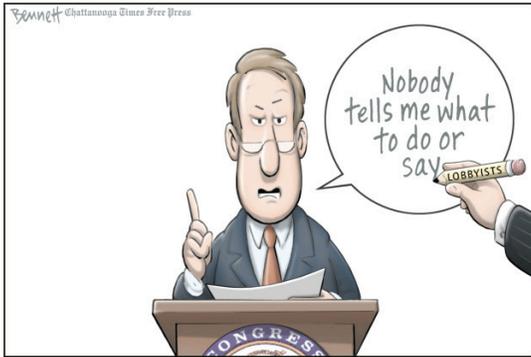


1.2 Types of Democracy



**ESSENTIALS**

1. Representative democracies can take several forms along this scale: Participatory democracy/Pluralist democracy/Elite democracy
2. Different aspects of the U.S. Constitution as well as the debate between Federalists and Anti-Federalists in Federalist 10 and Brutus I reflect the tension between the broad participatory and the more filtered participation of the pluralist and elite models.
3. The three models of representative democracy continue to be reflected in contemporary institutions and political behavior.

**Should our elected officials do what they think is best or merely represent what “we the people” want?** Answer as if you were in Philadelphia in 1787 at the constitutional convention. Would the answer be different today? Explain.

**Representative democracies can take several forms along this scale:  
Participatory democracy/Pluralist democracy/Elite democracy**

Provide an advantage and disadvantage for each of the following forms of democracy. Find a contemporary example for each:

*Participatory*

Advantage

Disadvantage

Example

*Pluralist*

Advantage

Disadvantage

Example

*Elite*

Advantage

Disadvantage

Example

What form of democracy **is** most prevalent in the United States today?  
 What form of democracy **should be** most prevalent in the United States today?

**YESTERDAY. TODAY. FOREVER. Use the three models of representative government to answer the following three prompts:  
Participatory democracy/Pluralist democracy/Elite democracy**

What model did our Founding Fathers prefer?

What model do you prefer?

Investigate the impact of direct referendums on state and local policy-making. Find examples. Would you like to see national referendums? Explain

**CONCEPT APPLICATION QUESTION**

At the heart of the elitist theory is a clear presumption of the average citizen's inadequacies. As a consequence, democratic systems must rely on the wisdom, loyalty and skill of their political leaders, not on the population at large. The political system is divided into two groups: the elite, or the "political entrepreneurs," who possess ideological commitments and manipulative skills; and the citizens at large, the masses, or the "apolitical clay," of the system, a much larger class of passive, inert followers who have little knowledge of public affairs and even less interest. The factor that distinguishes democratic and authoritarian systems, according to this view, is the provision for limited, peaceful competition among members of the elite for the formal positions of leadership within the system. As Joseph Schumpeter summarized the theory; "the democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people's vote."

Source: Jack L. Walker, *A Critique of the Elitist Theory of Democracy*, *The American Political Science Review*, June 1966

- A. Describe the presumption behind the primacy of elitist democratic theory.
- B. In the context of the scenario, explain how the presumption discussed in (A) is affected by legal protections found in federal legislation or the U.S. Constitution.
- C. Explain why current Congressional elections are often uncompetitive, and discuss why, in the context of this scenario, this is a problem.