



US Social, Political and Economic Issues

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I. Federalism

I. Federalism

Excerpts from *Issues of Democracy*, USIA Electronic Journal, Vol. 2, No. 2, April 1997, <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/0497/ijde/toc.htm>

The United States of America is a country of many governments. The federal government is of course the largest, but the governments of the 50 states and thousands of smaller units -- counties, cities, towns and villages -- are no less important. The drafters of the Constitution created this multilayered system of government. They made the national structure supreme and assigned it certain specific functions, such as defense, currency regulation and foreign relations; yet they wisely recognized the need for levels of government more directly in contact with the people, and so they left many other responsibilities in the hands of state and local jurisdictions.

1. A COUNTRY OF MANY GOVERNMENTS

Source: State Department, Part 7 of *An Outline of the U.S. Government*, <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/outusgov/ch7.htm>

"The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people."

— The United States Constitution, Amendment X, 1789

The federal entity created by the Constitution is the dominant feature of the American governmental system. But the system itself is in reality a mosaic, composed of thousands of smaller units — building blocks that together make up the whole. There are 50 state governments plus the government of the District of Columbia, and further down the ladder are still smaller units that govern counties, cities, towns, and villages.

This multiplicity of governmental units is best understood in terms of the evolution of the United States. The federal system, it has been seen, was the last step in an evolutionary process. Prior to the Constitution, there were the governments of the separate colonies (later states) and, prior to those, the governments of counties and smaller units. One of the first tasks accomplished by the early English settlers was the creation of governmental units for the tiny settlements they established along the Atlantic coast. Even before the Pilgrims disembarked from their ship in 1620, they formulated the Mayflower Compact, the first written American constitution. And as the new nation pushed westward, each frontier outpost created its own government to manage its affairs.

The drafters of the U.S. Constitution left this multilayered governmental system untouched. While they made the national structure supreme, they wisely recognized the need for a series of governments more directly in contact with the people and more keenly attuned to their needs. Thus, certain functions — such as defense, currency regulation, and foreign relations — could only be managed by a strong centralized government. But others — such as sanitation, education, and local transportation — could be better served by local jurisdictions.

STATE GOVERNMENT

Before their independence, colonies were governed separately by the British Crown. In the early years of the republic, prior to the adoption of the Constitution, each state was virtually an autonomous unit. The delegates to the Constitutional Convention sought a stronger, more viable federal union, but they were also intent on safeguarding the rights of the states.

In general, matters that lie entirely within state borders are the exclusive concern of state governments. These include internal communications; regulations relating to property, industry, business, and public utilities; the state criminal code; and working conditions within the state. Within this context, the federal government requires that state governments must be democratic in form and that they adopt no laws that contradict or violate the federal Constitution or the laws and treaties of the United States.

There are, of course, many areas of overlap between state and federal jurisdictions. Particularly in recent years, the federal government has assumed ever broadening responsibility in such matters as health, education, welfare, transportation, and housing and urban development. But where the federal government exercises such responsibility in the states, programs are usually adopted on the basis of cooperation between the two levels of government, rather than as an imposition from above.

Like the national government, state governments have three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial; these are roughly equivalent in function and scope to their national counterparts. The chief executive of a state is the governor, elected by popular vote, typically for a four-year term (although in a few states the term is two years). Except for Nebraska, which has a single legislative body, all states have a bicameral legislature, with the upper house usually called the Senate and the lower house called the House of Representatives, the House of Delegates, or the General Assembly. In most states, senators serve four-year terms, and members of the lower house serve two-year terms.

The constitutions of the various states differ in some details but generally follow a pattern similar to that of the federal Constitution, including a statement of the rights of the people and a plan for organizing the government. On such matters as

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the operation of businesses, banks, public utilities, and charitable institutions, state constitutions are often more detailed and explicit than the federal one. Each state constitution, however, provides that the final authority belongs to the people, and sets certain standards and principles as the foundation of government.

CITY GOVERNMENT

Once predominantly rural, the United States is today a highly urbanized country, and about 80 percent of its citizens now live in towns, large cities, or suburbs of cities. This statistic makes city governments critically important in the overall pattern of American government. To a greater extent than on the federal or state level, the city directly serves the needs of the people, providing everything from police and fire protection to sanitary codes, health regulations, education, public transportation, and housing.

The business of running America's major cities is enormously complex. In terms of population alone, New York City is larger than 41 of the 50 states. It is often said that, next to the presidency, the most difficult executive position in the country is that of mayor of New York.

City governments are chartered by states, and their charters detail the objectives and powers of the municipal government. But in many respects the cities function independently of the states. For most big cities, however, cooperation with both state and federal organizations is essential to meeting the needs of their residents.

Types of city governments vary widely across the nation. However, almost all have some kind of central council, elected by the voters, and an executive officer, assisted by various department heads, to manage the city's affairs.

There are three general types of city government: the mayor-council, the commission, and the city manager. These are the pure forms; many cities have developed a combination of two or three of them.

Mayor-Council. This is the oldest form of city government in the United States and, until the beginning of the 20th century, was used by nearly all American cities. Its structure is similar to that of the state and national governments, with an elected mayor as chief of the executive branch and an elected council that represents the various neighborhoods forming the legislative branch. The mayor appoints heads of city departments and other officials, sometimes with the approval of the council. He or she has the power of veto over ordinances — the laws of the city — and frequently is responsible for preparing the city's budget. The council passes city ordinances, sets the tax rate on property, and apportions money among the various city departments.

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The Commission. This combines both the legislative and executive functions in one group of officials, usually three or more in number, elected city-wide. Each commissioner supervises the work of one or more city departments. One is named chairperson of the body and is often called the mayor, although his or her power is equivalent to that of the other commissioners.

The City Manager. The city manager is a response to the increasing complexity of urban problems, which require management expertise not often possessed by elected public officials. The answer has been to entrust most of the executive powers, including law enforcement and provision of services, to a highly trained and experienced professional city manager.

The city manager plan has been adopted by a growing number of cities. Under this plan, a small, elected council makes the city ordinances and sets policy, but hires a paid administrator, also called a city manager, to carry out its decisions. The manager draws up the city budget and supervises most of the departments. Usually, there is no set term; the manager serves as long as the council is satisfied with his or her work.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The county is a subdivision of the state, usually — but not always — containing two or more townships and several villages. New York City is so large that it is divided into five separate boroughs, each a county in its own right: the Bronx, Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. On the other hand, Arlington County, Virginia, just across the Potomac River from Washington, D.C., is both an urbanized and suburban area, governed by a unitary county administration.

In most U.S. counties, one town or city is designated as the county seat, and this is where the government offices are located and where the board of commissioners or supervisors meets. In small counties, boards are chosen by the county as a whole; in the larger ones, supervisors represent separate districts or townships. The board levies taxes; borrows and appropriates money; fixes the salaries of county employees; supervises elections; builds and maintains highways and bridges; and administers national, state, and county welfare programs.

TOWN AND VILLAGE GOVERNMENT

Thousands of municipal jurisdictions are too small to qualify as city governments. These are chartered as towns and villages and deal with such strictly local needs as paving and lighting the streets; ensuring a water supply; providing police and fire protection; establishing local health regulations; arranging for garbage, sewage, and other waste disposal; collecting local taxes to support governmental

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operations; and, in cooperation with the state and county, directly administering the local school system.

The government is usually entrusted to an elected board or council, which may be known by a variety of names: town or village council, board of selectmen, board of supervisors, board of commissioners. The board may have a chairperson or president who functions as chief executive officer, or there may be an elected mayor. Governmental employees may include a clerk, treasurer, police and fire officers, and health and welfare officers.

One unique aspect of local government, found mostly in the New England region of the United States, is the "town meeting." Once a year — sometimes more often if needed — the registered voters of the town meet in open session to elect officers, debate local issues, and pass laws for operating the government. As a body, they decide on road construction and repair, construction of public buildings and facilities, tax rates, and the town budget. The town meeting, which has existed for more than two centuries, is often cited as the purest form of direct democracy, in which the governmental power is not delegated, but is exercised directly and regularly by all the people.

OTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The federal, state, and local governments covered here by no means include the whole spectrum of American governmental units. The U.S. Bureau of the Census (part of the Commerce Department) has identified no less than 84,955 local governmental units in the United States, including counties, municipalities, townships, school districts, and special districts.

Americans have come to rely on their governments to perform a wide variety of tasks which, in the early days of the republic, people did for themselves. In colonial days, there were few police officers or firefighters, even in the large cities; governments provided neither street lights nor street cleaners. To a large extent, people protected their own property and saw to their families' needs.

Now, meeting these needs is seen as the responsibility of the whole community, acting through government. Even in small towns, the police, fire, welfare, and health department functions are exercised by governments. Hence, the bewildering array of jurisdictions.

2. AMERICAN FEDERALISM, PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

By Ellis Katz of the Center for the Study of Federalism at Temple University, explores the origins and development of American federalism.

Source: *Issues of Democracy*, USIA Electronic Journal, Vol. 2, No. 2, April 1997, <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/0497/ijde/katz.htm>

When the 13 North American colonies declared their independence from Great Britain on July 4, 1776, they recognized the need to coordinate their efforts in the war and to cooperate with each other generally. To these ends, they adopted the Articles of Confederation, a constitution which created a league of sovereign states which committed the states to cooperate with each other in military affairs, foreign policy and other important areas. The Articles were barely sufficient to hold the states together through the war against England and, at the successful conclusion of that war, fell apart completely as the states pursued their own interests rather than the national interest of the new United States.



A view of the State House in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania where the U.S. Constitution was signed. This black- and-white photo of an original hand-colored lithograph by Birdi & Son, sold by R. Campbell & Co. 1799, was provided by the U.S. Library of Congress.

The Origin and Development of American Federalism

To remedy the defects of the Articles (or, in the words of the Constitution of 1787, "to create a more perfect union"), George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and other nationalist leaders called upon the states to send delegates to a constitutional convention to meet in the city of Philadelphia in May 1787. It was, of course, that convention that produced the Constitution of the United States.

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The framers of the Constitution rejected both confederal and unitary models of government. Instead, they based the new American government on an entirely new theory: federalism. In a confederation, the member states make up the union. Sovereignty remains with the states and individuals are citizens of their respective states, not of the national government. In a unitary system, on the other hand, the national government is sovereign and the states, if they exist at all, are mere administrative arms of the central government. In the American federal system, the people retain their basic sovereignty and they delegate some powers to the national government and reserve other powers to the states. Individuals are citizens of *both* the general government and their respective states.

This brief history is important for two reasons. First, the American federal system is not simply a decentralized hierarchy. The states are not administrative units that exist only to implement policies made by some central government. The states are fully functioning constitutional polities in their own right, empowered by the American people to make a wide range of policies for their own citizens.

Second, the framers expected that the states would be the principal policymakers in the federal system. The powers granted to the federal government are relatively few in number and deal mainly with foreign and military affairs and national economic issues, such as the free flow of commerce across state lines. Most domestic policy issues were left to the states to resolve in keeping with their own histories, needs and cultures.

The first 75 years of American development (1790-1865) were marked by constitutional and political conflicts about the nature of American federalism. Almost immediately George Washington, Alexander Hamilton, John Marshall and their Federalist colleagues argued for an expansive interpretation of federal authority, while Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Spencer Roane and their partisan allies maintained that the American union was little more than a confederation in which power and sovereignty remained with the states. By the 1850s, the debate focused on whether slavery was a matter for national or state policy.

The American Civil War (1860-1865) did much to resolve these federalism questions. The northern victory and the subsequent adoption of the 13th, 14th and 15th amendments to the Constitution ended slavery, defined national citizenship, limited the power of the states in the areas of civil rights and liberties, and, generally, established the supremacy of the national Constitution and laws over the states. Federalism issues continued of course, and during the first third of this century, the U.S. Supreme Court often cited federalism considerations to limit federal authority over the economy. Two developments, however, led to the expansion of federal authority, and, according to some critics, brought about an imbalance in American federalism.

First, under the New Deal programs of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the functions of the federal government expanded enormously. It was the New Deal that gave rise to Social Security, unemployment compensation, federal welfare programs, price stabilization programs in industry and agriculture, and collective bargaining for labor

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unions. Many of these programs, while funded by the federal government, were administered by the states, giving rise to the federal grant-in-aid system. The U.S. Supreme Court legitimated this expanded federal role, and since 1937 has pretty much allowed the national government to define the reach of its authority for itself.

