for the campaign just as racehorses are groomed and trained for a race.

(D) As gatekeepers, members of the press officially begin the horse race.

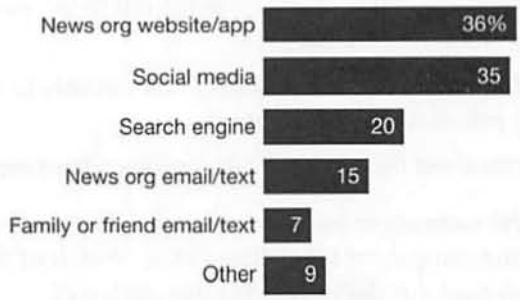
4. Which of the following is an accurate comparison of objective news and commentary?

	Objective News	Commentary
(A)	Factual accounts of events and people	Opinions of experts or people with political goals
(B)	Includes endorsements as long as they are on the editorial pages	Less common today than in the past and found in fewer places
(C)	Delivered by the guests on a talk show	Avoids criticizing government or government officials
(D)	A hallmark of talk radio after the removal of the Fairness Doctrine	Usually found on the front pages of traditional newspapers

Pathways to Online News

Twice a day for one week, online news consumers were asked **if they got news in the past two hours.**

When they did, average % of the times they got it through...



Note: Respondents were asked about the news they got on their main topic in each instance. Numbers add to more than 100% because respondents could report using more than one pathway in each survey.

"How Americans Encounter, Recall and Act Upon Digital News," Survey conducted Feb. 24-March 1, 2016

Source: *Pew Research Center*

5. Which accurately describes the information presented in the above chart?
   (A) People obtain news online mostly through social media or a news organization's website.
   (B) More Americans are getting news through social media than via television.
   (C) Most Americans use Google, Bing, or other search engines to find relevant news stories.
   (D) Texts from family and friends are what most often lead people to online news.

6. Which of the following is a reasonable conclusion based on the data in the graph?
   (A) Americans prefer watching video to reading text for their news.
   (B) News outlets face stiff competition for consumers.
   (C) Email will soon be the main way news outlets deliver news.
   (D) Search engines provide an unbiased index to the news.

7. Which of the following is a legitimate limitation to the information presented in the graph?

(A) The graph does not consider Twitter or Snapchat.

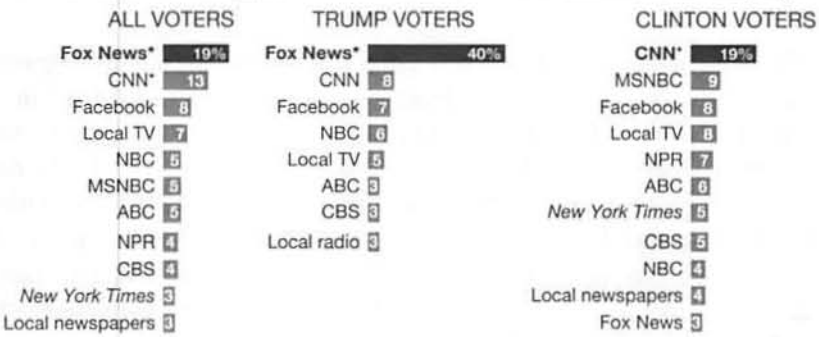
(B) The graph does not distinguish between email, text, and alerts.

(C) The graph fails to consider how often people get their news from word of mouth.

(D) The graph does not distinguish consumption of online news versus print media.

Main Sources of News for Voters in 2016 Presidential Election

% of voters who named__as their "main source" for news about the 2016 campaign



*Among this group of voters, this source was named at significantly higher rates than the source below it. Significance of any other relationships provided upon request.
Note: Sources shown are only those that were named by at least 3% of each group. Results are based on responses to open-ended questions; respondents could write in any source they chose.
Source: Pew Research Center survey conducted Nov. 29-Dec. 12, 2016.
"Trump, Clinton Voters Divided in Their Main Source for Election News"

8. Which statement accurately reflects the information presented in the above illustration?

(A) More Clinton voters watched CNN than any other outlet for their election news.

(B) Trump voters tended to watch a wider variety of news outlets than Clinton voters.

(C) One of the Big Three led in viewership/audience when voters were asked what they watched for election news.

(D) For election news viewing, CNN ranked highest in all three categories.

9. What conclusion can you draw from the data in the information graphic?

(A) Fox News built its viewership on its reputation for credibility.

(B) Fox News targets conservatives as their niche audience.

(C) Trump voters tend to rely more on print journalism than television.

(D) Social media plays a very small role in getting election news.

