

# Readings

## Unit 11

- Introduction—Public Opinion: Voice of the People
- Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*: “Political Associations in the United States”
- Paine, *Common Sense*
- *Federalist Papers*: “Federalist No. 10”
- Hahn, “Student Views of Democracy: The Good News and Bad News”

## Questions

1. What did Tocqueville suggest was the constitutive element of liberty?
2. How did Paine distinguish between society and government?
3. Within whom does the freedom of the state reside in a republic, according to Paine? In what way is it determined?
4. How did Tocqueville explain the prominence of social organizations within the United States?

## Introduction—Public Opinion: Voice of the People

President George Bush derisively dismissed President William Clinton's administration as governing by polls. While there is no evidence that the Bush administration was any less interested in the polls than previous administrations were, this claim does reveal a public perception of the use and abuse of polls. While everyone would agree that government should do what citizens want it to do, if administrations follow the dictates of the polls too slavishly they appear to lack leadership. Tocqueville explained that above the government's institutions, "and beyond all these characteristic forms, there is a sovereign power, that of the people, which may destroy or modify them at its pleasure." The many ways that the sovereign people influenced the government was a central concern for Tocqueville. "It remains to be shown in what manner this power, superior to the laws, acts; what are its instincts and its passions, what the secret springs that retard, accelerate, or direct its irresistible course, what the effects of its unbounded authority, and what the destiny that is reserved for it" (179). Here at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the power and presence of public opinion polls challenges constitutional government and, in connection with the growth of mass culture, threatens individualism and difference.

The Constitution creates and limits the institutions of government. The reliance by the government on opinion polls for support and legitimacy undermines the role of the Constitution in creating governmental legitimacy by giving the branches the power to do whatever the people will allow. For example, in the twentieth century, the executive branch has become the branch of government most involved in war-making. This flies in the face of the constitutional grants of war-making power, most explicitly the power of Congress to declare war. This function is now routinely performed by the presidency. This fundamental constitutional change occurred without a change in the actual document.

Tocqueville noticed that in America there was a tendency for people to look to mass culture for opinion. The pressures of equality, Tocqueville believed, would make authority less appealing to Americans to such a degree that they would be less willing to take direction from local authorities. He believed, similarly to Madison's account in "Federalist No. 10," that local communities and differences would become less important and less valued as the attention of American citizens was commanded by the national public. This identification with the national government, Tocqueville and Madison believed, would reduce the power and saliency of local identifications and reduce the political activity of American citizens. The production of national polls can emphasize this tendency to look to an abstract national identification for guidance and authority.

The readings for this chapter cover several aspects of this problem. The central challenge to democracy foreseen by Tocqueville and institutionalized by Madison constitutes the core reading. Caroline Hahn's article on the surveys of school children reveals some interesting opinions and beliefs of school children in an example of an interesting opinion survey. These readings contribute to any attempt to understand the destiny of the people.

# Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*: “Political Associations in the United States”

## (Volume I, Chapter XII)

*DAILY USE which the Anglo-Americans make of the right of association—Three kinds of political associations—How they apply the representative system to associations—Dangers resulting to the state—Great Convention of 1831 relative to the tariff—Legislative character of this Convention—Why the unlimited exercise of the right of association is less dangerous in the United States than elsewhere—Why it may be looked upon as necessary—Utility of associations among a democratic people.*

IN no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America. Besides the permanent associations which are established by law under the names of townships, cities, and counties, a vast number of others are formed and maintained by the agency of private individuals.

The citizen of the United States is taught from infancy to rely upon his own exertions in order to resist the evils and the difficulties of life; he looks upon the social authority with an eye of mistrust and anxiety, and he claims its assistance only when he is unable to do without it. This habit may be traced even in the schools, where the children in their games are wont to submit to rules which they have themselves established, and to punish misdemeanors which they have themselves defined. The same spirit pervades every act of social life. If a stoppage occurs in a thoroughfare and the circulation of vehicles is hindered, the neighbors immediately form themselves into a deliberative body; and this extemporaneous assembly gives rise to an executive power which remedies the inconvenience before anybody has thought of recurring to a pre-existing authority superior to that of the persons immediately concerned. If some public pleasure is concerned, an association is formed to give more splendor and regularity to the entertainment. Societies are formed to resist evils that are exclusively of a moral nature, as to diminish the vice of intemperance. In the United States associations are established to promote the public safety, commerce, industry, morality, and religion. There is no end which the human will despairs of attaining through the combined power of individuals united into a society.

I shall have occasion hereafter to show the effects of association in civil life; I confine myself for the present to the political world. When once the right of association is recognized, the citizens may use it in different ways.

An association consists simply in the public assent which a number of individuals give to certain doctrines and in the engagement which they contract to promote in a certain manner the spread of those doctrines. The right of associating in this fashion almost merges with freedom of the press, but societies thus formed possess more authority than the press. When an opinion is represented by a society, it necessarily assumes a more exact and explicit form. It numbers its partisans and engages them in its cause; they, on the other hand, become acquainted with one another, and their zeal is increased by their number. An association unites into one channel the efforts of divergent minds and urges them vigorously towards the one end which it clearly points out.

The second degree in the exercise of the right of association is the power of meeting. When an association is allowed to establish centers of action at certain important points in the country, its activity is increased and its influence extended. Men have the opportunity of seeing one another; means of execution are combined; and opinions are maintained with a warmth and energy that written language can never attain.

Lastly, in the exercise of the right of political association there is a third degree: the partisans of an opinion may unite in electoral bodies and choose delegates to represent them in a central assembly. This is, properly speaking, the application of the representative system to a party.

Thus, in the first instance, a society is formed between individuals professing the same opinion, and the tie that keeps it together is of a purely intellectual nature. In the second case, small assemblies are formed, which represent only a fraction of the party. Lastly, in the third case, they constitute, as it were, a separate nation in the midst of the nation, a government within the government. Their delegates, like the real delegates of the majority, represent the whole collective force of their party, and like them, also, have an appearance of nationality and all the moral power that results from it. It is true that they have not the right, like the others, of making the laws; but they have the power of attacking those which are in force and of drawing up beforehand those which ought to be enacted.

## Political Associations in the United States, cont'd.

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If, among a people who are imperfectly accustomed to the exercise of freedom, or are exposed to violent political passions, by the side of the majority which makes the laws is placed a minority which only deliberates and gets laws ready for adoption, I cannot but believe that public tranquillity would there incur very great risks. There is doubtless a wide difference between proving that one law is in itself better than another and proving that the former ought to be substituted for the latter. But the imagination of the multitude is very apt to overlook this difference, which is so apparent to the minds of thinking men. It sometimes happens that a nation is divided into two nearly equal parties, each of which affects to represent the majority. If, near the directing power, another power is established which exercises almost as much moral authority as the former, we are not to believe that it will long be content to speak without acting; or that it will always be restrained by the abstract consideration that associations are meant to direct opinions, but not to enforce them, to suggest but not to make the laws.