Second, during the 1950s and 1960s, the national government became viewed as the principal promoter and defender of civil rights and liberties. In a series of very important decisions, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down state-supported racial segregation, state laws that discriminated against women, and state criminal proceedings that violated the due process of law provision of the 14th Amendment. Thus, people looked to the institutions of the national government (especially to the U.S. Supreme Court) to defend them against their own state governments.

These two developments required a reconceptualization of federalism. Until the New Deal, the prevailing concept of federalism was "dual federalism," a system in which the national government and the states have totally separate sets of responsibilities. Thus foreign affairs and national defense were the business of the federal government alone, while education and family law were matters for the states exclusively. The New Deal broke this artificial distinction and gave rise to the notion of "cooperative federalism," a system by which the national and state governments may cooperate with each other to deal with a wide range of social and economic problems.

Cooperative federalism characterized American intergovernmental relations through the 1950s and into the 1960s. The principal tool of cooperative federalism was the grant-in-aid, a system by which the federal government uses its greater financial resources to give money to the states to pursue mutually agreed-upon goals. The building of the interstate highway system in the United States during the 1950s and 1960s is usually cited as an example of cooperative federalism working at its best. The federal government provided up to 90 percent of the cost of highway construction, gave technical assistance to the states in building the highways, and, generally, set standards for the new roads. The highways were actually built and maintained by the states.

Three points about this sort of cooperative federalism need to be made clear. First, the federal government and the states agreed on the goals; both wanted the roads built. Second, only the federal government and the states were involved in the programs. Cities and other units of local government were not full partners in the cooperative federalism of the 1950s and early 1960s. Third, the grant-in-aid programs affected only a small number of policy areas; most of the funding went for highways, airport construction, and housing and urban development. As late as 1963, the total funding for all federal grants-in-aid was only about \$9 thousand-million.

But this sort of cooperative federalism ended by the mid-1960s. Under President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society, the federal government sometimes enacted grant-in-aid programs in which the states had little interest, or to which they were actually opposed. Second, federal funds were now often given directly to units of local government --

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counties, cities, small towns, and school and other special districts. Third, while previous grant-in-aid programs were limited to a few areas on which the federal government and the states agreed, the Great Society reached almost every policy area -- education, police and fire protection, historic preservation, public libraries, infant health care, urban renewal, public parks and recreation, sewage and water systems and public transit.

The consequence of all this was two-fold. First, the number of players in the intergovernmental system increased tremendously, from 51 (the states and the federal government) to the 80,000 or so units of local government that existed at the time. Second, federal grants-in-aid, which affected only a few policy areas previously, now affected almost all areas of public life. This led to a number of managerial and political problems (coordination, accountability, priorities, micro-management, etc.) that political scientist David Walker has summed up with the phrase "the hyperintergovernmentalization" of American public policy.

President Richard M. Nixon tried to fix all of this by the consolidation of small categorical grant programs into larger bloc grant programs in which the states would have more discretion. By and large, however, his efforts failed. By the time he left office, there were more grant programs (over 600) than when he started. The presidency of Ronald Reagan seemed to promise a solution. While Reagan supported many of Nixon's proposed solutions, his real impact was on federal spending, which has caused Americans to re-think not only federalism, but the role of government itself.

Wanting a smaller role for government, especially for the federal government, Reagan successfully fought for increased defense spending, tax cuts and increased (or at least maintained) levels of Social Security payments. The result was that there was less and less money available for federal domestic grant-in-aid programs. While federal grant-in-aid spending crept upwards during the Bush administration, and has remained fairly stable during the Clinton administration (over \$225 thousand-million in 1996), Reagan's strategy, by and large, has worked -- although it has created a new set of problems for state and local government.

American Federalism Today and Tomorrow

American federalism was never merely a set of static institutional arrangements, frozen in time by the U.S. Constitution. Rather, American federalism is a dynamic, multi-dimensional process that has economic, administrative, and political aspects as well as constitutional ones. This is perhaps more true today than it ever has been. Let me suggest six crucial issues that Americans face today:

Unfunded Mandates. With the shortage of federal money to support federal priorities, Congress, using its constitutional authority to "regulate commerce among the states," imposed direct regulations upon the states. Since these regulations require the states to act but do not provide any funding to finance these activities, they are called "unfunded mandates." Many of these regulations deal with environmental protection, historic

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preservation and the protection of individual rights, but they all carry with them substantial costs to the states. The states rebelled against these federal requirements and, in response, Congress enacted the Unfunded Mandates Act of 1995, which (with certain threshold requirements) prohibits the federal government from placing new requirements on state and local government without providing the necessary funding. It remains to be seen whether this law will effectively limit the range of federal activity, especially given how broadly the U.S. Supreme Court has interpreted Congress' authority.

Constitutional Issues. Since 1937, the U.S. Supreme Court has interpreted Congress' power to spend money for the general welfare and its authority to regulate commerce among the states so broadly that the national government can reach almost any economic, social, or even cultural activity it wishes. Thus, national laws reach such traditionally local matters as crime, fire protection, land use, education, and even marriage and divorce. In its 1995 decision in *United States v. Lopez*, however, the Court unexpectedly held that the national government had exceeded its constitutional authority by enacting a law prohibiting the possession of hand guns near public school buildings. The Court held that the federal government had not demonstrated any connection between the possession of guns near school buildings and Congress' power to regulate interstate commerce. It was the first time in 60 years that the Court had seriously questioned a congressional exercise of its commerce power. At this time, we do not know whether the Court's *Lopez* decision will simply be the exception to an otherwise unrestrained expansion of the constitutional authority of the federal government, or the beginning of a new jurisprudence which seeks to restore limits on federal authority.

Public Finance. If more policymaking and implementation responsibility is left to state and local governments, then it is likely that we will encounter a mismatch between program responsibility and fiscal capacity. During the late 1960s and early 1970s, cities received very substantial federal funding to implement the Great Society social programs. While federal funding has slowed, and in some cases even stopped, citizen demand for programs continues and even grows. Cities and other units of local government still much provide such traditional services as public education, trash disposal, crime and fire protection, and street repair and maintenance. In addition, they must satisfy largely unfunded federal and state mandates in such areas as environmental protection, race and gender-equal opportunity programs, education of the handicapped, and land-use planning. Increasingly, the demand for local services grows while the capacity to support them diminishes. This dilemma has forced local governments to become much more innovative in how such services are provided.

Reinventing Government. Caught in this dilemma of rising expectations and decreasing financial capacity, local governments have been forced to "reinvent" the way they deliver and finance services. Reinvention takes many forms. Cities across the country have experimented with greater administrative decentralization, entering into markets and competing with private service providers, redefining clients as customers and attempting to hold government agencies accountable to them. Perhaps, most interesting of all, privatization has taken many forms, ranging from contracting with private firms to

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providing meal service at a public school, to turning over waste disposal or even the operation of an entire prison to a private agency. In addition, cities have been forced to become less dependent on both federal aid and local property taxes and have turned to charging realistic fees for services. Creative financing and ways of delivering services appear to result in substantial cost savings with no decline in quality. It is early in the process, however, and we will need to wait to fully evaluate the full impact of "reinventing government" on public life.

International Trade. There also is a new international dimension to American federalism. Agreements such as GATT and NAFTA will have a profound impact upon federalism. Most observers suggest that the authority of the states will be further eroded as state policies on such matters as economic development, environmental protection and professional licensing will be subject to the terms of these international agreements, as well as to the strictures of the U.S. Constitution. These observers are right, but there is another aspect to these international agreements that might enhance state authority. Under NAFTA, for example, the American states are guaranteed at least a consultative role in implementing the agreement. It will be interesting to see how the states that make up the American, Canadian and Mexican federations will be affected by this emerging "federation of federations."

The States As Laboratories. Many years ago, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis D. Brandeis wrote that the states were "social laboratories" in which we could experiment with a variety of solutions to social and economic problems without putting the whole nation at risk. This view of federalism is more true today than ever before. If the United States is to develop innovative and effective solutions to such problems as crime, education, welfare and urban blight, they will be forged by state governments working hand-in-hand with their local communities.

How effectively we Americans meet these challenges and use these opportunities will shape the future of American federalism.

3. ANNOTATED WEB SITES

[The Council of State Governments](http://www.csg.org/csg/default)

<http://www.csg.org/csg/default>



The Council of State Governments (CSG) is a united front of state leaders which works to evoke change in the federal government, such as the 1995 enactment of the federal Unfunded Mandates Act. CSG also strives to consider ways to restore the balance of powers between the states and the federal government.

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[Governing Magazine](http://www.governing.com/)

<http://www.governing.com/>



Governing is a monthly magazine whose primary audience is state and local government officials: governors, legislators, mayors, city managers, council members and other elected, appointed and career officials who set policy for and manage the day-to-day operations of cities, counties and states, as well as such governmental bodies as school boards and special districts.

[The Institute for Electronic Government](http://www.ieg.ibm.com/)

<http://www.ieg.ibm.com/>



The Institute for Electronic Government is a global resource for government leaders to explore, develop, and share strategies appropriate to our times -- public policy, cyberlaw, economic development, electronic commerce, delivery of services to citizens, constituency relationships, and replacing industrial-age institutions with the art of governance -- through digital-age technologies and networks.

[The National Association of Counties \(NACo\)](http://www.naco.org/)

<http://www.naco.org/>



NACo is the national voice for America's county governments, representing the American people at a grass-roots level. Member counties share important goals and concerns that impact the quality of life in communities across the nation, acting as a liaison with other levels of government; improving public understanding of counties; serving as a national advocate for counties; and providing a resource for counties to help them find innovative methods to meet the challenges they face.

[The National Civic League](#)

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<http://www.ncl.org/>



The National Civic League seeks to foster collaboration between citizens, government, business, and nonprofit organizations by promoting the principles of collaborative problem-solving and consensus-based decision-making in local community building.

[The National Conference of State Legislatures](http://www.ncsl.org/)

<http://www.ncsl.org/>



The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) believes that legislative service is one of democracy's worthiest pursuits. As a national conduit for lawmakers to communicate with one another and share ideas, NCSL is dedicated to serving the United States, its commonwealths and territories, through research, publications, consulting services, meetings and seminars.

[The National Governors' Association](http://www.nga.org/)

<http://www.nga.org/>



The National Governors' Association provides direct access to information on U.S. state governors and shares the best ideas of the states. Also provides assistance on state-focused problems, information on state innovations and practices, and a bipartisan forum for governors to establish, influence and implement policy on national issues.

[The National League of Cities](http://www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/)

http://www.nlc.org/nlc_org/site/



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Through the National League of Cities (NLC), mayors and city council members share information that strengthens municipal government throughout the United States. NLC advances public interest, building democracy and community, and improving the quality of life by strengthening the performance and capabilities of local governments and advocating the interests of local communities through influencing national policy and building understanding and support for cities and towns.

[Publius: The Journal of Federalism](http://www2.lafayette.edu/~publius/)

<http://www2.lafayette.edu/~publius/>

PLUBIUS

A journal devoted to the increase and diffusion of knowledge about federalism and intergovernmental relations. At this website, you can browse article titles, both past and present, but you must subscribe on-line to view articles.

[The United States Conference of Mayors](http://www.usmayors.org/)

<http://www.usmayors.org/>



The Conference of Mayors aids the development of effective national urban policy, strengthens federal-city relationships, ensures that federal policy meets urban needs, and provides mayors with leadership and management tools of value in their cities. Speaking with a united voice on matters pertaining to organizational policies and goals, each member-mayor contributes to development of national urban policy through service on one or more of the organization's 10 standing committees.

[The Urban Institute](http://www.urban.org/)

<http://www.urban.org/>



The Urban Institute is a nonprofit policy-research organization that investigates the social and economic problems confronting the United States and the government policies and public and private programs designed to alleviate them. The Institute's objectives are to sharpen thinking about American society's problems and efforts to solve them, improve government decisions and their implementation, and increase citizens' awareness about important public choices.

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II. U. S. Political Process

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1. AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT: AN OVERVIEW

by Frederick M. Kaiser

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Updated January 22, 2001

Summary

Power in American national government is decentralized, divided, dispersed, and limited. This distribution of power derives in part from the Constitution, through limitations imposed on the government, the system of checks and balances among the three branches, and independent bases of support and authority for each branch. This report, which examines these elements, will be updated as developments require.