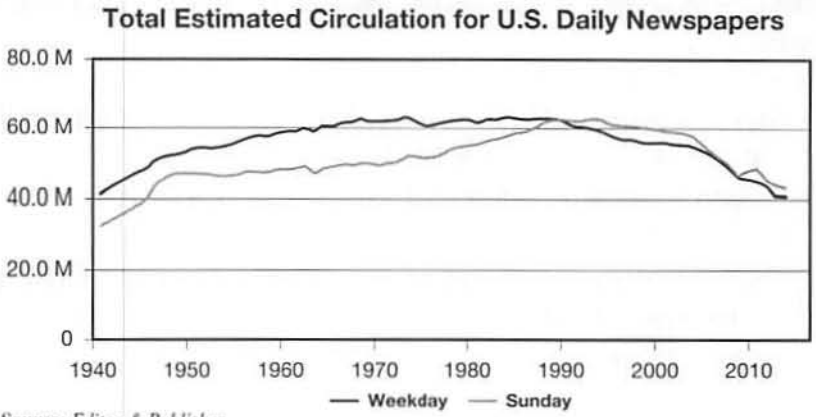
10. What is one effect of consumer-driven media?
    (A) It replaces content from professionals with content from nonexperts.
    (B) It increases the quality of public debate by engaging so many people.
    (C) It helps establish the importance of fact and research before sharing stories.
    (D) It overcomes ideological divides and brings people together.

FREE-RESPONSE QUESTIONS

1. "For it seems now more certain than ever that the bloody experience of Vietnam is to end in a stalemate . . . To say that we are mired in stalemate seems the only realistic, yet unsatisfactory, conclusion. On the off chance that military and political analysts are right, in the next few months we must test the enemy's intentions, in case this is indeed his last big gasp before negotiations. But it is increasingly clear to this reporter that the only rational way out then will be to negotiate, not as victors, but as an honorable people who lived up to their pledge to defend democracy, and did the best they could."

    —Anchorman Walter Cronkite, CBS News Broadcast, 1968

    After reading the scenario, respond to A, B, and C below:
    (A) Describe the nature of the reporting in the passage above.
    (B) In the context of the passage, explain how the nature of reporting in part A affects elected officials.
    (C) In the context of the passage, explain how the media serves as a linkage institution.



Source: *Editor & Publisher*

2. Use the information graphic to answer the questions.
   (A) Identify a decade during which both weekday and Sunday circulation declined.
   (B) Describe a difference in the trend between weekday and Sunday circulation, and draw a conclusion about that difference.
   (C) Explain how newspaper circulation as shown in the graphic demonstrates the changing media landscape.

3. Jay Near was the publisher of a newspaper in Minneapolis in the late 1920s called *The Saturday Press*. In it he accused public officials of corruption in sensational exposes and took an anti-Catholic, anti-Semitic, and anti-labor posture. A 1925 Minnesota state law known as the Public Nuisance Law or Minnesota Gag Law banned future publication of *The Saturday Press* on the grounds that its bigoted attitudes constituted a public nuisance. Near sued, arguing that the rights to a free press were violated. A state court upheld the ban, but the newly formed American Civil Liberties Union became interested in the case and it came before the Supreme Court in 1931 as *Near v. Minnesota*. In a 5:4 vote, the Court ruled that the state law preventing publication in advance was unconstitutional even if what was going to be published was untrue.
   (A) Identify the principle that is common to both *Near v. Minnesota* (1931) and *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971). (See page 250.)
   (B) Based on the principle identified in part A, explain a difference between the facts of *Near v. Minnesota* and those in *New York Times Co. v. United States* (1971).
   (C) Describe an action that a person or organization could take after publication of a controversial, libelous, or offensive article.

4. Develop an argument that explains whether a free press is essential to democracy.

   In your essay, you must:

   - Articulate a defensible claim or thesis that responds to the prompt and establishes a line of reasoning.
   - Support your claim with at least TWO pieces of accurate and relevant information:
     - At least ONE piece of evidence must be from one of the following foundational documents:
       - First Amendment of the Constitution
       - *Brutus No. 1*
     - Use a second piece of evidence from the other document from the list above or your study of the media
   - Use reasoning to explain why your evidence supports your claim/thesis.
   - Respond to an opposing or alternative perspective using refutation, concession, or rebuttal.

WRITING: ***PLAN AND REVISE***

Take time before digging into your writing to gather your thoughts. What position are you taking? What evidence will you use to support that position? What are alternate positions? How will you respond to them? A graphic like the one below might help you prepare to write.

My position	
Evidence (include at least two pieces)	
Alternate positions	
Rebuttals	

Leave time to revise your essay after you complete a first draft. Check it over to make sure you have addressed each required task. Also check your organization and transitions. Does your essay flow smoothly? Read it over from the beginning with fresh eyes and try to make your ideas as clear as possible.