The more I consider the independence of the press in its principal consequences, the more am I convinced that in the modern world it is the chief and, so to speak, the constitutive element of liberty. A nation that is determined to remain free is therefore right in demanding, at any price, the exercise of this independence. But the unlimited liberty of political association cannot be entirely assimilated to the liberty of the press. The one is at the same time less necessary and more dangerous than the other. A nation may confine it within certain limits without forfeiting any part of its self-directing power; and it may sometimes be obliged to do so in order to maintain its own authority.

In America the liberty of association for political purposes is unlimited. An example will show in the clearest light to what an extent this privilege is tolerated.

The question of a tariff or free trade has much agitated the minds of Americans. The tariff was not only a subject of debate as a matter of opinion, but it affected some great material interests of the states. The North attributed a portion of its prosperity, and the South nearly all its sufferings, to this system. For a long time the tariff was the sole source of the political animosities that agitated the Union.

In 1831, when the dispute was raging with the greatest violence, a private citizen of Massachusetts proposed, by means of the newspapers, to all the enemies of the tariff to send delegates to Philadelphia in order to consult together upon the best means of restoring freedom of trade. This proposal circulated in a few days, by the power of the press, from Maine to New Orleans. The opponents of the tariff adopted it with enthusiasm; meetings were held in all quarters, and delegates were appointed. The majority of these delegates were well known, and some of them had earned a considerable degree of celebrity. South Carolina alone, which afterwards took up arms in the same cause, sent sixty-three delegates. On the 1st of October 1831 this assembly, which, according to the American custom, had taken the name of a Convention, met at Philadelphia; it consisted of more than two hundred members. Its debates were public, and they at once assumed a legislative character; the extent of the powers of Congress, the theories of free trade, and the different provisions of the tariff were discussed. At the end of ten days the Convention broke up, having drawn up an address to the American people in which it declared (1) that Congress had not the right of making a tariff, and that the existing tariff was unconstitutional; (2) that the prohibition of free trade was prejudicial to the interests of any nation, and to those of the American people especially.

It must be acknowledged that the unrestrained liberty of political association has not hitherto produced in the United States the fatal results that might perhaps be expected from it elsewhere. The right of association was imported from England, and it has always existed in America; the exercise of this privilege is now incorporated with the manners and customs of the people. At the present time the liberty of association has become a necessary guarantee against the tyranny of the majority. In the United States, as soon as a party has become dominant, all public authority passes into its hands; its private supporters occupy all the offices and have all the force of the administration at their disposal. As the most distinguished members of the opposite party cannot surmount the barrier that excludes them from power, they must establish themselves outside of it and oppose the whole moral authority of the minority to the physical power that domineers over it. Thus a dangerous expedient is used to obviate a still more formidable danger.

The omnipotence of the majority appears to me to be so full of peril to the American republics that the dangerous means used to bridle it seem to be more advantageous than prejudicial. And here I will express an opinion that may remind the reader of what I said when speaking of the freedom of townships. There are no countries in which associations are more needed to prevent the despotism of faction or the arbitrary power of a prince than those which are democratically constituted. In aristocratic nations the body of the nobles and the wealthy are in themselves natural associations which check the abuses of power. In countries where such associations do not exist, if

## Political Associations in the United States, cont'd.

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private individuals cannot create an artificial and temporary substitute for them I can see no permanent protection against the most galling tyranny; and a great people may be oppressed with impunity by a small faction or by a single individual.

The meeting of a great political convention (for there are conventions of all kinds), which may frequently become a necessary measure, is always a serious occurrence, even in America, and one that judicious patriots cannot regard without alarm. This was very perceptible in the Convention of 1831, at which all the most distinguished members strove to moderate its language and to restrain its objects within certain limits. It is probable that this Convention exercised a great influence on the minds of the malcontents and prepared them for the open revolt against the commercial laws of the Union that took place in 1832.

It cannot be denied that the unrestrained liberty of association for political purposes is the privilege which a people is longest in learning how to exercise. If it does not throw the nation into anarchy, it perpetually augments the chances of that calamity. On one point, however, this perilous liberty offers a security against dangers of another kind; in countries where associations are free, secret societies factions, but no conspiracies.

*DIFFERENT WAYS in which the right of association is understood in and in the United States—Different use which is made of it.*

THE most natural privilege of man, next to the right of acting for himself, is that of combining his exertions with those of his fellow creatures and of acting in common with them. The right of association therefore appears to me almost as inalienable in its nature as the right of personal liberty. No legislator can attack it without impairing the foundations of society. Nevertheless, if the liberty of association is only a source of advantage and prosperity to some nations, it may be perverted or carried to excess by others, and from an element of life may be changed into a cause of destruction. A comparison of the different methods that associations pursue in those countries in which liberty is well understood and in those where liberty degenerates into license may be useful both to governments and to parties.

Most Europeans look upon association as a weapon which is to be hastily fashioned and immediately tried in the conflict. A society is formed for discussion, but the idea of impending action prevails in the minds of all those who constitute it. It is, in fact, an army; and the time given to speech serves to reckon up the strength and to animate the courage of the host, after which they march against the enemy. To the persons who compose it, resources which lie within the bounds of law may suggest themselves as means of success, but never as the only means.

Such, however, is not the manner in which the right of association is understood in the United States. In America the citizens who form the minority associate in order, first, to show their numerical strength and so to diminish the moral power of the majority; and, secondly, to stimulate competition and thus to discover those arguments that are most fitted to act upon the majority; for they always entertain hopes of drawing over the majority to their own side, and then controlling the supreme power in its name. Political associations in the United States are therefore peaceable in their intentions and strictly legal in the means which they employ; and they assert with perfect truth that they aim at success only by lawful expedients.

The difference that exists in this respect between Americans and Europeans depends on several causes. In Europe there are parties which differ so much from the majority that they can never hope to acquire its support, and yet they think they are strong enough in themselves to contend against it. When a party of this kind forms an association, its object is not to convince, but to fight. In America the individuals who hold opinions much opposed to those of the majority can do nothing against it, and all other parties hope to win it over to their own principles. The exercise of the right of association becomes dangerous, then, in proportion as great parties find themselves wholly unable to acquire the majority. In a country like the United States, in which the differences of opinion are mere differences of hue, the right of association may remain unrestrained without evil consequences. Our inexperience of liberty leads us to regard the liberty of association only as a right of attacking the government. The first notion that presents itself to a party, as well as to an individual, when it has acquired a consciousness of its own strength is that of violence; the notion of persuasion arises at a later period, and is derived from experience. The English, who are divided into parties which differ essentially from each other, rarely abuse the right of association because they have long been accustomed to exercise it. In France the passion for war is so intense that there is no undertaking so mad, or so injurious to the welfare of the state that a man does not consider himself honored in defending it at the risk of his life.