Introduction

If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place, oblige it to control itself. James Madison, Federalist No. 51

In this passage from the Federalist Papers, James Madison, sometimes referred to as the “Father of the Constitution,” offers a rationale for the form of national government operating here since 1789. Power in the national government is dispersed, divided, and decentralized; it is also limited, directly and indirectly, by the Constitution. To protect certain individual rights and political liberties, this charter places explicit restrictions on the national government, principally through the Bill of Rights and the 14th Amendment. The 1st Amendment, for instance, mandates that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.” The Constitution also establishes checks and balances among the three branches of government—the executive, judiciary, and legislature—each of which has its own independent institutional base and its own enumerated and implied powers. The branches, moreover, share responsibility for policy making at the national level. As a consequence of these characteristics, the Constitution issues an “invitation to struggle” over the direction of American public policy, as one of its foremost students, Edward S. Corwin, has observed.

Institutional Characteristics

U.S. Constitution

The Constitution, replacing the Articles of Confederation in 1789, strengthened the national government. Article III declares that “This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; and all Treaties made, or which shall be made, under the Authority of the United States, shall be the supreme Law of the Land.” Despite this enhancement, the Constitution limited the power of the national government, recognizing, for instance, the independence and powers of the states. It also established a new governmental regime that divided authorities among three branches, rather than consolidating these powers in a single entity, as had been the case under its short-lived predecessor.

The Constitution is a brief document, compared to many other national and state constitutions. It is not an elaborate blueprint, detailing the organization of government. Instead, it is a broad framework—sometimes referred to as a living constitution—that has allowed the national government to adapt its organizational arrangements and structures to the changing characteristics, needs, and demands of the American people over the past two centuries. The Constitution, moreover, is difficult to amend. An amendment requires a favorable two-thirds vote in the House and in the Senate, along with ratification by three-fourths of the individual states. The document can be amended in one other way: the legislatures of two-thirds of the states may call for a convention to propose amendments, which would then require ratification by three-fourths of the states. However, no national convention has been established under this approach; consequently, no constitutional amendment has been approved through this process.

Partly because of this structure, the constitutional system has achieved a high degree of stability. The U.S. Constitution is today the oldest written democratic charter for a national government. Since the Bill of Rights—the first 10 amendments—was ratified in 1791, the Constitution has been amended only 17 times, most recently in 1992. And one of these amendments canceled another (i.e., the 18th Amendment, establishing prohibition of alcohol in 1919, was repealed by the 21st Amendment in 1933).

Separate Institutions

Congress, the President, and the Supreme Court have separate and distinct political bases under the Constitution, to foster each branch’s independence and integrity. The ultimate purpose behind this separation, James Madison argued in the Federalist Papers, is to prevent a “faction”—that is, a group “adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interest of the community”—from gaining control over the entire government.

Restrictions on Serving in Another Branch. The institutional autonomy and integrity of the legislature is supported by a constitutional prohibition: “No Senator or Representative shall, during the time for which he was elected, be appointed to any civil Office ... which shall be created or the Emoluments [salary and fees] whereof shall have been increased during such time” (Article I, Section 6). The Constitution also prohibits any executive or judicial officer from being a Member of Congress. Two narrow caveats to this ban, however, call upon officials from other branches to participate in congressional proceedings. One allowance is for the Vice President, who, while serving in the executive branch, is also “President of the Senate”; he may also vote there, but only to break a tie. A second is for the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, who presides over the trial in the Senate of a President who has been impeached by the House.

Independent Electoral Bases. The elected officials—President, Vice President, Senators, and Representatives—have different terms of office, constituencies, and modes of election that reinforce their independence from one another. The full election cycle for the President and all legislators requires three elections to complete, and each of the three involves a different configuration of open offices.

The President is now limited to two elected four-year terms in office (or a maximum of 10 years if he fills less than half of an unexpired term of another President). The President is chosen every four years, formally through the electoral college. These votes are now cast on a winner-take-all basis in each state (except in Maine and Nebraska, which use a system compounding statewide and congressional district returns) and the District of Columbia. All electoral college votes for each state, which equal the number of Senators and Representatives for the state, plus three electoral college votes for the District of Columbia, customarily go to the candidate who receives the most popular votes in the state or in the District of Columbia.

Consequently, there exists the possibility that the presidential candidate who receives a majority (or plurality) of the popular votes nationwide would not receive a majority of the electoral college votes. This has occurred only four times in U.S. history, most recently in the election of 2000.

In the event that no presidential candidate receives a majority in the electoral college, the newly-elected House of Representatives, voting by state delegations and not by individuals, decides who will become President. In the event that no vice presidential candidate receives a majority in the electoral college, the Senate chooses the Vice President, with each individual Senator in the new Congress having one vote.

Members of Congress—100 Senators, two from each of the 50 states, and 435 Representatives, whose seats are apportioned among the states according to population—have electoral constituencies and schedules that differ from the President's and between House and Senate members. Senators are elected to six-year terms. These are staggered, so that only one-third of the full Senate is up for election every two years and so that no

two Senate seats from the same state are up in the same election (except when a special election to fill an unexpired term coincides with the regularly scheduled election). Senators were originally selected by their respective state legislatures, but since the ratification of the 17th Amendment in 1913, they are required to be directly elected. Representatives are elected every two years from individual districts in the states where they reside (or at-large in the seven least populous states with only one Representative).

Split or divided party government—where the President’s party lacks control of one or both houses of Congress—can and does result from these different constituencies, terms of office, and modes of election. In fact, this pattern has become common in the contemporary era. Over the 32-year period from 1969 (with the beginning of 91st Congress) to 2001 (with the end of the 106th Congress), party control will have been divided or split for all but six years. Of the six Presidents during this time, only one (Jimmy Carter, 1977-1981) had his own party as a majority in both chambers for his entire presidency; and that comprised but a single term. Only one other President has had a majority in both houses for a portion of his term of office (Bill Clinton for two years, 1993-1995). Three of the six Presidents (Richard Nixon, 1969-1974; Gerald Ford, 1974-1977; and George Bush, 1989-1993) lacked party control of either house during their entire incumbency. One other President (Ronald Reagan) encountered opposition party control of the House during his entire two terms (1981-1989) and of the Senate for two years (1987-1989), while Bill Clinton will have faced opposition party control of both houses for six of his eight years in office (1995-2001).

Unified party government has returned in 2001, when George W. Bush became President. The House is under his party’s leadership; and an evenly split Senate is controlled by the same party, because of Vice President Cheney’s position as President of the Senate.

Judicial Independence. The federal judiciary has its own constitutional base of independence. Supreme Court justices and lower federal court judges—all of whom are appointed by the President by and with the advice and consent of the Senate—serve for life or “during good Behaviour” (U.S. Constitution, Article III). They can be removed from office only by Congress through the arduous process of impeachment by a majority of the House and conviction by two-thirds of the Senate.

Institutional Supports. Each branch has its own institutional supports. Among these are professional staff in each branch, who provide information and advice, conduct research and analysis, investigate perceived problems, organize meetings and briefings, and carry out various other assignments on behalf of the President, Members of Congress, and justices and judges.

Members of Congress hire their own professional staff, as does each committee, subcommittee, chamber office (such as the Speaker of the House and President pro tempore of the Senate), and political party organization of the House and Senate. In addition, the legislature is assisted in its legislative, oversight, representative, and constituent-service responsibilities by three agencies: the Congressional Budget Office, Congressional Research Service, and General Accounting Office. Congress, furthermore,

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can create commissions and task forces to conduct studies and make recommendations. The presidency also has its own supporting cast. In addition to various counselors and personal aides to the President, the Executive Office of the President provides a variety of capabilities and services through a number of entities. These include the White House Office, Office of Management and Budget, Office of the Vice President, Council of Economic Advisers, Council on Environmental Quality, National Security Council, Office of National Drug Control Policy, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Office of Science and Technology Policy, Office of Policy Development, and Office of Administration. Presidents, moreover, can create task forces and advisory commissions to make studies and recommendations on policy matters. The Chief Executive can also call upon cabinet officers and agency officials to assist in policy formulation, as well as to secure support for administration programs in the public and in Congress. Separate from these formal arrangements, Presidents may consult with political colleagues and trusted friends, who might form an informal group of advisors or “kitchen cabinet.”

Checks and Balances and Shared Responsibilities

Under the Constitution, the three branches have both enumerated and implied powers that reinforce their institutional independence and political power. Accompanying this, however, is shared responsibility for public policy and a system of checks and balances. These “auxiliary precautions,” as Madison called them in the Federalist Papers, are designed so that the “several constituent parts may, by their mutual relations, be the means of keeping each other in their proper places ... [and] may be a check on the other.”

Lawmaking. The key function of lawmaking is shared, with the President able to veto legislation passed by both chambers of Congress; to override his veto requires a two-thirds vote in each house. Further, the Supreme Court, through its implied power of judicial review, can declare a statute or a part of it unconstitutional, as it did initially, nearly two centuries ago, in *Marbury v. Madison* (5 U.S. (1 Cr.) 137 (1803)).

National Security Policy. Control of national security policy is also divided. While the President is commander in chief of the armed forces, Congress has authority to declare war, raise and support armies, and make rules governing the land, air, and naval forces. While the President holds the sword, as commander in chief, Congress holds the purse strings, through the appropriations process. The Supreme Court can also affect the military capacity of the United States, as the Court did when it overturned the President’s seizure of the steel mills during the Korean War (*Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co. v. Sawyer*, 343 U.S. 579 (1952)). Treaties are also a shared responsibility. Negotiated by the President, they must be ratified by two-thirds of the Senate. Their implementation, moreover, often requires new legislation and appropriations, both of which bring the House of Representatives into the mix. Separately, public law may be used instead of a treaty to accomplish the same ends, as with the North American Free Trade Agreement.

Executive and Judicial Appointments. Civil officers, Supreme Court justices, and federal judges are nominated by the President but must be confirmed by the Senate. Under the 25th Amendment, moreover, both houses of Congress must confirm the President's nominee for Vice President, when that post is vacant, as occurred when Gerald Ford in 1973 and Nelson Rockefeller the next year were confirmed.

Investigations. The executive can investigate suspected criminal conduct by legislators, who may be prosecuted in federal court, while Congress can investigate the activities and conduct of personnel and officials in the other branches. These congressional efforts, in turn, can result in information and evidence that could be used in subsequent judicial proceedings. Congress, through the impeachment process, can also remove the President, Vice President, and U.S. officers for treason, bribery, and other high crimes and misdemeanors, or justices and judges for violating the "good Behaviour" standard in the Constitution. Although the President is responsible for seeing that the laws are faithfully executed, Congress oversees their implementation and the President's stewardship. The courts, moreover, can check the legislature's or executive's investigative powers to ensure that they are not used to violate the other's constitutional prerogatives.

Dispersed and Decentralized Organization

Although "executive power is vested in a President" by the Constitution (Article II, Section 1), he shares official responsibility for enforcing, implementing, and administering public law and policy with other officers and offices. Individual agencies and subordinate officers in the executive branch and elsewhere have been delegated duties and authority directly by statute. One of the first acts of the First Congress—the 1789 act creating the Treasury Department—for instance, ordered the comptroller (and not the President or the head of the department) to direct prosecutions for all delinquencies of revenue officers and for debts due to the United States.

The Constitution does not establish specific departments or agencies; these are created and sustained by legislation. As a result, a wide range and variety of organizations administer public policy. These include not only the cabinet departments, which now number 14, but also other executive branch agencies, such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Central Intelligence Agency. Implementation of policy also extends to independent regulatory commissions, including the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the Federal Trade Commission; public and quasi-public corporations, such as the U.S. Postal Service; and various foundations, boards, institutes, and government-sponsored enterprises. The Supreme Court, moreover, has upheld the constitutionality—and independence—of these entities that carry out public policy. The most important of these decisions—*Humphrey's Executor v. United States*, 295 U.S. 602 (1935)—applied to independent regulatory commissions, which were seen as possessing legislative (rulemaking), executive (implementation), and judicial (adjudication) powers.

Along these same lines, a 1988 ruling (*Morrison v. Olson*, 487 U.S. 654 (1988)) recognized the constitutionality of independent counsels; these positions, authorized under a statute that lapsed in 1999, were created to investigate and prosecute alleged wrongdoing by high-ranking officials.

