

Political Socialization

- **Political Socialization** – Refers to the process by which the central values of the political culture are transmitted from one generation to another.

Agents of Socialization

- **Agents of Socialization** – The persons by which and the setting in which the process of political socialization is accomplished.
 - Family
 - Schools
 - Church
 - Friends

Socialization Groupings

- I. **Primary groups**
 - Individuals closest to you
 - Family, friends
- II. **Secondary groups**
 - Organizations
 - Churches, professional groups
- III. **Social classes**
 - Lower, working class, middle class, etc.

Socialization Across Time

- I. **Life-cycle Effect** – how a person's beliefs and behavior change over time
 - Example – Political view prior to having a family vs. the views after having a family
- II. **Period Effect** – One historical event impacts an entire society.
 - Example – Great Depression
- III. **Cohort Effect** – One historical event impacts a specific group of people.
 - Example – Vietnam War on men of draft age

Agents of Socialization

- Family
 - Most important agent of socialization
 - Families have similar political views
 - Children hold same party affiliation as parents
- Schools
 - Schools pass on American political values
 - Similar peer groups

Agents of Socialization, continued

- Religion
 - Catholics
 - Liberal economics/social conservatives
 - Protestant
 - Conservative economics & social issues
 - Jewish
 - Liberal economics & social issues

Agents of Socialization, continued

- Religion – why party affiliation
 - Social Status Theory
 - Catholics & Jews – Associated with the Democratic Party because used to be poor and therefore democratic.
 - Religious Tradition Theory
 - The moral teachings of each religion guides their party affiliation.
 - Jews – Social justice
 - Protestants – Personal salvation

Agents of Socialization, continued

- Mass Media
 - Influenced by what they report

Socio-Demographic Influences

- Schooling/Education
 - Lower educated individuals have less political information
- Regional
 - Regional influences on culture and religion
 - Example – South vs. Northeast

Socio-Demographic Influences, continued

- Race
 - African-Americans more liberal and democratic
 - Whites more Republican
- Gender
 - Support social measures
 - Example – gun control
 - Gender Gap
 - Women more democratic

Political Parties

- **LIBERTARIANISM**
 - Core beliefs
 - Extreme individual liberty
 - Extreme limited government
 - Elements of Anarchism – belief in no government
 - But need for criminal justice, defense

Political Parties, continued

- **LIBERTARIANISM**
 - Policy positions
 - Oppose government programs
 - Support cuts in gov't spending
 - Eliminate FBI & CIA
 - Favor U.S. defense system, but no overseas involvement
 - Favor individual liberties

Political Parties, continued

■ **Socialism**

- Gov't ownership of means of production
- Policy positions
 - Nationalization of major industries
 - Higher taxes
 - Cut defense spending
 - Favor individual liberty

Political Parties, continued

■ **Liberalism** (Democrats)

- Philosophical Background
 - Positive view of human nature
 - People are naturally good
 - Society should provide equality

Political Parties, continued

■ **Liberalism**

- Policy positions
 - Support
 - Welfare
 - Food stamps
 - Housing
 - Health care
 - Affirmative action
 - Free speech
 - Abortion
 - Individual morality

Political Parties, continued

■ **Liberalism**

- Criticisms
 - Too much government
 - Government becomes too big
 - Undermines self-help tradition
 - Rely too much on the government

Political Parties, continued

■ **Conservatism** (Republican)

- Philosophical Background
 - Pessimistic view of human nature
 - People need to be guided by a moral code
 - Personal responsibility
 - Market economics
- Policy positions
 - Strong defense
 - Lower taxes
 - Limited gov't
 - Anti-Abortion

Political Parties, continued

■ **Conservatism**

- New Right
 - Christian Conservatives/Moral Right
 - Emphasis on moral issues
 - School prayer
 - Pro-family
 - Pro-life
 - Anti-gay

Political Parties, continued

■ **Conservatism**

- Criticisms
 - Selective opposition to government
 - Too much emphasis on market economics
 - Race and sexism