## Political Associations in the United States, cont'd.

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But perhaps the most powerful of the causes that tend to mitigate the violence of political associations in the United States is universal suffrage. In countries in which universal suffrage exists, the majority is never doubtful, because neither party can reasonably pretend to represent that portion of the community which has not voted. The associations know as well as the nation at large that they do not represent the majority. This results, indeed, from the very fact of their existence; for if they did represent the preponderating power, they would change the law instead of soliciting its reform. The consequence of this is that the moral influence of the government which they attack is much increased, and their own power is much enfeebled.

In Europe there are few associations which do not affect to represent the majority, or which do not believe that they represent it. This conviction or this pretension tends to augment their force amazingly and contributes no less to legalize their measures. Violence may seem to be excusable in defense of the cause of oppressed right. Thus it is, in the vast complication of human laws, that extreme liberty sometimes corrects the abuses of liberty, and that extreme democracy obviates the dangers of democracy. In Europe associations consider themselves, in some degree, as the legislative and executive council of the people, who are unable to speak for themselves; moved by this belief, they act and they command. In America, where they represent in the eyes of all only a minority of the nation, they argue and petition.

The means that associations in Europe employ are in accordance with the end which they propose to obtain. As the principal aim of these bodies is to act and not to debate, to fight rather than to convince, they are naturally led to adopt an organization which is not civic and peaceable, but partakes of the habits and maxims of military life. They also centralize the direction of their forces as much as possible and entrust the power of the whole party to a small number of leaders.

The members of these associations respond to a watchword, like soldiers on duty; they profess the doctrine of passive obedience; say, rather, that in uniting together they at once abjure the exercise of their own judgment and free will; and the tyrannical control that these societies exercise is often far more insupportable than the authority possessed over society by the government which they attack. Their moral force is much diminished by these proceedings, and they lose the sacred character which always attaches to a struggle of the oppressed against their oppressors. He who in given cases consents to obey his fellows with servility and who submits his will and even his thoughts to their control, how can he pretend that he wishes to be free?

The Americans have also established a government in their associations, but it is invariably borrowed from the forms of the civil administration. The independence of each individual is recognized; as in society, all the members advance at the same time towards the same end, but they are not all obliged to follow the same track. No one abjures the exercise of his reason and free will, but everyone exerts that reason and will to promote a common undertaking.

## Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (Chapter 2)

*Common Sense, the most influential pamphlet ever published in America, was written by the son of a Quaker corset maker, possible pirate, sometime editor, secretary to the Congressional Committee of Foreign Affairs for the Continental Congress, elected to the National Assembly of France, and prisoner of Robespierre in Luxembourg. "These are the times that try men's souls," he wrote of the American revolution in the first issue of The Crisis, but he could have been writing of his own life.*

### Common Sense

by Thomas Paine

#### Chapter 2

**SOME** writers have so confounded society with government, as to leave little or no distinction between them; whereas they are not only different, but have different origins. Society is produced by our wants, and government by our wickedness; the former promotes our happiness Positively by uniting our affections, the latter negatively by restraining our vices. The one encourages intercourse, the other creates distinctions. The first is a patron, the last a punisher.

Society in every state is a blessing, but government even in its best state is but a necessary evil in its worst state an intolerable one; for when we suffer, or are exposed to the same miseries by a government, which we might expect in a country without government, our calamities is heightened by reflecting that we furnish the means by which we suffer! Government, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence; the palaces of kings are built on the ruins of the bowers of paradise. For were the impulses of conscience clear, uniform, and irresistibly obeyed, man would need no other lawgiver; but that not being the case, he finds it necessary to surrender up a part of his property to furnish means for the protection of the rest; and this he is induced to do by the same prudence which in every other case advises him out of two evils to choose the least. Wherefore, security being the true design and end of government, it unanswerably follows that whatever form thereof appears most likely to ensure it to us, with the least expense and greatest benefit, is preferable to all others.

In order to gain a clear and just idea of the design and end of government, let us suppose a small number of persons settled in some sequestered part of the earth, unconnected with the rest, they will then represent the first peopling of any country, or of the world. In this state of natural liberty, society will be their first thought. A thousand motives will excite them thereto, the strength of one man is so unequal to his wants, and his mind so unfitted for perpetual solitude, that he is soon obliged to seek assistance and relief of another, who in his turn requires the same. Four or five united would be able to raise a tolerable dwelling in the midst of a wilderness, but one man might labor out the common period of life without accomplishing any thing; when he had felled his timber he could not remove it, nor erect it after it was removed; hunger in the mean time would urge him from his work, and every different want call him a different way. Disease, nay even misfortune would be death, for though neither might be mortal, yet either would disable him from living, and reduce him to a state in which he might rather be said to perish than to die.

Thus necessity, like a gravitating power, would soon form our newly arrived emigrants into society, the reciprocal blessings of which, would supersede, and render the obligations of law and government unnecessary while they remained perfectly just to each other; but as nothing but heaven is impregnable to vice, it will unavoidably happen, that in proportion as they surmount the first difficulties of emigration, which bound them together in a common cause, they will begin to relax in their duty and attachment to each other; and this remissness, will point out the necessity, of establishing some form of government to supply the defect of moral virtue.

Some convenient tree will afford them a State-House, under the branches of which, the whole colony may assemble to deliberate on public matters. It is more than probable that their first laws will have the title only of REGULATIONS, and be enforced by no other penalty than public disesteem. In this first parliament every man, by natural right will have a seat.

But as the colony increases, the public concerns will increase likewise, and the distance at which the members may be separated, will render it too inconvenient for all of them to meet on every occasion as at first, when their number was small, their habitations near, and the public concerns few and trifling. This will point out the con-

## Common Sense, cont'd.

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venience of their consenting to leave the legislative part to be managed by a select number chosen from the whole body, who are supposed to have the same concerns at stake which those have who appointed them, and who will act in the same manner as the whole body would act were they present. If the colony continue increasing, it will become necessary to augment the number of the representatives, and that the interest of every part of the colony may be attended to, it will be found best to divide the whole into convenient parts, each part sending its proper number; and that the elected might never form to themselves an interest separate from the electors, prudence will point out the propriety of having elections often; because as the elected might by that means return and mix again with the general body of the electors in a few months, their fidelity to the public will be secured by the prudent reflection of not making a rod for themselves. And as this frequent interchange will establish a common interest with every part of the community, they will mutually and naturally support each other, and on this (not on the unmeaning name of king) depends the strength of government, and the happiness of the governed.

Here then is the origin and rise of government; namely, a mode rendered necessary by the inability of moral virtue to govern the world; here too is the design and end of government, viz. freedom and security. And however our eyes may be dazzled with snow, or our ears deceived by sound; however prejudice may warp our wills, or interest darken our understanding, the simple voice of nature and of reason will say, it is right.