Conclusion

The constitutional system—through its founding premise of limited government and an intricate system of separated institutions, checks and balances, and shared responsibilities—strives to meet two core values of democracy. One is to ensure majority rule, through, for instance, the popular election of officials who make public policy; the other is to protect individual rights and civil liberties, through specific constitutional safeguards and indirectly through restraints on and competition among the three branches.

Selected References

Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay, *The Federalist Papers, 1787-1788* (New York: Mentor Books, 1961).

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2. THE U.S. ELECTION PROCESS

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INTRODUCTION

Elected government in the United States covers a wide range of offices and a large number of elected officials, extending from the Federal to State and local governments. The complexity of the system is reflected in the fact that, in 1987, 83,236 units of government existed on the three levels, with no fewer than 487,697 elected officials holding office. The election process is regulated through an array of Federal and State constitutional provisions, statutes and regulations, political party rules, and enduring political practices.

CHARACTERISTICS OF AMERICAN ELECTIONS

American elections on all three levels share certain characteristics, reflecting political traditions broadly shared with other English-speaking nations, distinctive American developments, and the influence of the United States Constitution on the structure of elected government.

Representative Government

Most citizen participation in the election process is based on the republican principle of representative government, in which the people delegate their governing authority to elected legislators and executives. An exception to this practice survives in the town meeting, a form of direct democracy characteristic of local government in rural New England. In addition, a number of States provide for direct involvement of voters in the legislative process through initiative and referendum. A number also provide for the early termination of terms of office of elected officials through recall elections. (See companion CRS Report, Initiative, Referendum, and Recall: Direct Democracy in the United States, 91-752 GOV.)

Single Member Districts of Equal Population

Elections for the U.S. Senate are conducted individually on a statewide basis, while those for the U.S. House of Representatives, as well as most State and local legislatures, are conducted in single member districts or constituencies. The Supreme Court has ruled that legislative districts in the House of Representatives, State legislatures, and elected local government bodies must be as nearly equal in population as is practicable, reflecting the principle of "one person, one vote."

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Plurality Elections

Closely related to the concept of single member districts is the plurality or "winner-take-all" system. Each voter casts a single vote for each officer to be elected, with the candidate receiving the most votes winning, even if this constitutes only a plurality of votes cast. Election of the President and Vice President by the electoral college, in which a majority of electoral votes is required, is a major exception to this practice, and is described in a companion report, Presidential Elections in the United States (91-467 GOV).

The Two-Party System

The need to aggregate a plurality or majority of popular votes resulting from the winner-take-all system and the prevalence of single member districts in U.S. political bodies and offices have been major factors in the development and endurance of the two-party system in the United States.

Fixed Terms of Office; Term Limits

The Constitution established fixed terms of office for all elected national officials, as well as specifying the dates on which such terms begin and end, practices which have been universally adopted at the State and local levels. There is no provision at any level for early dissolution of legislatures, in contrast with parliamentary forms of government. Dates for Federal elections may be changed only by congressional legislation, and even then, such action would not affect any constitutional provision relating to election of Members of Congress, the President, and the Vice President.

Some States allow for the recall of elected officials (the Constitution does not provide for recall of Federal elected officials), in which voters, through a petition process, may require elected officials to win a special recall election in order to remain in office. In 1990, for the first time, voters in three States (California, Colorado, and Oklahoma) passed initiatives to limit the number of terms State legislators can serve, either consecutively or totally. In addition, the Colorado initiative placed a 12-year limit on Members of Congress, a restriction likely to be challenged in court. A number of States already limit the number of consecutive or total terms governors can serve and the U.S. President is limited to two terms.

General Election Day

In the 19th century, Congress established election day for all Federal elective officers as the Tuesday after the first Monday in November in even numbered years. In the interest of convenience and economy, most of the States also hold statewide and many local elections on Federal election day. Primary (nominating) elections are held between one and eight months prior to general elections, depending on State requirements, while some

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local governments schedule general elections for other times of the year, particularly in the spring. While various levels of government and many private concerns permit workers time away from their duties in order to vote, election day is not generally observed as a public holiday in the United States or in any of the States.

Frequent Elections

The large number of officials to be elected on various levels of government in the United States, coupled with relatively short and often overlapping terms of office, and the prevalence of primary elections for nomination of general election candidates for office, can present voters with several voting opportunities during the course of an election year. Frequency of elections may induce voter fatigue and thereby diminish turnout.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE

The Constitution, as originally ratified, left the question of determining qualifications to vote in the hands of the States. State action gradually eliminated property restrictions, but as of 1860, in general, only white males 21 or older were allowed to vote. After the Civil War (1861-1865), through State actions, amendments to the Constitution, and, later, Federal legislation, the right to vote was gradually extended. The 15th Amendment (1870) eliminated barriers to voting based on race; the 19th Amendment (1920) extended the right to vote to women; the 24th Amendment (1964) prohibited poll taxes as a prerequisite of voting-, and the 26th Amendment (1971) set the voting age at 18. In addition, the Civil Rights Act of 1957, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended, prohibited State laws and party practices which were seen as discriminating against classes of voters, e.g., minority groups.

PRIMARY ELECTIONS

Although the process of nominating candidates for elected office was once an internal party function, carried out through caucuses (meetings of party office holders) and conventions of delegates elected by party members, in the 20th century these practices have been largely superseded by the State-regulated primary election as the principal mode of nomination, although some States continue to provide for nomination by convention, or a combination of conventions and primary elections.

In primaries, party candidates who have qualified for inclusion on the ballot, by gathering a requisite number of signatures of voters or qualification by the party convention, contest the election. Most primary elections are decided on the basis of a plurality of votes, with the winner appearing on the general election ballot as the official nominee of the party. Ten States require a majority of votes in order to secure nomination and provide- for a second, or runoff, primary between the two candidates receiving the most votes in the event a majority has not been gained. Primaries may be either "closed" (38 States), i.e., restricted to declared party members, or "open" (12 States and the District of

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Columbia), in which the voter receives ballots for all parties participating in the election and chooses a single ballot while voting. The Presidential nomination process is examined in a companion CRS report, Presidential Elections in the United States (91-467 GOV).

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION

Administrative Structure

State election codes establish the organizations, requirements, and procedures by which elections for Federal, State, and local elected officials are administered. Election-related duties in most States are assigned to the Secretary of State or a designated chief elections officer. States establish procedures for voter registration and purging (the mechanism by which voters who have failed to vote over a specified period of time are removed from the registry), residency requirements and polling hours, policy guidelines followed by local authorities, and the certification of election results.

Voter Registration

The United States is one of the few democratic nations which requires a voluntary act of registration by its eligible citizens in order to vote. The regulation, maintenance, and administration of voter registration is a State function, and is examined in a companion CPS report. Forty-nine of the 50 States require or permit voter registration prior to election day. Three of these States (Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) also permit voters to register on election day; while a fourth (North Dakota) does not maintain registration, requiring only valid identification to vote.

Ballot Access

Ballot access, the act of securing placement on the ballot for a party and its candidates, is regulated by the States.

Candidates of recognized political parties (invariably including major parties, and recognized "minor" parties in States which make this distinction) are accorded automatic ballot access in all 50 States. Provisions governing access for other parties vary. In some cases, any party which meets State requirements gains ballot access. These generally include demonstration of a certain level of public support, establishment of mandated organizational structures, and conduct of either a nominating, convention or primary election. In other States, such groups qualify only if they gain a requisite number of votes, typically one, two, three or five percent of votes cast in the most recent statewide or gubernatorial election. All States also provide for inclusion of independent candidates on the general election ballot. In this -case, candidates must submit petitions of support signed by a requisite number of registered voters with State election authorities in order to gain ballot placement. In addition, 46 States provide for "write-in" voting, in which the

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voter may cast a vote for a candidate who does not appear on the ballot. Some States also require a filing fee or an affidavit, usually swearing loyalty to the U.S. and State Constitutions

Voting Procedures

On election day, voters report to their designated polling place (there are an estimated 153,000 such places nationwide), their registration is verified, and they are recorded as having voted. State and local authorities have adopted a range of voting methods, most of which are automated, including pre-scored punch cards, lever machines, optical scanning devices, Datavote punch cards, and electronic systems. Paper ballots are used in jurisdictions which include only 6.6 percent of the American population. Ballots are counted and verified at the local level, and then forwarded to State authorities, who certify the results.

States generally organize their ballots in one of two ways. The group ballot lists candidate names, followed by party designation, under each office title. The party column ballot arranges candidates according to their party affiliation. Twenty one States provide for "straight ticket" voting, in which the voter may cast one vote for all candidates of a single party.

Forty-six States permit voters who cannot be physically present at the polls to cast an absentee ballot in advance of election day. Although these provisions vary from State to State, they typically include ill or disabled voters, students, those absent on business, or those who cannot vote on a particular day for religious reasons. In addition, the Federal Government, requires the States to accept absentee ballots from uniformed military personnel, sailors of the merchant marine, employees of the U.S. Government and citizens living abroad, and their eligible dependents.

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Reichley, A. James, ed. *Elections American Style*. Washington, D.C., The Brookings Institution, 1987.

3. ANNOTATED WEB SITES

Federal Election Commission

<http://www.fec.gov/>



Federal Election Commission

In 1975, Congress created the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to administer and enforce the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) - the statute that governs the financing of federal elections. The duties of the FEC, which is an independent regulatory agency, are to disclose campaign finance information, to enforce the provisions of the law such as the limits and prohibitions on contributions, and to oversee the public funding of Presidential elections.

The Commission is made up of six members, who are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. Each member serves a six-year term, and two seats are subject to appointment every two years. By law, no more than three Commissioners can be members of the same political party, and at least four votes are required for any official Commission action. This structure was created to encourage nonpartisan decisions. The Chairmanship of the Commission rotates among the members each year, with no member serving as Chairman more than once during his or her term.

Congressional Hispanic Caucus

<http://www.house.gov/reyes/CHC/>



The Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC) is an informal group of 18 members of Congress of Hispanic descent. The Caucus is dedicated to voicing and advancing, through the legislative process, issues affecting Hispanic Americans in the United States and the insular areas. The CHC was founded in December 1976 as a legislative service organization of the U.S. House of Representatives. Today, the CHC is organized as a congressional member organization, governed under the Rules of Congress and comprised solely of Members of the United States Congress.

The Center for Responsive Politics

<http://www.opensecrets.org/about/index.asp>

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The Center for Responsive Politics is a non-partisan, non-profit research group based in Washington, D.C. that tracks money in politics, and its effect on elections and public policy. The Center conducts computer-based research on campaign finance issues for the news media, academics, activists, and the public at large. The Center's work is aimed at creating a more educated voter, an involved citizenry, and a more responsive government.

Support for the Center comes from a combination of foundation grants and individual contributions. The Center accepts no contributions from businesses or labor unions. You can support the work of the Center directly by contributing through opensecrets.org.

[Democratic National Committee](#)

<http://www.democrats.org/index.html>



The Democratic National Committee plans the Party's quadrennial presidential nominating convention; promotes the election of Party candidates with both technical and financial support; and works with national, state, and local party organizations, elected officials, candidates, and constituencies to respond to the needs and views of the Democratic electorate and the nation.

[Republican National Committee](#)

<http://www.rnc.org/>



For over one hundred years, the Republican Party has been called the GOP. The Republican National Committee has the general management of the Republican Party, subject to direction from the national convention. The members of the Republican

National Committee consist of one national committeeman and one national committeewoman from, and the chairman of the state Republican Party of, each state.

Center for Voting and Democracy

<http://www.fairvote.org/>

The Center for Voting and Democracy

The Center is dedicated to fair elections where every vote counts and all voters are represented. It conducts research, analysis, education and advocacy to build understanding of and support for more democratic voting systems. It also promotes full representation as an alternative to winner-take-all elections and instant runoff voting as an alternative to plurality elections and traditional runoff elections. The Center is a nonprofit organization that relies on charitable contributions from the public.

Project Vote Smart

<http://www.vote-smart.org/>



Project Vote Smart (PVS) is a citizen's organization dedicated to serving all Americans with accurate and unbiased information for electoral decision-making. Its policies, procedures and structure are designed to guarantee absolute impartiality and standards of excellence in fulfillment of its mission.

