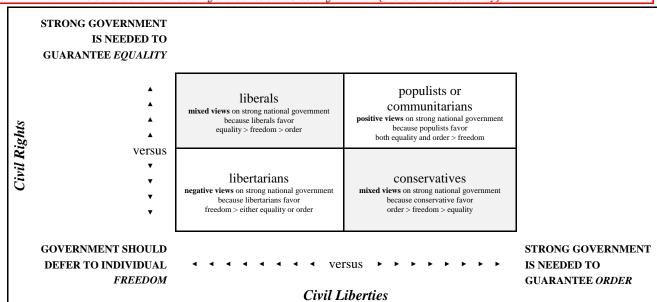
Chapter outline

PLS 101-AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT Part II: The Political Environment

Chapter 6: Public Opinion and the Media

- I. What is public opinion?
 - A. Government policy often at odds with public opinion [b/c of dispersion of power]
 - B. Status of the media
- II. Why do we distrust the federal government?
 - A. Trends: decline (1958 94); rebound (1994 2002); decline (2002) F 6.1, p. 94
 - B. Distrust was more of officials than the system
 - C. Explanations
 - 1. Shortcomings
 - 2. Increased expectations
- III. The origins of political attitudes: political socialization
 - A. The role of the family
 - B. Effects of religion Table 6.1, p. 99
 - C. Education
 - D. The "gender gap" Table 6.2, p. 102
- IV. Cleavages in public opinion
 - A. Occupation
 - B. Race/ethnicity Table 6.3, p. 103
 - C. Region
- V. Political ideology [Wilson's definitions are incorrect (p. 107) we will discuss how so in class]
 - A. Definition of political ideology: a coherent & consistent set of beliefs about what ends or goals government should pursue
 - B. Definition of political *culture*: a coherent & consistent set of beliefs about what *means* government should use to pursue its ends or goals e.g., authoritarian v. constitutional government
 - C. Classification schemes
 - 1. One-dimensional: left (liberal) v. right (conservative) [this is the way Wilson defines them]
 - 2. Two-dimensional: rank ordering of the three basic *ends* of government [this is a much better way]



- D. **Order v. freedom** [when *conservatives* and *populists* favor a *strong* federal government (to protect order) and *liberals* and *libertarians* favor a *more limited* federal government (that is constrained from abridging individual freedoms)]
 - 1. National defense: spending, secrecy, torture, anti-war protest, flag burning, draft resistance,
 - 2. Public morality: abortion, divorce, gay marriage, gays in the military, pornography & obscenity, alcohol & drugs, gambling
 - 3. Separation v. accommodation of church & state
 - a. State-sponsored religious devotions in public schools
 - b. Creationism v. evolution in public school curriculum
 - c. State-funded private religious schools charters & vouchers
 - d. Stem-cell research
 - 4. Foreign trade [protectionist policy]
 - 5. Immigration restrictions
 - 6. Term limits
 - Criminal justice
 - a. Limit rights of those suspected, accused, or convicted of crime
 - b. Death penalty
 - c. Drug suppression
- E. **Equality v. freedom** [when *liberals* and *populists* favor a *strong* federal government (to guarantee equality) and *conservatives* and *libertarians* favor *more limited* federal government (that is constrained from abridging individual freedom)]
 - 1. Public welfare (health care, social security, minimum wage)
 - 2. Public elections (racial gerrymandering, Motor-Voter Act, spending limits & public funding)
 - 3. Public funding of the arts
 - 4. Speech codes
 - 5. Environmental conservation
 - Consumer-product safety
 - 7. Minimum wage
 - 8. Gun control
 - 9. Government mediation of group conflicts
 - a. Race, sexual orientation, & gender (affirmative action)
 - b. Labor-management (closed or union shop)
- F. Problem: many controversies can be defined or perceived in more than one way
 - 1. Civil war
 - a. Abolitionist Republicans saw the issue primarily as equality -- civil rights of blacks
 - b. Lincoln saw the issue primarily as order -- preserving the union
 - Government regulation of the economy
 - Federalists, Whigs, and early Republicans saw the issue primarily as order --protecting property and contract rights and subsidizing nation building
 - Progressive Republicans and New-Deal Democrats saw the issue primarily as *equality* -- providing an economic safety net
- VI. The impact of the media: journalism in American history
- VII. The structure of the media

 $\underline{http://library.uncw.edu/web/research/topic/newspapers/index.html}$

- A. Degree of competition
- B. The national media
- C. The Internet and the World Wide Web
- VIII. Rules governing the media
 - A. Freedom of the press
 - B. Regulation and deregulation
- IX. Government and the news
 - A. Prominence of the president
 - B. Coverage of congress
- X. Interpreting the news Figure 6.2, p. 114
- XI. Are news stories slanted?
 - A. News leaks
 - B. The influence of media opinions on opinion and politics
 - C. The influence of politicians on the media