I draw my idea of the form of government from a principle in nature, which no art can overturn, viz. that the more simple any thing is, the less liable it is to be disordered, and the easier repaired when disordered; and with this maxim in view, I offer a few remarks on the so much boasted constitution of England. That it was noble for the dark and slavish times in which it was erected is granted. When the world was overrun with tyranny the least therefrom was a glorious rescue. But that it is imperfect, subject to convulsions, and incapable of producing what it seems to promise, is easily demonstrated.

Absolute governments (tho' the disgrace of human nature) have this advantage with them, that they are simple; if the people suffer, they know the head from which their suffering springs, know likewise the remedy, and are not bewildered by a variety of causes and cures. But the constitution of England is so exceedingly complex, that the nation may suffer for years together without being able to discover in which part the fault lies, some will say in one and some in another, and every political physician will advise a different medicine.

I know it is difficult to get over local or long standing prejudices, yet if we will suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

First. The remains of monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.

Secondly. The remains of aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

Thirdly. The new republican materials, in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.

The two first, by being hereditary, are independent of the people; wherefore in a constitutional sense they contribute nothing towards the freedom of the state.

To say that the constitution of England is a union of three powers reciprocally checking each other, is farcical, either the words have no meaning, or they are flat contradictions.

To say that the commons is a check upon the king, presupposes two things.

First. That the king is not to be trusted without being looked after, or in other words, that a thirst for absolute power is the natural disease of monarchy.

Secondly. That the commons, by being appointed for that purpose, are either wiser or more worthy of confidence than the crown.

But as the same constitution which gives the commons a power to check the king by withholding the supplies, gives afterwards the king a power to check the commons, by empowering him to reject their other bills; it again supposes that the king is wiser than those whom it has already supposed to be wiser than him. A mere absurdity!

## Common Sense, cont'd.

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There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgment is required. The state of a king shuts him from the world, yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; wherefore the different parts, unnaturally opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.

Some writers have explained the English constitution thus; the king, say they, is one, the people another; the peers are an house in behalf of the king; the commons in behalf of the people; but this hath all the distinctions of an house divided against itself; and though the expressions be pleasantly arranged, yet when examined they appear idle and ambiguous; and it will always happen, that the nicest construction that words are capable of, when applied to the description of something which either cannot exist, or is too incomprehensible to be within the compass of description, will be words of sound only, and though they may amuse the ear, they cannot inform the mind, for this explanation includes a previous question, viz. how came the king by a Power which the people are afraid to trust, and always obliged to check? Such a power could not be the gift of a wise people, neither can any power, which needs checking, be from God; yet the provision, which the constitution makes, supposes such a power to exist.

But the provision is unequal to the task; the means either cannot or will not accomplish the end, and the whole affair is a *felo de se*; for as the greater weight will always carry up the less, and as all the wheels of a machine are put in motion by one, it only remains to know which power in the constitution has the most weight, for that will govern; and though the others, or a part of them, may clog, or, as the phrase is, check the rapidity of its motion, yet so long as they cannot stop it, their endeavors will be ineffectual; the first moving power will at last have its way, and what it wants in speed is supplied by time.

That the crown is this overbearing part in the English constitution needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places pensions is self-evident, wherefore, though we have and wise enough to shut and lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.

The prejudice of Englishmen, in favor of their own government by king, lords, and commons, arises as much or more from national pride than reason. Individuals are undoubtedly safer in England than in some other countries, but the will of the king is as much the law of the land in Britain as in France, with this difference, that instead of proceeding directly from his mouth, it is handed to the people under the most formidable shape of an act of parliament. For the fate of Charles the First, hath only made kings more subtle not more just.

Wherefore, laying aside all national pride and prejudice in favor of modes and forms, the plain truth is, that it is wholly owing to the constitution of the people, and not to the constitution of the government that the crown is not as oppressive in England as in Turkey.

An inquiry into the constitutional errors in the English form of government is at this time highly necessary; for as we are never in a proper condition of doing justice to others, while we continue under the influence of some leading partiality, so neither are we capable of doing it to ourselves while we remain fettered by any obstinate prejudice. And as a man, who is attached to a prostitute, is unfitted to choose or judge of a wife, so any prepossession in favor of a rotten constitution of government will disable us from discerning a good one.

## ***Federalist Papers: “Federalist No. 10”***

*Madison’s letter “Federalist No. 10” explores the role of the structure of government in regulating differences and democracy. It has become commonplace to consider the American government and the American founders as democratic—“Federalist No. 10” is an important reminder that they were very concerned with controlling democracy. In this defense of the Constitution and the structure of government created by the Constitution, Madison argues, contrary to virtually all previous accounts of republican government, that a large republic will most successfully sustain itself against the pressures of political factions or interests by weakening the importance of small groups. Not only does Madison make an argument for limiting democracy by making America so big that diverse interests would have a great deal of difficulty becoming important on the national stage, but he also suggests some of the intellectual significance of American conceptions of Manifest Destiny and America’s takeover of virtually an entire continent.*

### **Federalist No. 10—The Same Subject Continued: The Union as a Safeguard Against Domestic Faction and Insurrection**

Friday, November 23, 1787

by James Madison

To the People of the State of New York:

AMONG the numerous advantages promised by a wellconstructed Union, none deserves to be more accurately developed than its tendency to break and control the violence of faction. The friend of popular governments never finds himself so much alarmed for their character and fate, as when he contemplates their propensity to this dangerous vice. He will not fail, therefore, to set a due value on any plan which, without violating the principles to which he is attached, provides a proper cure for it. The instability, injustice, and confusion introduced into the public councils, have, in truth, been the mortal diseases under which popular governments have everywhere perished; as they continue to be the favorite and fruitful topics from which the adversaries to liberty derive their most specious declamations. The valuable improvements made by the American constitutions on the popular models, both ancient and modern, cannot certainly be too much admired; but it would be an unwarrantable partiality, to contend that they have as effectually obviated the danger on this side, as was wished and expected. Complaints are everywhere heard from our most considerate and virtuous citizens, equally the friends of public and private faith, and of public and personal liberty, that our governments are too unstable, that the public good is disregarded in the conflicts of rival parties, and that measures are too often decided, not according to the rules of justice and the rights of the minor party, but by the superior force of an interested and overbearing majority. However anxiously we may wish that these complaints had no foundation, the evidence, of known facts will not permit us to deny that they are in some degree true. It will be found, indeed, on a candid review of our situation, that some of the distresses under which we labor have been erroneously charged on the operation of our governments; but it will be found, at the same time, that other causes will not alone account for many of our heaviest misfortunes; and, particularly, for that prevailing and increasing distrust of public engagements, and alarm for private rights, which are echoed from one end of the continent to the other. These must be chiefly, if not wholly, effects of the unsteadiness and injustice with which a factious spirit has tainted our public administrations.