Senate

<http://www.senate.gov>

House of Representatives

<http://www.house.gov>

U.S. Elections News coverage:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/politics/elections/2002/>

<http://www.nytimes.com/pages/politics/campaign/index.html> - (free)

registration required:

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<http://congress.org/congressorg/issues/basics/?style=comm>

U.S. Elections: Background info:

<http://www.dnet.org/>
Democracy Net - League of Women Voters

<http://www.vote-smart.org/>

<http://www.publicintegrity.org/dtaweb/home.asp>
Center for Public Integrity

<http://www.campaignline.com/>

Center for Voting and Democracy
<http://www.fairvote.org/>

CRS Reports on US Elections
<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/rights/democracy/electop.htm>

Campaign Spotlight from IIP
<http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/rights/democracy/spot.htm>

U.S. Elections : Campaign Finance:

FEC on campaign finance
http://www.fec.gov/finance_reports.html

Center for Responsive Politics
<http://www.opensecrets.org/>

Campaign Finance Information Center
<http://www.campaignfinance.org/>

U.S. Elections: Links to States, etc:

<http://www.getvoting411.us/elecnet/index.cfm>

<http://www.statedecisions2002.com/>

<http://www.uselections.com/>

U.S. Elections: Polling:

<http://www.pollingreport.com/>

<http://www.campaignline.com/odds/index.cfm>

<http://www.politics1.com/>

III. Media in the United States

III. Media in the United States

Excerpts from: *An Unfettered Press*, U. S. information Agency, 1994
<http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/press/press01.htm> ; *The Media and Society*,
U.S. Information Agency, c1994
<http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/media/media3cd.htm>

1. OVERVIEW

The communications industry is the largest private sector employer in the United States, and the news media make up the largest segment of that industry. Generating information, not just delivering it, is a growth business in the United States. The American news business used to be a largely domestic enterprise, but no longer. Satellite delivery of 24-hour Cable News Network broadcasts and same-day publication of the *Wall Street Journal* in Asia and Europe are symptomatic of the U.S. media's new global reach.

Change has occurred in other aspects of the industry besides mere growth, however. American journalism itself has undergone a fundamental transformation in recent years, partly as a result of new technology and partly as a result of the changes in the society it has chosen to mirror. This is not surprising, since change itself is a hallmark of American culture. Whether it chooses to call itself an observer or not, the American news industry is a full-fledged participant in that culture, as well as in its country's democratic political system and its free-market economy.

Protected by government interference by a brief, 200-year-old clause in the American constitution, the press has emerged as the self-appointed monitor of official life, recorder of public events, and even unofficial arbiter of public behavior. The U.S. news industry is also a very big business. Daily newspapers alone generate some \$32 billion in advertising revenue a year. Magazines -- and there are more than 11,000 of them -- circulate more copies than there are Americans to read them. Every household has at least three radios, and more than 95 percent own televisions.

Needless to say, the press was not always such a mass medium. The American press started in the 18th century as a small instrument of the literate elite and an unapologetic participant in partisan politics. It was a pamphleteering press, operated by colonial postmasters and opinionated printers. It was not for at least another century that the American press had transformed itself into a fairly nonideological communications instrument, in step with the desires, dynamism, and diversity of the country itself.

But change notwithstanding, the American press has maintained two fundamental constants over the past two centuries: (1) its independence from government, and (2) its reliance on public acceptance -- if not approval -- for its financial survival. Today, the press is better known as the media -- the plural for "medium" (or means of conveyance)

and a reflection of its many components in the electronic age. For it is no longer the written word but sight and sound that dominate the communications industry. Some recent studies claim that 65 percent of Americans depend on television for their daily diet of news. Nevertheless, that statistic can be misleading because it assumes that television fully satisfies the public's appetite for news. Within that same 65 percent there are many who read newspapers and magazines, listen to the radio, and receive a vast array of newsletters and brochures (much of it unsolicited advertising in their mailboxes). Now they must deal with the newest member of the communications family: the fax. Add the VCR, computerized mail, and something called interactive video, and it is no wonder Americans complain about "no time in the day" to do all the things they want or need to do.

One of the consequences of all these choices is increased competition in the information and advertising marketplace for a person's attention, and this scramble has helped blur the once-clear line between information, entertainment, and commerce. Journalism is no longer quite so easy to define as it was just a decade ago. The American news business is currently facing what the psychiatric profession calls an "identity crisis." This is particularly true in the newspaper industry, which is watching its role (and its revenue) shrink in the electronic age. Connected with this is the concern, as well as some evidence, that America's reading habit is diminishing, largely as a result of television and home video. But it is highly premature to sound a funeral dirge for the print media. Nearly every American town of any size (10,000 population or more) still has its own newspaper and access to a metropolitan daily as well.

The story of the American press is a complex one, reflecting the pluralism of the country itself. A favored description is diversity. Nevertheless, there are some common threads that bind the media in the United States. Here are some of the most important of its common traits:

- The American news industry is a business.
- The industry views itself as a public trust.
- The news industry is largely unregulated.
- There is no uniform definition of news.
- The mainstream press is generally non ideological.
- America's press tradition is community based.

2. JOURNALISM ETHICS

The watchdog role of the American press came to the fore in the 1960s during the Vietnam War and during the Watergate investigation of the early 1970s. In the former case, the press played a major role in accelerating the U.S. exit from an unpopular war, and in the latter case, two persistent reporters from The Washington Post, Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, succeeded in uncovering facts that led to the resignation of President Nixon. As a result, Woodward and Bernstein became media celebrities, and their book about the investigation, *All the President's Men*, was made into a movie.

For a time thereafter, the trend toward greater investigative journalism flourished. However, some excesses in the early 1980s caused the American public to doubt press credibility. For instance, a young Washington Post reporter, Janet Cooke, won a Pulitzer Prize (the top U.S. journalism award) for her moving portrayal of an eight-year-old heroin addict named Jimmy. Later, it was learned that she had fabricated the article, and the Pulitzer Prize was withdrawn.

In the face of polls showing increased public distrust of the press beginning in the late 1970s, many editors showed renewed interest in codes of ethics and other forms of self-regulation. Journalistic codes of ethics outlining how the press should behave have been in use in the United States since 1923, when the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) approved the first one, revised most recently in 1975. The Society of Professional Journalists/Sigma Delta Chi and the Associated Press Managing Editors have adopted similar codes. These ethical codes of the three major newspaper professional organizations offer important guidelines, calling on journalists to perform with intelligence, objectivity, accuracy and fairness. However, they are only voluntary and lack sanctions for noncompliance.

Some newspapers have experimented with another vehicle for improved ethical performance, the ombudsman, a concept that originated in Scandinavia. An ombudsman is an individual appointed by a newspaper to investigate complaints concerning the paper's coverage and practices and to publish the results of the investigation. In 1967, The Louisville Courier Journal (Louisville, Kentucky) became the first U.S. newspaper to adopt the system. Among the national elite dailies, however, only The Washington Post implemented an independent ombudsman office with powers to look into abuses or failures by the newspaper and act on complaints by readers. In 1985, the Organization of Newspaper Ombudsmen had an active roster of 30 ombudsmen, and the median circulation of the papers for which they worked was about 130,000. Since then, however, many papers have discontinued the system.

Ethical questions continue to haunt American media. One of the hottest current issues for American journalists is where to draw the line between the individual's right to privacy and the public's right to know. For example, when The Village Voice was offered a free-lance article in July 1991 exposing the homosexuality of a high Defense Department official, editors of the New York City weekly rejected the piece as an unwarranted invasion of privacy. One month later, the same editors permitted a Voice columnist to summarize the allegations, including the official's name. They cited as their rationale the fact that the man's identity was so widely circulated by other news organizations that continued restraint would have been a futile exercise. On the other hand, The Washington Post chose to cover the controversy without citing the official by name, because of its policy of "not writing about personal lives of public officials unless the personal aspects begin influencing their jobs."

Newspapers have also differed on whether to name the victims in rape cases, another delicate privacy issue. The U.S. court system, state and federal legislatures, regulatory

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bodies, the public and the media will all continue to have a hand in shaping how such legal and ethical issues are handled in America during the 1990s.

3. JOURNALISM EDUCATION

U.S. journalism benefits from a wide network of educational facilities. The first U.S. school of journalism was founded by the University of Missouri in 1908. By 1990, the number of universities offering journalism degrees had jumped to 404. Between 1960 and 1990, college journalism enrollment grew from slightly over 11,000 to almost 160,000. Most of these students (93.8 percent) were studying for the bachelor's degree, while 5.6 percent were in master's programs, and 0.5 percent in doctoral programs. The most dramatic trend in journalism education is the increasing percentage of women, who in 1990 constituted a majority in both the bachelor's and master's programs. Table 1 lists the ten largest journalism and mass communication programs by 1990 undergraduate enrollments.

U.S. journalism schools prepare students for more than newspaper careers. In addition to news-editorial, the traditional slot for newspaper journalists, the three other major areas are advertising, broadcast journalism and public relations. In 1990, the largest number of enrolled students, 33 percent, was in advertising. In addition to journalism schools, most U.S. newspapers offer internships, whether or not for academic credit. There is also a growing emphasis on continuing education and mid-career training of professionals. In 1980, Northwestern University inaugurated the first one-year graduate program for journalists with at least three years' experience.

Most American journalism schools and a number of U.S. foundations and other institutions offer scholarships for foreign students. Among these are the American Society of Newspaper Editors International Journalism Exchange Program, Alfred Friendly Foundation Press Fellowship, Nieman Foundation Fellowship for Journalists, Fulbright Commission Scholarships, Eisenhower Exchange Fellowships, and Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowships.

4. THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN BUILDING COMMUNITY

By Jan Schaffer, Executive Director, Pew Center for Civic Journalism

Source: [Global Issues](#) - Electronic Journal of the U.S. Department of State - April 2001 Volume 6, Number 1,
<http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itgic/0401/ijge/ijge0401.htm>

Civic journalism has come a long way in the six years since the Pew Center for Civic Journalism was created. Two things we now know:

1. When the media does its job differently, citizens do their jobs differently.
2. When you seed innovation in newsrooms, you get new ideas.

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We live in an era today in which both journalists and the public in the United States are struggling to reach a consensus on what constitutes good journalism.

It's no longer enough for journalists themselves to think they are doing a good job. For journalism to continue to receive constitutional protection -- and continue to attract readers and viewers -- readers and viewers have to agree that journalism plays an essential role in our democratic society.

Recently, though, there have been disturbing data that this is not the case. National surveys document a reservoir of resentment toward the American press and its practices. Arrogant, insensitive, biased, inaccurate, and sensational are the words the public uses to characterize the media.

There appears to be a growing consensus that "news" is broken. Now the big question is: do journalists know how to fix it?

Newspaper circulation is flat or falling. Although people are reading more, they're not reading newspapers. And TV news viewership is plummeting.

The Freedom Forum, a nonpartisan, international foundation, recently conducted a survey on the state of the First Amendment. Overall, the press held its First Amendment rights in higher esteem than did the general public.

- More than half of the respondents -- 53 percent -- said they believe the press has too much freedom. This is an increase of 15 percentage points from a similar survey in 1997.
- Only 45 percent said they believe the media protect democracy, down from 54 percent in 1985. And 38 percent said the media actually hurt democracy.
- Some 65 percent said newspapers should not be able to publish freely.
- Disturbing numbers of people said the press should not be allowed to endorse or criticize political candidates, should not be able to use hidden cameras for newsgathering, and should not be able to publish government secrets.

What Can We Do?

This is troubling news if you're a journalist. I would also like to think that it is troubling news if you are a member of the public.

What can we do about all of this? One thing we are doing at the Pew Center is trying to go beyond simply diagnosing the problem; we are actually coming up with some prescriptions for solutions. In truth, many journalists are more comfortable with diagnoses than prescriptions, but feedback from the research is so overwhelming that even hard-bitten editors are starting to say "enough." But before we can fix things, we have to figure out what we seek to be. What is our role in building community?

Older models of journalism, especially in community and regional newspapers, were often tagged as "lapdog" -- under the control of publishers out to play civic booster and woo advertising dollars.

"Attack dog" is the model that now frequently comes to mind in the aftermath of some of the coverage of the Clinton presidency and from visions of photojournalists hiding in the bushes of the Kennedy family compound following the death of John F. Kennedy, Jr.

Then there's the "watchdog" model that journalists pay great lip service to. This is a role that is still valued by the community. But the public increasingly has misgivings about that role, and even journalists agree that the press is often doing more than simply covering stories -- they are often driving controversies, especially in looking at the personal and ethical behavior of public figures.

Some of the latest research shows that the press values its watchdog role more than the public does. Only 10 percent of the news media believe that press criticism of political leaders keeps these officials from doing their jobs -- but 31 percent of the public believes that it interferes with leaders doing their jobs.

