

- Mass Media and Public Opinion
- What is Public Opinion?
- Very few matters in which all or nearly all of “the people” think a like.
- Public opinion are attitudes held by significant number of persons on matters of government and politics.
- What shapes Public Opinions
 - Life time process
 - Like Sociological Factors
 - Family
 - Schools
 - Opinion Leaders
 - Mass Media
 - Mix of Factors
- Limits on the Force of Public Opinion
 - Interest groups, not elections
- Measurement of Public Opinion
 - Challenging
 - Elections, Interest Groups, Media & Personal Contacts
 - http://www.realclearpolitics.com/epolls/other/president_obama_job_approval-1044.html#polls
 - Polls
 - Public opinion polls – device that attempts to collect information about public opinion by asking people questions
 - Straw vote –
 - Scientific Polling –
 - Polling Process – Universe, Representative (Sample, random, quota), Questions, Polling, evaluation
- Evaluation of Polls -
- Mass Media & Politics
- Mass Media – includes those means of communication that can reach large, widely dispersed audiences, masses of people, simultaneously.
 - Television –
 - Newspapers –
 - Radio –
 - Magazines -
 - Internet –
- Impact on Politics
 - Public Agenda –
 - Electoral Politics –
- Limits on Media Influence -
- <http://www.people-press.org/2011/01/04/internet-gains-on-television-as-publics-main-news-source/>
- Interest Groups

A private organization that tries to persuade public officials to respond to the shared attitudes of its members.

Nature of Interest Groups

- Public policy –
- Political Parties and Interest groups

- Interest Groups: Good or Bad
- Functions –
- Criticisms –

Types of Interest Groups

- American Tradition
- Economic Interests
 - Businesses –
 - Labor –
 - Agricultural –
 - Professional
- Others
 - Promote causes –
 - Promote Welfare of certain groups –
 - Religious –
- Public-Interest Groups – seeks to institute certain public policies of benefit to all or most people in this country.
- Interest Groups at Work
- Influence Public Opinion
 - + influence & promoting policies
- Influence Elections
- Lobby those who make public policy