CHAPTER 5 - Public Opinion and Political Socialization

The basic definition of public opinion is
* the collective attitudes of citizens on a given issue or question.
the underlying attitude of citizens toward their government.
journalists’ reports about what the public thinks.
support for or opposition to candidates or proposals.
polling and survey results of the population.

Survey methodology did not become a powerful research tool until the
* 1930s.
1950s.
1970s.
1980s.
1990s.

The Framers guessed that the ________ would reflect public opinion, especially on the crucial issues of taxes and
government spending.

president
Supreme Court
U.S. Senate
* House of Representatives
educated classes

Which of the following statements reflects the role public opinion should play according to the majoritarian model of
democracy?
Public opinion should play a much smaller role than it would play in the pluralist model.
Groups with different opinions should be allowed to clash openly over government policy.
Public opinion is less important than the opinions of experts.
* Government should do what a majority of the public wants.
A majority of the public is ill-informed on the issues, which means the role of public opinion should be increased.

The goal of the statistical theory of sampling is

to match the sampler’s views with a public response.
to obtain the view of every individual in the population.
to account for wide variances in public opinion on controversial issues.
to obtain a large enough sample size to avoid bias.
* to reflect the views of the population with some predictable degree of accuracy.

Today, the mass media conduct most polls by
face-to-face interviews.
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*telephone.
mail surveys.
the Internet.
mail surveys and the Internet.

The accuracy of the population sample used for public opinion polls depends on
whether telephoning or direct contact is used to draw the sample.
the care with which questions are written and asked.
whether computers are used to draw the sample.
the factors of believability and reliability.
*randomness of selection, size of sample, and variation in the population.

Recently, media outlets have started including _______ in their samples, particularly in response to the habits of younger Americans.
interest groups
more people
more urban residents
cable viewers
*cell phones

One of the nation’s oldest polls, the __________, was started in the 1930s, and was most notably wrong in 1948 when it predicted that Thomas Dewey, the Republican candidate, would defeat the Democratic incumbent, Harry Truman in the presidential election.
Harris Poll
Zogby Poll
Field Poll
CBS Poll
*Gallup Poll

A typical Gallup national poll surveys approximately ______ individuals.
50
*1,500
3,000
4,500
10,000

In nineteen presidential elections since 1936, Gallup polls have deviated from actual results by
*less than 1.0 percentage point.
about 3 percentage points.
about 6 percentage points.
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about 10 percentage points.
about 15 percentage points.

Public opinion polls can be criticized on the grounds that
a survey of a few thousand people cannot possibly yield an accurate picture of American attitudes.
there is clear evidence that polling organizations falsify results.
politicians pay no attention to poll results.
*the way a pollster words a question can determine the answer.
the entities that finance administration of the poll skew results for a certain desired outcome.

A symmetrical, bell-shaped distribution around a single mode is called a
stable distribution.
*normal distribution.
skewed distribution.
bimodal distribution.
modality.

A distribution of opinions that shows little change over time is a
normal
consistent
modal
*stable
skewed

When Americans are asked to identify themselves on left-right ideological scales (liberal, moderate, or conservative), the
data plotted on a graph is a(n)
*normal distribution.
skewed distribution.
bimodal distribution.
unstable distribution.
reliable distribution.

Since surveying the American public about ideology began, the ideological distribution of the public has become
somewhat more moderate.
skewed toward liberalism.
*skewed toward conservatism.
more bimodal.
more normal.

Today, university students are much more _________ than the general public.
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conservative
moderate
*liberal
alienated
Republican

The process whereby one becomes aware of politics, learns political facts, and forms political values is called political norming.
ideological awakening.
political coming-of-age.
systems building.
*political socialization.

Generally, the first agent of political socialization that people are exposed to is school.
their peers.
*family.
television.
the Internet.

Children are likely to adopt their parents’ party identification when parents discuss party politics with children.
parents refrain from forcing their views on children.
at least one parent has worked for a party.
both parents vote regularly.
*both parents strongly identify with the same party.

The major agents of early socialization in the United States are religion and social class.
family, religion, and political party.
*family, school, community, and peers.
school and social class.
economics, television, and the Internet.

When elementary schools introduce students to authority figures outside the family, like the teacher, they prepare students for the value of ________; when they stress norms of democratic decision making and respecting the opinions of others, they teach ________.
order; freedom
*order; equality
freedom; order
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equality; order
equality; freedom

The first political institution that young children tend to focus on is the
*president.
Congress.
Supreme Court.
political party system.
Constitution.

Pressure on an individual to conform to community values or views is strongest when
community values are consistent with modern culture.
schools are involved in socialization.
*the community is homogeneous.
competing values are present.
corruption in local government occurs.

As parental and school influences wane in adulthood, ________ emerge as more important socialization agents.adult
peer groupspolitical partiesthe mass media
the current presidents
*adult peer groups and the mass media.

Individuals with higher education and income tend to favor _______ over ________.
*freedom; order or equality
order; freedom
equality; freedom
conservatives; libertarians
government guarantees of employment; a more limited government role

In the presidential elections since 1968, the South has tended to vote
for Democratic candidates.
for Independent candidates.
*for Republican candidates.
for Republican and Independent candidates about equally.
for Democratic and Independent candidates about equally.

Which of the following statements concerning Latinos is incorrect?
Latinos are defined as people of Latin American origin.
*Latinos are a racial group.
Latinos are projected to be 20 percent of the nation’s population by 2030.
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Latinos have lagged behind African Americans in gaining political office. Latinos favor government restrictions on abortion more than other groups.

The contemporary political “gender gap” refers to the tendency of women to
*identify more with the Democratic Party than men do.
vote less than men do.
favor female candidates for office over male candidates.
pay less attention to politics than men do.
vote more for Republican candidates than men do.

The set of values and beliefs that a person holds about the purpose and scope of government is called
*political ideology.
party identification.
liberalism or conservatism.
political socialization.
communalism.

In the current American context, a liberal would tend to promote
*economic equality ahead of freedom, and freedom ahead of social order.
freedom ahead of economic equality, and social order ahead of freedom.
freedom ahead of both economic equality and social order.
both economic equality and social order ahead of freedom.
business and government policy ahead of social order.

A libertarian is most likely to exhibit the characteristics of
low education and high income.
low education and low income.
low income and high education.
*high income and high education.
moderate education and moderate income.

According to the self-interest principle, people tend to
*choose what benefits them personally.
have only a vague notion of how political ideology impacts policy outcomes.
misunderstand costs and benefits of different policies.
be inflexible in their ideology.
select policy options based on their perception of the greatest good for the greatest number.