Today some new models are being tested. One is that of "guide dog." Can there be a journalism that not only gives the people news and information but also helps them do their jobs as citizens? That doesn't just deliver the civic freak show of the day, but actually challenges people to get involved, get engaged, and take ownership of problems? That doesn't position them as spectators, but as participants?

This is where civic journalism has fostered numerous experiments. Civic journalism does not advocate abandoning the watchdog role, but rather adding further responsibilities to it.

The Pew Center for Civic Journalism

When the Pew Charitable Trusts decided to create the Pew Center for Civic Journalism, it was not concerned about journalism; it was focused on civic engagement. The Trusts feared that democracy was broken -- that citizens were not voting, not volunteering, and not participating actively in civic life; that people were not stepping forward to help tackle problems in their communities.

And they wondered if journalism might be a part of the problem. Were the media treating people in news stories as spectators at some civic freak show rather than as active participants of a self-governing society?

And they put forth a simple hypothesis: if journalists did their jobs differently, would citizens do their jobs differently? Could we nourish some experiments in newsrooms to see if there could be different models, models that still adhere to the core values of journalism -- accuracy, objectivity, independence, fairness -- but are also useful to

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citizens?

Civic journalism is now a broad label put on efforts by editors and news directors to try to do their jobs as journalists in ways that help to overcome people's sense of powerlessness and alienation. It aims to educate citizens about issues and current events so they can make civic decisions, engage in civic dialogue and action, and, generally, exercise their responsibilities in a democracy.

Civic journalists believe that it is possible to create news coverage that motivates people to think and even to act, rather than simply enticing them to watch. And they believe it's their responsibility to do so.

I caution, however, that civic journalists don't want to tell readers and viewers what to think or how to act. They are simply creating a neutral zone of empowerment, arming citizens with information and sometimes with methods to shoulder some responsibility and offer some imagination or solutions for fixing a problem.

Civic journalists believe you can be a guide dog without relinquishing your watchdog role. And they are all too happy to abandon the attack-dog role.

Now, depending on your point of view, this is either a return to the fundamentals of good journalism or a revolutionary new approach to reporting the news. I personally believe it's more than just good journalism, at least the kind of journalism that I practiced for 22 years at the Philadelphia Inquirer.

It employs all the tools of good journalism, but it's not afraid to get more involved with the community -- in listening, in being a catalyst for activity, in helping the community build its own capacity. And it's not afraid to say: if the old journalism is not working, let's re-invent it.

What Is News?

One way that civic journalists try to do "different journalism" is to seek new definitions of news. Most journalists define news as conflict: incumbent vs. challenger, winner vs. loser, pro vs. con.

Civic journalism seeks to expand that definition. It seeks to go beyond covering an event, a meeting, or a controversy. It tries to convey knowledge, not just news developments. It's about covering consensus as well as conflict, success stories as well as failures -- stories that may help other communities deal with difficult issues.

Civic journalism is trying to come up with some new models of reporting that might be more in tune with new models of governance. Many local governing scenarios are moving away from a win-lose paradigm to a more consensus-based, win-win approach to solving local problems.

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How can journalism be equipped to deal with that? We do a great job of covering the conflict, stalking, and keeping score of the winners and losers. But send a reporter out to cover a meeting in which everyone agrees on something, and he or she is likely to come back and tell the editor that "nothing happened." There's no story.

Civic journalists seek to examine where community players agree on something as well as where they disagree. That's new.

One of the Pew Center's more ambitious experiments was undertaken in Spokane, Washington, in 1999 when the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper used civic journalism "mapping" tools to chart the key moments in the lives of young people that determine whether they will succeed or fail in adulthood and possibly end up in prison. They came up with some interesting moments -- like the first day of fourth grade is when you will know whether a child is going to like school or not. Or the first day of seventh grade is when it's determined whether you're going to be a "nerd" or part of the "in" crowd.

The idea was not only to cover this subject, but also to uncover some intervention points for social service agencies in the community. This is a very different definition of "news."

Civic journalism is about reframing stories to make them more relevant to readers.

The *Orange County Register* in California experimented with a new narrative technique to tell the story of "Motel Children" -- achingly poor kids living in residential motels literally across the street from the Disneyland theme park. The story was told in dialogue, using the childrens' own words.

The response was overwhelming. It included \$200,000 in donations, 50 tons of food, 8,000 toys, and thousands of volunteer hours devoted to helping "Motel Children." The county directed \$1 million for a housing program to get families out of motels. A nonprofit agency launched a \$5-million campaign to treat drug abuse among motel families.

Reporter Laura Saari said afterward that what amazed her was how everyone was working together toward a solution. "A similar story, told in a conventional way, would have put government agencies on the defensive. But because of the writing approach, no one felt like they were being blamed. So instead of wasting energy defending themselves, they've hit the street."

Civic journalism is about redefining balance.

Journalists report two sides of a story and believe it's fair and balanced. Civic journalists suggest that a better term is bipolar, not balanced, coverage. Balance is in the middle, not at the extremes. Civic journalists try to ensure that all the people affected by the issue

have a voice in the story, not just the proponents of the most extreme viewpoints who send us their press releases. And civic journalists are not afraid to report on ambiguity, when people are still working out how they feel.

Finally, civic journalism is about providing entry points to involve people and encouraging interactivity between journalists and citizens. It seeks to create two-way conversations with readers, in contrast to a one-way downloading of information -- dumping a lot of facts on the public -- as is seen so frequently in traditional journalism.

This interaction can happen in the news pages, on the air, in cyberspace, and sometimes in real space -- at forums and town hall meetings. North Carolina's Charlotte Observer, while covering a major issue regarding school busing, found that it was getting some of its best story ideas in e-mails from readers.

In 1999, the Pew Center supported a program at New Hampshire Public Radio (WHPR) for an On-Line Tax Calculator. The courts had ordered this tax-free state to come up with a tax to fund public schools. WHPR's Tax Challenge Web site had educational information, discussion space, and a nifty capacity that allowed people to enter the value of their home, their income, and the name of town they lived in, and actually calculate what three different tax reform proposals would cost them.

This was a very different, customized, individualized, and useful journalism that empowered people to play a role in a public policy choice. The Pew Center recently funded WHPR to develop a Utility Bill Estimator as a way to make the issue of utility deregulation more accessible to people.

The Bottom Line

So what's civic journalism's bottom line?

For the community:

- We see quality journalism that also improves a community's capacity for dealing with problems.
- We see that when you provide readers with the means to act, they will act.
- We have seen in research that civic journalism efforts have measurably increased readers' knowledge of a particular subject.
- We have seen that civic journalism efforts have positively influenced people's perceptions of the media.
- We have seen other community groups adopt the model of civic engagement (through study circles and action teams, for example) that they learned from news organization involvement with civic journalism efforts.
- And we are starting to see people running for elective office who never aspired to office until they became involved in a civic journalism initiative.

For journalism:

- We see in-depth reporting that has resonated more authentically with the community, rather than journalism that parrots just two sides of an issue.
- We see journalists rediscovering their communities -- and cracking some old stereotypes.
- We see all kinds of innovations in newsrooms. New pages, new jobs, new criteria, new mission statements. A new vocabulary. At the *Virginian Pilot* in Norfolk, the mission statement of its reporters covering the state capital in Richmond, Virginia, promises to cover state government and elections "as an exercise in civic problem solving."
- Finally, civic journalism has produced an environment that has allowed editors to take new risks.

I don't think civic journalism has all the answers to what ails the media. But it can take a big slice of credit for coming up with some remedies. And we believe, as St. Paul advised in one of his letters, that we need to "try all things and hold fast to all that is good."

4. RELATED WEB SITES

[The Poynter Institute](http://www.poynter.org)

<http://www.poynter.org>



The Poynter Institute is a school for journalists, dedicated to the promotion of excellence and integrity in the craft and leadership of successful journalistic enterprises. The Institute, founded in 1975, has developed a rich mixture of teaching and research programs, ranging from sophisticated courses and seminars for professional journalists to basic classes at the elementary school level.

[The Pew Center for Civic Journalism](http://www.pewcenter.org)

<http://www.pewcenter.org>



A center for innovative journalistic endeavors striving to create and refine better ways of reporting the news in order to engage citizens in community life. The Pew Center is an

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incubator for civic journalism experiments that enable news organizations to create and refine better ways of reporting the news to re-engage people in public life.

[The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press](http://www.people-press.org)

<http://www.people-press.org>



THE PEW RESEARCH CENTER
FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE PRESS

An independent opinion research group that studies public attitudes toward the press, politics and public policy issues. The Center's purpose is to serve as a forum for ideas on the media and public policy through public opinion research. In this role it serves as an important information resource for political leaders, journalists, and public interest organizations.

[American Society of Newspaper Editors](http://www.asne.org)

<http://www.asne.org>



The ASNE, founded in 1922, is the leading organization of daily newspaper editors in the U.S. dedicated to the leadership of American journalism. It is committed to fostering the public discourse essential to democracy; helping editors maintain the highest standards of quality, improve their craft and better serve their communities; and preserving and promoting core journalistic values, while embracing and exploring change.

[The Society of Professional Journalists](http://www.spj.org)

<http://www.spj.org>



The Society of Professional Journalists is the largest and most broad-based U.S. journalism organization, dedicated to encouraging the free practice of journalism and

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stimulating high standards of ethical behavior.

The Freedom Forum

<http://www.freedomforum.org>



The Freedom Forum is a nonpartisan foundation dedicated to free press, free speech and free spirit for all people. The foundation focuses on three main priorities: the Newseum, First Amendment freedoms and newsroom diversity.

National Press Foundation

<http://www.nationalpress.org>

Works to enhance the professional competence of journalists through in-career education projects. Sponsors conferences, seminars, fellowships, and awards.

IV. Advocacy, Grassroots Organizations and Think Tanks in the United States

IV. Advocacy, Grassroots Organizations and Think Tanks in the United States

1. ISSUE ADVOCACY AND ISSUE ADS ON THE RISE IN THE UNITED STATES

By Professor James Thurber, professor of government and director of the Center for Congressional and Presidential Studies and the Lobbying Institute at American University.

Source: *Issues of Democracy*, USIA Electronic Journal, Vol. 3, No. 2, June 1998, <http://usinfo.state.gov/journals/itdhr/0698/ijde/toc.htm>

Lobbyists always have played a role in the U.S. system of democracy. Historically, most represented business interests and other organizations with vested economic interests. But in recent years, there has been a huge increase in issue advocacy groups formed by citizens with shared concerns.

In contrast to the 18th century when the Republic was founded, the American government is now a huge, complex infrastructure with hundreds of bureaucracies in the executive branch alone. The days when an ordinary citizen could wander unannounced up to the White House and seek, and sometimes, obtain an audience with the president are long since gone. Even the 535 lawmakers who sit in the House of Representatives and the Senate now have huge staffs and represent districts many times the size of those in existence during the nation's formative years.

An individual citizen still has major influence on his elected representatives, fundamentally through his vote and other means of making his viewpoint known. But increasingly during this century, and especially in recent decades, citizens with like-minded concerns have combined together to form lobbying organizations that seek to influence both the public and lawmakers and officeholders. It is one way, perhaps, for citizens to recapture the clout their forebears had when the population of the country was far smaller and government was much closer to the people.

As is the case with the large special interests, most notably corporations and labor unions, issue advocacy groups formed by citizens are protected by the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which guarantees Americans the right to petition their government as well as freedom of speech.

Although citizen advocacy groups have been part of the lobbying community for many years, in the last two decades their numbers have exploded. According to Burdett

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Loomis, author of *The Contemporary Congress*, the number of Washington-based lobbying groups jumped from 4,000 in 1977 to more than 14,500 by the early 1990s. A key part of the mix, he adds, are "citizen groups," such as many of the civil rights, environmental and consumer organizations formed in the aftermath of the extension of government activity into these and other areas during the 1960s.

TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

In seeking to influence both the public and their government -- federal, state and local -- issue advocacy organizations employ a wide range of tactics and strategies including testifying at congressional hearings, direct lobbying, litigation, coalition-building, grassroots mobilization, public relations and advertising.

