Public Opinion

• Your opinions

Introduction

Sources of Public Opinion

• Political socialization
• Family
• Genes
• Personality
  – Big 5
  – