

nation's health. Other scholars disagree, saying there is little evidence of irreconcilable differences among groups, especially outside of political elites.

1.5

Learning Objective 1.5: Outline the central arguments of the debate in America over the proper scope of government.
(p. 25)

The Scope of Government in America

- The scope of responsibilities of the United States' government includes economic, military, and domestic activities. However, **individualism** in America makes the scope of the United States government comparatively small in relation to other democracies.

For Additional Review

To understand more fully the important ideas of the government in America, review the relevant vocabulary terms in the chapter. To aid in your review, create flash cards or make sentences using the vocabulary terms. Review these vocabulary study aids in preparation for the test.

To understand more fully the important ideas of the government in America, develop and use effective strategies for taking notes on readings. Create a system of note-taking which allows you to write quickly and get down the basic concepts. Use the structure of the textbook as the structure of your notes. Review these notes in preparation for the test.

□ Review Questions

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Which of the following best illustrates elite theory?
 - a. The idea that large interest groups such as AARP (American Association of Retired Persons) dominate government decision-making.
 - b. The idea that a small group of wealthy individuals dominate government policy-making.
 - c. The idea that contending interests are so strong within the United States that government is often weakened.
 - d. The fact that more than 20,000 special interest groups lobby Congress each year.
 - e. The idea that because of technologies such as the Internet and television, Americans are increasingly isolated from their government, jeopardizing the strength of traditional groups in society.

2. All of the following are characteristic beliefs associated with American political culture EXCEPT
- liberty.
 - equality of opportunity.
 - individualism.
 - government regulation of the economy.
 - political equality.
3. According to pluralist theorists, which of the following statements describe the American political system?
- The public interest is normally served in the United States through a process of bargaining and compromise.
 - Organized interest groups fairly shape the public agenda by broadly representing the interests of Americans.
 - Multiple small groups among the wealthiest one percent of the public are in some way responsible for most policymaking.
 - Policymaking reflects the desires of those who control many of the largest corporations in the United States.
- I and II
 - II and III
 - I and III
 - II and IV
 - III and IV
4. All of the following are examples of public policy EXCEPT
- The president issues an executive order requiring corporations doing business with the government to have affirmative action hiring plans.
 - Congress writes a law requiring lobbyists to disclose which interest groups employ them.
 - The Supreme Court upholds the death penalty for a murder conviction.
 - The Federal Trade Commission writes a rule that corporate claims in television ads be true.
 - The American Association of Retired Persons passes a rule giving access to their insurance policies only to dues-paying members.
5. Democratic theory includes which of the following?
- "one person, one vote"
 - freedom of religion
 - majority rule
 - a bicameral Congress
 - a republican form of government

3. Basic functions common to all national governments include all of the following EXCEPT
- collecting taxes.
 - maintaining a national defense.
 - providing universal health care.
 - preserving order.
 - socializing young citizens.
7. Members of single interest groups
- work to limit the bias in national laws favoring married couples.
 - lobby the government to enact laws limiting the percentages that credit card companies can charge to finance monthly balances.
 - regulate the discount rate that the government charges to banks for the loans that they choose to make.
 - are reluctant, usually, to compromise on the issue that defines their narrowly defined goal.
 - have bound together in recent years to "bundle" soft money contributions to presidential candidates.
8. All of the following can create public policies EXCEPT
- Congress.
 - the president.
 - an interest group.
 - the courts.
 - the bureaucracy.
9. Which characteristic of American politics is concerned with the rights of the minority?
- the election process
 - the congressional policymaking process
 - interest group bargaining and compromising on political issues
 - the president altering his policy proposals in response to public opinion
 - the Bill of Rights guarantee of civil liberties
10. Government has grown to be big and active because
- the public expects government to solve problems.
 - it is hard to cut programs such as Social Security and national defense.
 - Democrats, the "party of big government," have been in power in recent years.
 - the government is committed to reducing income inequality.
- I and II
 - II and III
 - III and IV
 - I, II and III
 - II and IV

11. All of the following are core political ideas in the United States EXCEPT
- liberty.
 - individualism.
 - socialism.
 - self-government.
 - equality.
12. One effect of the American political system's use of checks and balances is
- the fact that the three branches operate independently of one another.
 - that policy mistakes are completely avoided.
 - the absolute guarantee that governmental power will not be abused.
 - an unusually expedient decision making process.
 - severe fragmentation of the governing authority.
13. Which of the following is an output of the American political system?
- the judiciary appointment process
 - a general election
 - law passed by Congress and presidential decision in foreign policy
 - a primary election
 - executive bureaucracy
14. All of the following statements concerning African Americans today are correct EXCEPT
- African Americans are twice as likely as whites to graduate from college.
 - African Americans are twice as likely as whites to live in poverty.
 - African Americans are twice as likely as whites to be unable to find a job.
 - African Americans are twice as likely as whites to die in infancy.
 - African Americans have equal rights under the law.
15. Which of the following statements provides the most accurate description of democracy as practiced in the United States?
- The will of the majority always prevails.
 - The will of the people is checked by nothing.
 - The people govern through elected officials.
 - The people govern through mandates.
 - The people directly govern themselves.
16. The characteristics and beliefs of a particular people about government and politics is known as
- scientific socialism.
 - political culture.
 - elitism.
 - pluralism.
 - capitalism.

17. This natural rights' philosopher stated in a 17th century political document that all individuals have certain natural rights, including those of life, liberty, and property.
- Thomas Paine
 - Thomas Jefferson
 - Jean Jacques Rousseau
 - John Locke
 - James Madison
18. All of the following statements about majoritarianism in the United States are true EXCEPT
- Policy makers often ignore the opinion of the majority when making policy decisions.
 - The majority of the public supports general statements about civil liberties but are less likely to support specific applications.
 - Public policy tends to change with the changes in majority opinion on major issues.
 - The public is interested in and well-informed on all policy issues.
 - Majorities do sometimes rule in the American political arena.
19. In which famous document did James Madison argue that government is most dangerous when a single group gains complete political control?
- Common Sense*
 - Federalist* No. 10
 - the Constitution
 - the preamble to the Declaration of Independence
 - The Wealth of Nations*
20. All of the following are considered inputs into the American political system EXCEPT
- the activities of interests groups.
 - the activities of political parties.
 - laws passed by Congress.
 - voting in elections.
 - letters to representatives.

Free-Response Questions

- There is a common set of values generally espoused by United States citizens—a political culture.
 - Identify three elements of American political culture.
 - Describe two of these elements.
 - Explain why citizens might espouse these values but object to specific applications.
- Government is a set of institutions by which people make collective decisions.
 - Identify three functions government serves.
 - Provide two explanations why people might choose to use government to pursue these functions.