Advocacy groups have attempted to influence the public and lawmakers from the beginning. But in the 20th century, methods have become more varied and sophisticated. Modern technology, such as the fax and the Internet, has made access easier and cheaper. Whether issue advocacy campaigns are large or small, they attempt to mobilize their members and potential backers to support or oppose an issue, so that pressure will be placed on candidates and public officials to act in their favor. Not all issue advocacy organizations are membership-based. But those that are have an enormous advantage. Some of the most influential groups in the United States, which have large membership bases, are the [National Education Association](#), the [American Association of Retired Persons \(AARP\)](#), the [Christian Coalition](#), the [Family Research Council \(FRC\)](#) and the [National Organization of Women \(NOW\)](#). These groups have a diverse and broad membership, scattered across the many electoral districts around this nation. Since winning re-election is an important concern for elected officials, they are more likely to pay attention to an organization that has a local chapter in the district they represent.

ISSUE ADVOCACY GROUPS AND TELEVISION

Of all the advertising methods that issue advocacy groups employ, the most effective in the modern age is television. The rising number of issue advocacy organizations is one reason why there has been a surge in the purchase of television time for the promotion of viewpoints, as distinct from the endorsement of candidates. According to Darrell West, author of *How Issue Ads Have Reshaped American Politics*, approximately 25 percent of all the broadcast political advertisements in the 1996 election campaign were issue ads; West points out that they are becoming more commonplace also, because they largely are exempt from spending limitations imposed on spots that endorse candidates for office.

A report by the Annenberg Public Policy Center of the University of Pennsylvania estimated that in 1995 and 1996, between \$135 million and \$150 million was spent on issue advocacy advertising by at least 31 different groups, most of it on television time. This was about one-third of the total \$400 million spent on advertising by candidates in all federal races in that election cycle.

Television, which often attracts large audiences, is an attractive tool for issue advocacy groups that can afford its high cost because the organizations realize that their effectiveness results, in no small measure, from their ability to influence the public as well as candidates for office.

West estimates that perhaps as many as 40 or 50 percent of the broadcast political messages in the 2000 election campaign may be issue ads. Although they are nothing new in American politics -- they first aired on radio in the 1930s in opposition to President Franklin Roosevelt's Social Security proposal -- they have increased enormously over the last two decades, as issue advocacy groups have flourished and as campaign finance laws regulating spending to elect candidates have become more strict. That is partly because issue advocacy groups can avoid most current campaign finance regulations. By simply avoiding appeals in ads to vote for or against a candidate, advocacy groups may be able to significantly affect the outcome of an election. If a group expressly advocates the election or defeat of a particular candidate in an issue ad, it is required by the Federal Election Commission (FEC) to register as a political action committee (PAC). However, if the ad does not advocate the election or defeat of a candidate, the group does not have to disclose where the money for the ad came from, nor how much is being spent for its airing. To many observers, this raises serious questions as to whether the intent of campaign finance laws is essentially being subverted.

One example -- from the 1992 election campaign -- exemplifies the problem. During that campaign, the Christian Action Network urged voters to defeat the Clinton-Gore team because they favored policies that were counter to the group's fundamental Christian beliefs. Although the issue ads sponsored by the group indirectly suggested a vote against particular candidates, they did not actually tell voters to vote against them. The group did not disclose its expenditures for the ads, and the Federal Election Commission declared that the ads did not express advocacy for or against a particular candidate, and were therefore legally exempt under current law.

The implications for the conduct of politics are profound since, more and more, issue ads not only are aired during campaigns when candidates are most vulnerable to being influenced, but also in between elections, particularly at times when large, controversial issues are under debate. And not all the ads are sponsored by issue advocacy groups. Some are aired by the larger lobbies representing business and labor.

For example, in 1992 opposing sides on passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) aired television ads advocating their positions. Many businesses backed the treaty because they wanted expanded trade with Mexico and Canada. They sponsored ads espousing the virtues of the agreement. In contrast, the AFL-CIO, a "union of unions," which represents about 14 million workers throughout the United States, produced ads warning of job losses to U.S. workers, if NAFTA were passed. In this case, NAFTA won out.

Another example is the debate over national healthcare in the United States. When President Clinton introduced a national healthcare reform plan during his first term in office, he had the backing of several influential groups. The AFL-CIO spent over \$10 million dollars to fight for the healthcare package's passage. The American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) spent \$2.5 million on behalf of its members. Both groups saw the healthcare bill as a solution to the high cost of medical care and as a means of introducing universal healthcare coverage.

On the opposite side of the fence, such groups as the [National Federation of Independent Business](#), the [Health Insurance Association of America](#) and independent issue advocacy groups representing conservative viewpoints also spent millions of dollars to defeat the reform bill, arguing it was a waste of taxpayers' money and would lead to a huge increase in the power of the federal government. In this case, the president's healthcare proposal was defeated.

IMPLICATIONS FOR REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Since the rise of issue advocacy organizations and issue ads in American politics on a mass scale is relatively recent, few proposals have been advanced to regulate them. The concern derives not only from the fact that issue ads largely are exempt from current campaign finance laws, but also because some of the more well-funded groups are gaining influence at the expense of broader-based social movements and traditional political parties. Those groups with ample resources obviously have an advantage, but not necessarily a winning advantage, over those groups which do not.

In addition, there is concern that some issue advocacy groups are "stealth," or "front," organizations for economic or other interests that are not easily discerned by the public, or even lawmakers. Political scientists Larry Sabato and Glenn Simpson in their book, *Dirty Little Secrets*, document how some groups with civic-minded, seemingly disinterested titles, are in fact lobbies for particular interests. For example, a group called Citizens for Sensible Control of Acid Rain, was, in fact, funded by the coal and electric industry to lobby against the Clean Air Act.

Darrell West and others of similar persuasion emphasize the need to broaden the nation's disclosure laws to more effectively cover issue advocacy organizations and their expenditures. "There should be more timely and complete disclosure of independent expenditures and issue advocacy in election campaigns," West remarks. He also raises the question of whether more regulation, as well as disclosure, is needed, particularly to expose the so-called stealth or front groups.

Not all experts, however, voice the level of concern expressed by West and others who favor greater controls. Roger Davidson and Walter Oleszek, for example, in their recent book, *Congress and Its Members*, stress the checks and balances in the system. "Built-in checks constrain group pressures," they write. "There often are competing groups on any issue," which balance each other out, they add.

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Although measures dealing specifically with issue advocacy groups have not been adopted at the federal level, a number of states have adopted so-called "truth in communication" codes. The most sweeping regulation is in the midwestern state of Wisconsin. Under its state law regulating issue advocacy, any groups or persons engaged in activities having "the purpose of influencing the election," must register with the state elections board and disclose their donors. Ads or other types of communication may not be paid for with corporate or labor money. During the 1996 election, Wisconsin state courts ordered several ads off the airwaves which criticized state legislators -- on the basis that the groups involved had not disclosed their contributors.

At the federal level, it is likely that members of Congress will revisit this issue as part of overall campaign finance reform, a topic still very much under debate in the United States. Meanwhile, political scientists emphasize the role of a free and responsible media in monitoring issue advocacy groups and the issue ads they sponsor.

BACK TO THE FUTURE

The growth and change in the nature of interest group tactics, especially in the use of television, brings the United States back to a fundamental problem identified by James Madison in 1787 in [*Federalist Paper No. 10*](#). In a free and open society, Madison wrote, interest groups form to pursue policies that favor them at the expense of the broader national interest. Madison hoped that the solution to the problem would come from the diversity of interests of the population and the structure of the new government.

To a certain extent, Madison's expectations have prevented the tyranny of any one faction. Yet, the interest-group system remains somewhat unbalanced. In particular, the groups that use sophisticated tactics, such as issue advocacy, are considerably more influential than others. The inequities point to flaws in pluralism.

There is no mechanism to automatically ensure that interest groups will form to speak for those who need representation. Madison's dictum to avoid suppressing political freedoms, even at the expense of permitting selfish interests representing narrow segments of the population to promote their own causes, has generally guided the American democracy. There is little consensus on how to balance those conflicting factors. As long as lobbying is constitutionally protected, issue advocacy groups will campaign to influence the public and thus public policy. Where to draw the line is unclear, particularly when it is government that must draw it.

2. RELATED WEB SITES - ADVOCACY GROUPS

Public Citizen

<http://www.citizen.org/>



Public Citizen is a national, non-profit consumer rights organization founded in 1971 by consumer-advocate Ralph Nader. Public Citizen fights for consumer rights in the marketplace, safe products, a healthy environment and workplace, clean and safe energy sources, and corporate and government accountability.

National Organization of Women (NOW)

<http://www.now.org>



The National Organization for Women is the largest organization of feminist activists in the United States. Since its founding in 1966, NOW's goal has been "to take action" to bring about equality for all women.

League of Women Voters

<http://www.lwv.org/>



The League of Women Voters is a multi-issue organization whose mission is to encourage the informed and active participation of citizens in government and to influence public policy through education and advocacy.

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National Education Association

<http://www.nea.org>



NEA is America's oldest and largest organization committed to advancing the cause of public education. Their mission is to promote the cause of quality public education and advance the profession of education; expand the rights and further the interest of educational employees; and advocate human, civil, and economic rights for all.

Christian Coalition

<http://www.cc.org>



Christian Coalition is the largest and most active conservative grassroots political organization in America. The Christian Coalition of America offers people of faith the vehicle to be actively involved in shaping their government. The Christian Coalition of America is committed to representing the pro-family agenda.

3. THINK TANKS IN BRIEF

Source: *The Role of Think Tanks in U.S. Foreign Policy*. Electronic Journal of the U. S. Department of State - Volume 7, Number 3, November 2002

The approximately 1,500 think tanks in the United States "engage in a range of policy-related activities, and comprise a diverse set of institutions that have varied organizational forms," says James G. McGann of the Foreign Policy Research Institute. The following fact sheet profiles nine U.S. think tanks, selected to show

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a representative range of views, with budgets ranging from \$3 million to nearly \$30 million, and staff sizes that range from 35 to about 200.

American Enterprise Institute

<http://www.aei.org>



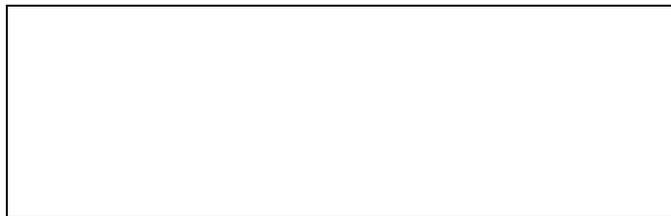
Mission: The American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, founded in 1943, is dedicated to preserving and strengthening the foundations of freedom -- limited government, private enterprise, vital cultural and political institutions, and a strong foreign policy and national defense -- through scholarly research, open debate, and publications. AEI is strictly nonpartisan and takes no institutional positions on pending legislation or other policy questions.

Structure: A 24-member Board of Trustees, composed of leading business and financial executives, governs the Institute, and its research agenda and appointments are reviewed by a Council of Academic Advisers, a group of distinguished outside scholars. President Christopher C. DeMuth guides the Institute's daily operations. The Institute has about 50 resident scholars and fellows, and maintains a network of more than 100 adjunct scholars at American universities and policy institutes.

Funding: AEI is an independent, non-profit organization supported primarily by grants and contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals. Its budget in 2000 was \$17 million.

The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

<http://www.ceip.org>



Mission: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (CEIP), founded in 1910, is a private, non-profit organization dedicated to advancing cooperation between nations and promoting active international engagement by the United States. Through research, publishing, convening, and, on occasion, creating new institutions and international networks, the Endowment's associates shape fresh policy approaches.

Structure: The Board of Trustees, composed of 23 leaders of American business and public life, governs the Endowment and directs its research initiatives. President Jessica T. Matthews oversees the Endowment's daily operations. The Washington Office supports a staff of 100, and nearly 40 Russian scholars work at the CEIP office in Moscow.

Funding: The Endowment has an annual budget of \$18.3 million. Most of its funding comes from contributions, rental income, and publications, including "Foreign Policy," one of the world's leading magazines of international politics and economics.

Center for Nonproliferation Studies

<http://cns.miis.edu/>



Mission: The Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS), established in 1989 by its current director, Dr. William Potter, strives to combat the spread of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) by training the next generation of non-proliferation specialists and disseminating timely information and analysis. CNS at the Monterey Institute of International Studies is the largest non-governmental organization in the United States devoted exclusively to research and training on non-proliferation issues.