By a faction, I understand a number of citizens, whether amounting to a majority or a minority of the whole, who are united and actuated by some common impulse of passion, or of interest, adverse to the rights of other citizens, or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.

There are two methods of curing the mischiefs of faction: the one, by removing its causes; the other, by controlling its effects.

There are again two methods of removing the causes of faction: the one, by destroying the liberty which is essential to its existence; the other, by giving to every citizen the same opinions, the same passions, and the same interests.

## Federalist No. 10, cont'd.

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It could never be more truly said than of the first remedy, that it was worse than the disease. Liberty is to faction what air is to fire, an aliment without which it instantly expires. But it could not be less folly to abolish liberty, which is essential to political life, because it nourishes faction, than it would be to wish the annihilation of air, which is essential to animal life, because it imparts to fire its destructive agency.

The second expedient is as impracticable as the first would be unwise. As long as the reason of man continues fallible, and he is at liberty to exercise it, different opinions will be formed. As long as the connection subsists between his reason and his self-love, his opinions and his passions will have a reciprocal influence on each other; and the former will be objects to which the latter will attach themselves. The diversity in the faculties of men, from which the rights of property originate, is not less an insuperable obstacle to a uniformity of interests. The protection of these faculties is the first object of government. From the protection of different and unequal faculties of acquiring property, the possession of different degrees and kinds of property immediately results; and from the influence of these on the sentiments and views of the respective proprietors, ensues a division of the society into different interests and parties.

The latent causes of faction are thus sown in the nature of man; and we see them everywhere brought into different degrees of activity, according to the different circumstances of civil society. A zeal for different opinions concerning religion, concerning government, and many other points, as well of speculation as of practice; an attachment to different leaders ambitiously contending for pre-eminence and power; or to persons of other descriptions whose fortunes have been interesting to the human passions, have, in turn, divided mankind into parties, inflamed them with mutual animosity, and rendered them much more disposed to vex and oppress each other than to co-operate for their common good. So strong is this propensity of mankind to fall into mutual animosities, that where no substantial occasion presents itself, the most frivolous and fanciful distinctions have been sufficient to kindle their unfriendly passions and excite their most violent conflicts. But the most common and durable source of factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society. Those who are creditors, and those who are debtors, fall under a like discrimination. A landed interest, a manufacturing interest, a mercantile interest, a moneyed interest, with many lesser interests, grow up of necessity in civilized nations, and divide them into different classes, actuated by different sentiments and views. The regulation of these various and interfering interests forms the principal task of modern legislation, and involves the spirit of party and faction in the necessary and ordinary operations of the government.

No man is allowed to be a judge in his own cause, because his interest would certainly bias his judgment, and, not improbably, corrupt his integrity. With equal, nay with greater reason, a body of men are unfit to be both judges and parties at the same time; yet what are many of the most important acts of legislation, but so many judicial determinations, not indeed concerning the rights of single persons, but concerning the rights of large bodies of citizens? And what are the different classes of legislators but advocates and parties to the causes which they determine? Is a law proposed concerning private debts? It is a question to which the creditors are parties on one side and the debtors on the other. Justice ought to hold the balance between them. Yet the parties are, and must be, themselves the judges; and the most numerous party, or, in other words, the most powerful faction must be expected to prevail. Shall domestic manufactures be encouraged, and in what degree, by restrictions on foreign manufactures? are questions which would be differently decided by the landed and the manufacturing classes, and probably by neither with a sole regard to justice and the public good. The apportionment of taxes on the various descriptions of property is an act which seems to require the most exact impartiality; yet there is, perhaps, no legislative act in which greater opportunity and temptation are given to a predominant party to trample on the rules of justice. Every shilling with which they overburden the inferior number, is a shilling saved to their own pockets.

It is in vain to say that enlightened statesmen will be able to adjust these clashing interests, and render them all subservient to the public good. Enlightened statesmen will not always be at the helm. Nor, in many cases, can such an adjustment be made at all without taking into view indirect and remote considerations, which will rarely prevail over the immediate interest which one party may find in disregarding the rights of another or the good of the whole.

The inference to which we are brought is, that the CAUSES of faction cannot be removed, and that relief is only to be sought in the means of controlling its EFFECTS.

## Federalist No. 10, cont'd.

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If a faction consists of less than a majority, relief is supplied by the republican principle, which enables the majority to defeat its sinister views by regular vote. It may clog the administration, it may convulse the society; but it will be unable to execute and mask its violence under the forms of the Constitution. When a majority is included in a faction, the form of popular government, on the other hand, enables it to sacrifice to its ruling passion or interest both the public good and the rights of other citizens. To secure the public good and private rights against the danger of such a faction, and at the same time to preserve the spirit and the form of popular government, is then the great object to which our inquiries are directed. Let me add that it is the great desideratum by which this form of government can be rescued from the opprobrium under which it has so long labored, and be recommended to the esteem and adoption of mankind.

By what means is this object attainable? Evidently by one of two only. Either the existence of the same passion or interest in a majority at the same time must be prevented, or the majority, having such coexistent passion or interest, must be rendered, by their number and local situation, unable to concert and carry into effect schemes of oppression. If the impulse and the opportunity be suffered to coincide, we well know that neither moral nor religious motives can be relied on as an adequate control. They are not found to be such on the injustice and violence of individuals, and lose their efficacy in proportion to the number combined together, that is, in proportion as their efficacy becomes needful.

From this view of the subject it may be concluded that a pure democracy, by which I mean a society consisting of a small number of citizens, who assemble and administer the government in person, can admit of no cure for the mischiefs of faction. A common passion or interest will, in almost every case, be felt by a majority of the whole; a communication and concert result from the form of government itself; and there is nothing to check the inducements to sacrifice the weaker party or an obnoxious individual. Hence it is that such democracies have ever been spectacles of turbulence and contention; have ever been found incompatible with personal security or the rights of property; and have in general been as short in their lives as they have been violent in their deaths. Theoretic politicians, who have patronized this species of government, have erroneously supposed that by reducing mankind to a perfect equality in their political rights, they would, at the same time, be perfectly equalized and assimilated in their possessions, their opinions, and their passions.

A republic, by which I mean a government in which the scheme of representation takes place, opens a different prospect, and promises the cure for which we are seeking. Let us examine the points in which it varies from pure democracy, and we shall comprehend both the nature of the cure and the efficacy which it must derive from the Union.

The two great points of difference between a democracy and a republic are: first, the delegation of the government, in the latter, to a small number of citizens elected by the rest; secondly, the greater number of citizens, and greater sphere of country, over which the latter may be extended.

