

1.1

Ideals of Democracy

Explain how democratic ideals are reflected in the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution.

1. Enlightenment thinkers stressed the importance of governments protecting natural rights. In the state of nature one can find popular sovereignty. This belief resulted in a desire to make all governments beholden to

- a. The divine right of kings
- b. The consent of the governed
- c. The hierarchy of wealth and privilege
- d. Centralized legal systems

2. One of the true ancestors of American government was Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). In *Leviathan* (1651), Hobbes wrote of the imperative need for a social contract with adequate checks and balances because in “the state of nature” mankind was

- a. “Enlightened and enchanted”
- b. “Rational and unsentimental”
- c. “Nasty and brutish”
- d. “Noble and magnanimous”

3. *“No freeman shall be taken, imprisoned, disused, outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed, nor will we proceed against or prosecute him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land...”* This early affirmation of the rights of men based upon the rule of law can be found in

- a. Plato’s *Republic*, 380 BC
- b. The Magna Charta, 1215
- c. *The Prince* by Machiavelli, 1532
- d. Hobbes’ *Leviathan*, 1651

4. *“Men being, as has been said, by nature, all free, equal and independent, no one can be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent.”*

In this quote from the *Second Treatise on Government* (1690), John Locke was clearly advocating for

- a. Popular sovereignty
- b. Separation of powers
- c. Checks and balances
- d. Federalism

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John Locke wrote this in the *Second Treatise on Government* (1690). If he were alive today he would be pleased to know that

- a. Our House of Representatives is directly elected
- b. Congress declares war but the President is the commander-in-chief
- c. The House of Representatives can impeach sitting judges
- d. The Tenth Amendment protects states’ rights

6. "When the legislative and executive powers are united in the same person, or in the same body of magistrates, there can be no liberty; because apprehensions may arise, lest the same monarch or senate should enact tyrannical laws, to execute them in a tyrannical manner."

In this quote from *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), Montesquieu was clearly advocating for

- a. Popular sovereignty
- b. Separation of powers
- c. Checks and balances
- d. Federalism

7. The American offspring of Montesquieu's writing in *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748) can best be seen the following example

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- d. The Tenth Amendment protects states' rights

8. This transformative document has been and continues to be used as a manifesto of freedom to oppressed peoples around the world.

- a. Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748)
- b. *The Mayflower Compact* (1620)
- c. *The Declaration of Independence* (1776)
- d. *The U.S. Constitution* (1789)

9. The Declaration of Independence (1776) contained an argument that government should preserve

- a. Both liberty and equality
- b. Liberty but not equality
- c. Equality but not liberty
- d. Political rights but not economic rights

10. This seminal document established the essential blue print for a unique form of political democracy in America. Even today it can be cited as the longest lasting and most durable government charter in human history.

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Critical Thinking Prompt:

What are the advantages and disadvantages of a government based upon a written code rather than a routine plebiscite? Should the age of the written code matter?