Structure: CNS has a full-time staff of more than 65 specialists and over 65 graduate student research assistants located in offices in Monterey, California; Washington, D.C.; and Almaty, Kazakhstan. An International Advisory Board -- including U.S. and Russian legislators, former ambassadors, United Nations officials, renowned non-proliferation experts, and corporate executives -- meets twice a year to review CNS programs and activities. In addition, the Center has convened the Monterey Nonproliferation Strategy Group, an international panel of experts who meet periodically to develop policy recommendations.

Funding: CNS, with an annual budget of \$6.5 million, is a non-profit educational institution supported by donations from individuals, foundations and corporations. Three times a year, it publishes the journal *The Nonproliferation Review*.

[Center for Strategic and International Studies \(CSIS\)](http://www.csis.org)

<http://www.csis.org>

CSIS

Mission: For four decades, the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) has been dedicated to providing world leaders with strategic insights on -- and policy solutions to -- current and emerging global issues. CSIS helps to develop national and international public policy by generating strategic insights, convening strategic networks, crafting policy solutions, and developing today's and tomorrow's leaders.

Structure: CSIS is led by President and Chief Executive Officer John J. Hamre, a former deputy secretary of defense, and is guided by a Board of Trustees chaired by former Senator Sam Nunn and consisting of prominent individuals from both the public and private sectors. CSIS employs 190 researchers and support staff.

Funding: Contributions from corporations, foundations, and individuals constitute 85 percent of the revenues needed to meet CSIS's budget, which in 2001 was \$17.5 million. The remaining funds come from endowment income, government contracts, and publication sales.

[The Council on Foreign Relations](http://www.cfr.org)

<http://www.cfr.org>

COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Mission: Founded in 1921, the Council on Foreign Relations is a non-partisan membership organization, research center, and publisher. It is dedicated to increasing America's understanding of the world and contributing ideas to U.S. foreign policy. The Council accomplishes this mainly by promoting constructive debates and discussion, clarifying world issues, and by publishing *Foreign Affairs*, the leading journal on global issues.

Structure: The Council is governed by a 31-member Board of Directors. Leslie H. Gelb is the Chief Executive officer and president. It has a staff of approximately 200, including about 75 fellows. Its membership (approximately 4,000, chosen by a nomination process) is divided almost equally among New York, Washington, D.C., and the rest of the country.

Funding: The Council is an independent, tax exempt organization financed by member dues and gifts, foundation and individual grants, corporate contributions, and revenues from its own endowment. The total budget for its current fiscal year is \$29.6 million.

[The Heritage Foundation](http://www.heritage.org)

<http://www.heritage.org>



Mission: Founded in 1973, The Heritage Foundation is a research and educational institute whose mission is to formulate and promote conservative public policies based on the principles of free enterprise, limited government, individual freedom, traditional American values, and a strong national defense. The Foundation produces research and generates solutions consistent with its beliefs that are marketed to the Congress, the Executive Branch, the news media and others.

Structure: A 19-member Board of Trustees governs the work of 185 Heritage employees, including some 75 experts in a wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues. President Edwin J. Feulner oversees the Foundation's daily operations.

Funding: The Heritage Foundation, which has an annual budget of \$28.4 million, is supported by contributions from its members, including corporations and more than 200,000 individuals across the United States.

[Hudson Institute](http://www.hudson.org/)

<http://www.hudson.org/>



Mission: The Hudson Institute, founded in 1961, produces independent, high-quality research and strives to compete boldly in the debate of policy ideas. Hudson works to counsel and guide policy change, applying its ideas whenever possible alongside other leaders in communities, business, non-profit organizations and governments alike. Its mission is to be America's premier source of applied research on enduring policy challenges.

Structure: In 1984, Hudson broadened its scope by securing a diverse, influential research staff. The Institute, which has a staff of 75, maintains its headquarters in Indianapolis, Indiana, while also operating an office in Washington, D.C. and satellite offices across the United States. Institute President Herbert I. London and two vice-

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presidents, one in Indianapolis and one in Washington, D.C., preside over the Institute, and its work is guided by a Board of Trustees.

Funding: Hudson Institute, with an annual budget of \$7 million, is a non-profit organization supported primarily by contributions from individuals, foundations, and corporations.

[The Cato Institute](http://www.cato.org)

<http://www.cato.org>

Mission: The Cato Institute, founded in 1977 as a non-profit public policy research foundation, seeks to broaden the parameters of public policy debate to allow consideration of the traditional American principles of limited government, individual liberty, free markets, and peace. Toward that goal, the Institute strives to achieve greater involvement of the public in questions of policy and the proper role of government.

Structure: A Board of Directors, composed of 15 business professionals, governs the Institute, which has approximately 90 full-time employees, 60 adjunct scholars, and 16 fellows, plus interns. President and founder Edward H. Crane oversees the Institute's daily operations.

Funding: In order to maintain its independence, the Cato Institute, which is a \$15 million a year operation, accepts no government funding or endowments. Contributors include individuals, corporations, and foundations. Other revenue is generated from the sale of publications and conference fees.

[New America Foundation](http://www.newamerica.net/)

<http://www.newamerica.net/>



Mission: The purpose of the New America Foundation, founded in January 1999, is to elevate new voices and ideas to the fore of the nation's public discourse. Relying on a venture capital approach, the Foundation invests in outstanding individuals and policy ideas that transcend the conventional political spectrum. New America sponsors a wide range of research, published writing, conferences, and events on the most important issues of the day.

Structure: The New America Foundation, which has a staff of 35, is an independent, non-partisan, non-profit public policy institute that was conceived through the collaborative work of a diverse and intergenerational group of public intellectuals, civic leaders, and business executive. New America's Board of Directors is chaired by James Fallows, and Ted Halstead is the organization's founding President and CEO.

Funding: The New America Foundation, with an annual budget of \$3 million, is supported primarily by grants and contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals, and by the sale of its publications.

[The Brookings Institution](http://www.brook.edu/)

<http://www.brook.edu/>



Mission: The Brookings Institution is an independent, nonpartisan organization devoted to research, analysis, education, and publication focused on public policy issues in the areas of economics, foreign policy, and governance.

Structure: A Board of Trustees is responsible for the general supervision of Brookings, approval of its areas of investigation, and for safeguarding the independence of its work.

Funding: The Office of External Affairs coordinates all institutional fundraising, ranging from general operating support to grants and gifts for specific research projects.

[RAND](http://www.rand.org/)

<http://www.rand.org/>



Mission: An independent, nonprofit research institution. A center for education and training in policy analysis.

Structure: A Board of Trustees is responsible for the general supervision of RAND, approval of its areas of investigation, and for safeguarding the independence of its work. The full- and part-time staff of more than 1,600 represents.

Funding: RAND, with an annual budget of \$3,8 million, is supported primarily by grants and contributions from foundations, corporations, and individuals, and by the sale of its publications.

V. Internet and New Technologies in the Unites States

V. Internet and New Technologies in the United States

Source: Executive Summary from *A Nation Online: How Americans Are Expanding Their Use Of The Internet*. National Telecommunications and Information Administration. U.S. Department of Commerce, February 2002, http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/dn/nationonline_020502.htm

1. OVERVIEW

Few technologies have spread as quickly, or become so widely used, as computers and the Internet. These information technologies are rapidly becoming common fixtures of modern social and economic life, opening opportunities and new avenues for many Americans. Not only are many more Americans using the Internet and computers at home, they are also using them at work, school, and other locations for an expanding variety of purposes.

In the last few years, Americans' use of the Internet and computers has grown substantially.

? The rate of growth of Internet use in the United States is currently two million new Internet users per month.

? More than half of the nation is now online. In September 2001, 143 million Americans (about 54 percent of the population) were using the Internet — an increase of 26 million in 13 months. In September 2001, 174 million people (or 66 percent of the population) in the United States used computers.

Children and teenagers use computers and the Internet more than any other age group.

- Ninety percent of children between the ages of 5 and 17 (or 48 million) now use computers.
- Seventy-five percent of 14-17 year olds and 65 percent of 10-13 year olds use the Internet.
- Family households with children under the age of 18 are more likely to access the Internet (62 percent) than family households with no children (53 percent), and non-family households (35 percent).

- Computers at schools substantially narrow the gap in computer usage rates for children from high and low income families.

Internet use is increasing for people regardless of income, education, age, races, ethnicity, or gender.

- Between December 1998 and September 2001, Internet use by individuals in the lowest-income households (those earning less than \$15,000 per year) increased at a 25 percent annual growth rate. Internet use among individuals in the highest-income households (those earning \$75,000 per year or more) increased from a higher base but at a much slower 11 percent annual growth rate.
- Between August 2000 and September 2001, Internet use among Blacks and Hispanics increased at annual rates of 33 and 30 percent, respectively. Whites and Asian American and Pacific Islanders experienced annual growth rates of approximately 20 percent during these same periods.
- Over the 1998 to 2001 period, growth in Internet use among people living in rural households has been at an average annual rate of 24 percent, and the percentage of Internet users in rural areas (53 percent) is now almost even with the national average (54 percent).
- The highest growth rate among different types of households is for single mothers with children (29 percent).
- People with mental or physical disabilities (such as blindness, deafness, or difficulty walking, typing, or leaving home) are less likely than those without such disabilities to use computers or the Internet.

While 80 percent of Americans access the Internet through dial-up service, residential use of broadband service is rapidly expanding.

- Between August 2000 and September 2001, residential use of high-speed, broadband service doubled—from about 5 to 11 percent of all individuals, and from 11 to 20 percent of Internet users.

Americans are going online to conduct an expanding range of activities.

- Forty-five percent of the population now uses e-mail, up from 35 percent in 2000. Approximately one-third of Americans use the Internet to search for product and service information (36 percent, up from 26 percent in 2000).
- Among Internet users, 39 percent of individuals are making online purchases and 35 percent of individuals are searching for health information.

Use of the Internet and computers at work has contributed to higher use levels at home.

- The presence of someone who uses a computer or the Internet at work in a household is associated with substantially higher computer ownership or Internet use for that household, by a margin of about 77 percent to 35 percent.

With more than half of all Americans using computers and the Internet, we are truly a nation online. At work, schools, and libraries, as well as at home, the Internet is being used by a greater number of Americans.

2. RELATED WEB SITES

National Telecommunications and Information Administration

U.S. Department of Commerce

<http://www.ntia.doc.gov>



NTIA, an agency of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is the Executive Branch's principal voice on domestic and international telecommunications and information technology issues. NTIA works to spur innovation, encourage competition, help create jobs and provide consumers with more choices and better quality telecommunications products and services at lower prices.

Internet Society

<http://www.isoc.org/>



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The Internet Society (ISOC) is a professional membership society with more than 150 organization and 11,000 individual members in over 182 countries. It provides leadership in addressing issues that confront the future of the Internet, and is the organization home for the groups responsible for Internet infrastructure standards.

Pew Internet Project

<http://www.pewinternet.org/>



The Project explores the impact of the Internet on children, families, communities, the work place, schools, health care and civic/political life. The Project aims to be an authoritative source for timely information on the Internet's growth and societal impact, through research that is scrupulously impartial. This is a non-profit initiative of the Pew Research Center for People and the Press.

Center for Democracy and Technology

<http://www.cdt.org/>



Center for Democracy and Technology works to promote democratic values and constitutional liberties in the digital age. With expertise in law, technology, and policy, CDT seeks practical solutions to enhance free expression and privacy in global communications technologies. CDT is dedicated to building consensus among all parties interested in the future of the Internet and other new communications media.

Electronic Frontier Foundation

<http://www.eff.org/>



EFF is a donor-supported membership organization working to protect the fundamental rights regardless of technology; to educate the press, policymakers and the general public about civil liberties issues related to technology; and to act as a defender of those liberties.

Internet Education Foundation

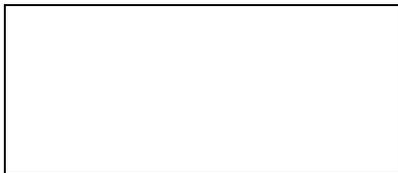
<http://www.neted.org/>



The Internet Education Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating the public and policymakers about the potential of a decentralized global Internet to promote democracy, communications, and commerce.

Online News Association

<http://www.onlinenewsassociation.org/>



The Online News Association is an association composed largely of professional online journalists. The Association has more than 600 professional members, that is, members whose principal livelihood involves gathering or producing news for digital presentation. The membership includes news writers, producers, designers, editors, photographers and others who produce news for the Internet or other digital delivery systems, as well as academic members and others interested in the development of online journalism.



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