The effect of the first difference is, on the one hand, to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens, whose wisdom may best discern the true interest of their country, and whose patriotism and love of justice will be least likely to sacrifice it to temporary or partial considerations. Under such a regulation, it may well happen that the public voice, pronounced by the representatives of the people, will be more consonant to the public good than if pronounced by the people themselves, convened for the purpose. On the other hand, the effect may be inverted. Men of factious tempers, of local prejudices, or of sinister designs, may, by intrigue, by corruption, or by other means, first obtain the suffrages, and then betray the interests, of the people. The question resulting is, whether small or extensive republics are more favorable to the election of proper guardians of the public weal; and it is clearly decided in favor of the latter by two obvious considerations:

In the first place, it is to be remarked that, however small the republic may be, the representatives must be raised to a certain number, in order to guard against the cabals of a few; and that, however large it may be, they must be limited to a certain number, in order to guard against the confusion of a multitude. Hence, the number of representatives in the two cases not being in proportion to that of the two constituents, and being proportionally greater in the small republic, it follows that, if the proportion of fit characters be not less in the large than in the small republic, the former will present a greater option, and consequently a greater probability of a fit choice.

## Federalist No. 10, cont'd.

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In the next place, as each representative will be chosen by a greater number of citizens in the large than in the small republic, it will be more difficult for unworthy candidates to practice with success the vicious arts by which elections are too often carried; and the suffrages of the people being more free, will be more likely to centre in men who possess the most attractive merit and the most diffusive and established characters.

It must be confessed that in this, as in most other cases, there is a mean, on both sides of which inconveniences will be found to lie. By enlarging too much the number of electors, you render the representatives too little acquainted with all their local circumstances and lesser interests; as by reducing it too much, you render him unduly attached to these, and too little fit to comprehend and pursue great and national objects. The federal Constitution forms a happy combination in this respect; the great and aggregate interests being referred to the national, the local and particular to the State legislatures.

The other point of difference is, the greater number of citizens and extent of territory which may be brought within the compass of republican than of democratic government; and it is this circumstance principally which renders factious combinations less to be dreaded in the former than in the latter. The smaller the society, the fewer probably will be the distinct parties and interests composing it; the fewer the distinct parties and interests, the more frequently will a majority be found of the same party; and the smaller the number of individuals composing a majority, and the smaller the compass within which they are placed, the more easily will they concert and execute their plans of oppression. Extend the sphere, and you take in a greater variety of parties and interests; you make it less probable that a majority of the whole will have a common motive to invade the rights of other citizens; or if such a common motive exists, it will be more difficult for all who feel it to discover their own strength, and to act in unison with each other. Besides other impediments, it may be remarked that, where there is a consciousness of unjust or dishonorable purposes, communication is always checked by distrust in proportion to the number whose concurrence is necessary.

Hence, it clearly appears, that the same advantage which a republic has over a democracy, in controlling the effects of faction, is enjoyed by a large over a small republic,—is enjoyed by the Union over the States composing it. Does the advantage consist in the substitution of representatives whose enlightened views and virtuous sentiments render them superior to local prejudices and schemes of injustice? It will not be denied that the representation of the Union will be most likely to possess these requisite endowments. Does it consist in the greater security afforded by a greater variety of parties, against the event of any one party being able to outnumber and oppress the rest? In an equal degree does the increased variety of parties comprised within the Union, increase this security. Does it, in fine, consist in the greater obstacles opposed to the concert and accomplishment of the secret wishes of an unjust and interested majority? Here, again, the extent of the Union gives it the most palpable advantage.

The influence of factious leaders may kindle a flame within their particular States, but will be unable to spread a general conflagration through the other States. A religious sect may degenerate into a political faction in a part of the Confederacy; but the variety of sects dispersed over the entire face of it must secure the national councils against any danger from that source. A rage for paper money, for an abolition of debts, for an equal division of property, or for any other improper or wicked project, will be less apt to pervade the whole body of the Union than a particular member of it; in the same proportion as such a malady is more likely to taint a particular county or district, than an entire State.

In the extent and proper structure of the Union, therefore, we behold a republican remedy for the diseases most incident to republican government. And according to the degree of pleasure and pride we feel in being republicans, ought to be our zeal in cherishing the spirit and supporting the character of Federalists.

PUBLIUS.

# Carole L. Hahn, “Student Views of Democracy: The Good and Bad News”

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FOR THE MOST PART, U.S. ninth graders are well on their way to being knowledgeable, caring, engaged citizens when compared to their peers internationally. That is the good news. The bad news is that within this generally positive picture, some groups of students consistently perform poorly on tests of civic knowledge. Furthermore, sizable numbers of young people are not supportive of democratic principles in particular contexts. But there are a number of ways in which social studies instruction in the United States can be improved to better prepare youth for citizenship in a global age.

## **Civic Knowledge and Social Studies**

This mixed picture of student views of democracy emerges from the recent international study of young people’s civic knowledge, attitudes, and experiences conducted under the auspices of the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). First, the good news: on the overall IEA test of civic knowledge, U.S. students performed above the international mean (1). Moreover, U.S. students did exceptionally well on the items that measured such skills as the ability to comprehend political messages, interpret political cartoons, and distinguish fact from opinion. On the civic skills subscale of the IEA test, U.S. students scored significantly higher than did students in the other participating countries. For example, 83 percent of U.S. students could correctly interpret a political leaflet, compared to 65 percent internationally. On the subscale measuring knowledge of content, U.S. students did not differ from the international average. For example, the percentage of U.S. students who understood the function of political parties (72 percent) was close to the international average of 75 percent.

Along with their peers in 27 other countries, a nationally representative sample of 2,811 U.S. ninth graders were assessed in October 1999 on their civic knowledge (including content and skills), concepts, attitudes, and experiences. In addition, a school administrator in each of the 124 public and private schools that the students attended completed a school questionnaire. Data from those questionnaires make up the second phase of a two-phase study of civic education. (2)

In the first phase of the research, case studies of civic education were developed for each of the participating countries. (3) The U.S. case study provides a context for the findings in Phase 2. (4) For example, we found that most fourteen-year-olds in the United States are not likely to have had a specific course in civics or government. Nevertheless, U.S. ninth graders are likely to have acquired considerable information about democracy and democratic institutions from elementary and middle school social studies lessons about the nation’s political history and about the structure and function of government. That point was reinforced in Phase 2, in which 70 percent of ninth graders reported studying the U.S. Constitution and Congress at some time over the previous year. (5) Of course, social studies lessons are not the only means by which youth acquire ideas about democracy and citizenship. But they are important.

Students who reported studying social studies almost daily performed better on the three achievement measures—overall knowledge and the subscales measuring civic skills and content—than did students who studied social studies only twice a week or less. (6) That is important when we consider that only 65 percent of the ninth graders reported studying social studies almost daily. In some states and numerous districts, social studies is not required every year that students are in school. Indeed, only 55 percent of the principals reported that a civic-related subject, such as social studies, was required of ninth graders. In another study, researchers found that only 17 percent of students take a course specifically in civics or government in the ninth grade. (7)

## **Social Inequities**

Troubling findings from the IEA civic education (CivEd) study indicate that a student’s socioeconomic class and race or ethnicity matter in learning about democracy and democratic principles. Students who attend schools in which more than 25 percent of their students are eligible for the free and reduced lunch program did less well on the achievement measures (skills, content, and overall knowledge) than did students in schools with fewer than 25 percent of their students eligible for the program. Performance on the test was related also to home literacy

## Student Views of Democracy: The Good and Bad News, cont'd.

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resources and parents' education. That is, students who came from homes with many books and a daily newspaper (a proxy for socioeconomic level), as well as students whose parents completed more years of school, did better on the test than did students without those resources. Additionally, ninth graders who had high expectations for their own continued education did well on the CivEd assessment. That is, students who expected to complete eight or more years of school (presumably, completing college) did better than did those who expected to drop out of high school or end their formal schooling at high school graduation. (8) Similarly, in reviewing the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) in civics, researchers have repeatedly concluded that socioeconomic variables are associated with civic achievement. (9)

Race and ethnicity are also related to civic achievement. White and multiracial students scored higher, on average, than did black and Hispanic students on CivEd's three measures of civic knowledge. (10) In addition, Asian students scored higher than did black students on the three measures and higher than did Hispanics on the content subscale. These findings, like those on socioeconomic status, are consistent with findings from NAEP. (11)

In a nation that prides itself in valuing "justice and equality for all," these findings should be of great concern. Although schools cannot carry the full responsibility for overcoming economic and racial inequalities, there is much they can do. And there is much that social studies educators in particular can do. In focus-group interviews with teachers for the Phase 1 case study, it was apparent that the quality of social studies instruction provided to students varies by the socioeconomic level of the local community. In schools in urban areas serving large numbers of students from low-income families and students of color, social studies is often characterized as "drill-and-kill."

Ironically, out of a genuine concern for students' poor reading abilities and a realization that many students were not likely to read their social studies textbooks at home, teachers told us that they tried to meet student needs—but at a cost. One teacher explained that he was doing the best he could under the circumstances; he spent most class time having students read the textbook and answer questions at the end of the chapter to ensure that they understood what they read. He was aware that, as a consequence, his students were not engaged in discussions or other activities. (12) Other teachers in urban schools explained that the school as a whole put such an emphasis on order and discipline that the school atmosphere was authoritarian rather than democratic, and students were not encouraged to express their hews in class discussions. We did not hear such reports from teachers in suburban schools. Instead, they described a rich variety of in-class and out-of-class activities that enhanced students' civic education.

It is time that NCSS and social studies educators give top priority to addressing these inequalities. Rather than acquiesce in politicians' calls to standardize the curriculum or to increase the number of competency tests that are given to students each year, we must insist that all children and youth receive high-quality social studies instruction every day.

### Democratic Attitudes and Social Issues

Students across countries tended to be supportive of rights for women and immigrants, with 70 percent or more indicating support on a variety of items. U.S. students were especially supportive. They, along with students from Norway, Sweden, and Cyprus, scored above the international mean on both the women's rights and immigrants' rights scales. (13) That is good news. Nine out of ten U.S. ninth graders said that they supported women's political rights, that women should have equal political rights to men, and that women should run for political office? That level of support is an improvement over findings in the last IEA civic education study, in which students from the United States were the least supportive of women's political rights among students in the ten countries surveyed. (15)

Additionally, in the recent study, more than 80 percent of U.S. ninth graders said that immigrants should have all of the same rights as everyone else in the country. (16) Students agreed that immigrants should have the opportunity to keep their own customs and life-styles, and that after living in the country for several years, they should have the same opportunity as other citizens to vote in elections. This, too, is good news in a country that prides itself on being "a nation of immigrants."

With respect to student attitudes, however, the news is not all good. Males were significantly less supportive of rights for females than were females. (17) That is consistent with earlier research. (18) In the recent study, students born outside the United States were less supportive of women's rights than were those born in the United States, and black students were less supportive than were white students. (19) Students with fewer books in the home

## Student Views of Democracy: The Good and Bad News, cont'd.

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(an indication of family income and education) were less supportive than were students with more books. Students born in the United States were less supportive of immigrants' rights than were students born outside the country. Furthermore, white students were less likely than were their Hispanic, Asian, and multiracial peers to report a positive attitude toward immigrants' rights. It is easy to dismiss these findings with the assumption that it is natural for people to be more supportive of rights for people like themselves than for those unlike themselves. I believe, however, that we should be concerned with the substantial numbers of ninth graders (between 10 and 20 percent) who are less than fully supportive of rights for "the other." Do students think that rights are a zero-sum game, in which giving others more rights diminishes their own? Do they feel threatened?

These are issues that can and should be addressed by social studies educators. Researchers studying civic tolerance have found that students are more likely to support rights for others—including rights for groups whose beliefs they disagree with—when they do not feel threatened by the group or when they have studied about the application of democratic principles to specific cases. (20)

Social studies educators should confront these issues and give students the opportunity to explore gender and immigration topics in their classes. In the textbook analysis that was conducted as part of Phase 1 of the IEA study in the United States, males outnumbered females sixteen to one in civics and history textbooks for grades 7-9. (21) Other studies reveal that even when women and gender issues are included in civics textbooks, they are not mentioned in classes. (22) Clearly, much work remains to be done.

Furthermore, the textbook analysis, the focus groups, and the Phase 2 survey all point to the fact that many students do not have the opportunity to explore social issues, such as those related to gender and politics, and to immigration policies. Almost one-third of the ninth graders disagreed that teachers encouraged them to discuss political or social issues about which people have different opinions. (23) This is important because social studies researchers have identified benefits associated with controversial issues discussions: the development of political interest, civic tolerance, and critical thinking skills. (24)

### Civic Participation

There is also mixed news with respect to students' current and future civic participation. Many students are already engaged in numerous civic-related activities. Fifty percent of U.S. ninth graders said that they had participated in a voluntary group that helps the community. (25) That percentage was the same as reported by students in the NAEP civics assessment. (26) Furthermore, it was larger than was the percentage reported by students in all of the other twenty-seven countries participating in the IEA CivEd study. (27) Although volunteering to help others in the community may be a healthy sign for the future of a civil society, it does not necessarily mean that young people will grow up to be engaged in political activities or to influence public policies.

One-third of U.S. ninth graders reported participating in student government, and 20 percent had worked on a student newspaper—two school-level avenues for civic participation. More, however, had participated in sports, music (band) or art programs, community service, or religious organizations. Importantly, students who participated in any of these extracurricular activities did better on the civic knowledge part of the IEA CivEd assessment than did students who did not participate in those activities. (28) In Phase 1 focus groups, students told us that they learned much about democracy, rights and responsibilities of citizens, and multicultural diversity from their participation in extracurricular activities. (29) Apparently, participation in extracurricular activities is not merely a culture trait. It is also an important aspect of democratic education.

In other ways, however, U.S. students are not as engaged as they might be—the bad news. For example, although most U.S. ninth graders reported that they obtain news from television and newspapers, the percentages were lower than were percentages reported by students in most other countries. Indeed, only in Bulgaria and England did smaller percentages say that they followed news on television. (30) But social studies teachers can encourage students to keep up with the news and relate class topics to current events. Interestingly, 75 percent of the U.S. students said that current events are discussed in their social studies classes. Apparently, the discussion occurs in such a way that students do not feel a need to follow the news themselves—too often, individual students simply report on an event that they read about or clipped out of a newspaper to meet an assignment. Other studies suggest that when teachers frequently engage students in discussions of controversial issues in the news, students become interested in following the news on their own. (31)

## Student Views of Democracy: The Good and Bad News, cont'd.

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### International Issues

Between 65 and 75 percent of ninth graders reported studying domestic topics, such as Congress, the presidency, and the courts, over the previous year. Fewer than 50 percent reported studying other countries' governments or international organizations. (32) Additionally, U.S. students said that they were less likely to talk about international topics than domestic topics with teachers, family adults, and peers. They were also less likely to follow international than national news on television. (33) Furthermore, few U.S. students had participated in a United Nations or UNESCO club (2 percent) or a human rights organization (6 percent). More—24 percent—participated in an environmental organization. In recent years, when there has been increased discussion about the need for effective civic education, little of that discourse has attended to the need for a global perspective on civic education. This area needs attention if we are to adequately prepare our students to be knowledgeable, involved global citizens.

### The Future

Young people possess emerging images of themselves as adult citizens. For example, 85 percent of U.S. ninth graders say that they expect to vote in national elections when they are adults. (34) Almost 30 percent say that they probably or certainly will write letters to a newspaper about social or political issues. (35) Eighteen percent anticipate being a candidate for local office. The challenge for social studies educators is to build on the idealism of students as they enter high school, so that as graduating seniors they become citizens who vote and express their views on public issues.

A study commissioned by the National Association of Secretaries of State, whose members are responsible for elections, is instructive. (36) Concerned about low voter turnout of eighteen- to twenty-four-year-olds, the organization commissioned a study asking young people why they did not vote. Some young people said that they were embarrassed about not knowing what to do once they were in the voting booth. Others said that they did not feel sufficiently informed about the issues to cast an informed vote. Both of those conditions can be addressed in social studies classes. The second is more difficult than the first, particularly in this age of state tests. It is crucial, however, that social studies educators resist the current pressures to limit instruction to a drill of low-level facts—or even the squeezing out of social studies from the day's schedule. Instead, we must insist on high-quality issues-centered instruction for all of our students. In that way, we may indeed help our young people become the knowledgeable, engaged citizens that they want and expect to be.

### Notes

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(2.) An international team developed the questionnaires over seven years, using a consensus process involving more than twenty countries. The results are reported in two reports—an international report containing international comparisons and analyses of relationships of variables within the twenty-eight countries (Torney-Purta et al., *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries*) and a national report containing U.S. results by various subgroups and information not asked internationally (Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*).

(3.) Carole L. Hahn and Judith Torney-Purta, "The IEA Civic Education Project: National and International Perspectives," *Social Education* 65 (1999): 425-431; Judith Torney-Purta, J. Schwillie, and J. A. Amadeo, eds., *Civic Education across Countries: Twenty-Four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project* (Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 1999).

(4.) Carole L. Hahn, "Challenges to Civic Education in the United States," in *Civic Education across Countries: Twenty-Four National Case Studies from the IEA Civic Education Project*, eds. Judith Torney-Purta, J. Schwillie, and J. A. Amadeo (Amsterdam: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 1999), 583-607; Carole L. Hahn, P. P. Dilworth, M. Hughes, and T. Sen, *IEA Civic Education Project Phase 1: The United States—Responses to the Four Core International Framing Questions, Volume III* (unpublished paper; Available ERIC document reproduction service ED 444 887).

(5.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.

(6.) *Ibid*

(7.) R. Niemi and J. Smith, "Enrollments in High School Government Classes: Are We Short-Changing Both Citizenship and Political Science Training?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 34 (2001): 281-288.

(8.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.

## Student Views of Democracy: The Good and Bad News, cont'd.

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- (9.) L. Anderson, L. Jenkins, J. Leming, W. MacDonald, I. Mullis, and M.J. Turner, *The Civic Report Card* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1990); A. D. Lutkus, A. R. Weiss, J. Campbell, J. Mazzeo, and S. Lazer, *NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation* (Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, 1999); R. Niemi and J. Junn, *Civic Education: What Makes Students Learn* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1998).
- (10.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.
- (11.) Anderson et al., *The Civic Report Card*; Lutkus et al., *NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card* Niemi and Junn, *Civic Education*.
- (12.) Hahn, "Challenges to Civic Education."
- (13.) Torney-Purta et al., *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries*.
- (14.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.
- (15.) J. Torney, A. Oppenheim, and R. R. Farnen, *Civic Education in Ten Countries* (New York: John Wiley, 1975).
- (16.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.
- (17.) *Ibid.*
- (18.) Carole L. Hahn, *Becoming Political: Comparative Perspectives on Citizenship Education* (Albany, N.Y.: SUNY Press, 1998); Torney et al., *Civic Education in Ten Countries*.
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- (20.) Patricia G. Avery, "Political Tolerance among Adolescents," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 16 (1988): 183-201; Patricia G. Avery, K. Bird, S. Johnstone, J. Sullivan, and K. Thalhammer, "Exploring Political Tolerance with Adolescents," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 20 (1992): 386-420.
- (21.) Patricia G. Avery and A. M. Simmons, "Civic Life as Conveyed in U.S. Civics and History Textbooks," *International Journal of Social Education* 15 (2000/2001): 105-130.
- (22.) Carole L. Hahn, "Gender and Political Learning," *Theory and Research in Social Education* 24 (1996): 8-35.
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- (25.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.
- (26.) Lutkus et al., *NAEP 1998 Civics Report Card for the Nation*.
- (27.) Torney-Purta et al., *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries*.
- (28.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*. All of the comparisons in the U.S. report, including this one, did not control for other variables, such as socioeconomic status, home literacy resources, or expected education. It is likely that college-bound students from high socioeconomic status homes and communities may have more access and encouragement to participate in extracurricular activities than their peers.
- (29.) Hahn, "Challenges to Civic Education."
- (30.) Torney-Purta et al., *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries*.
- (31.) Hahn, *Becoming Political*.
- (32.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.
- (33.) *Ibid.*
- (34.) Torney-Purta et al., *Citizenship and Education in Twenty-Eight Countries*.
- (35.) Baldi et al., *What Democracy Means*.
- (36.) National Association of Secretaries of State (NASS), *New Millenium Project: American Youth Attitudes on Politics, Citizenship, Government, and Voting* (Lexington, Ky.: Author, 1999).

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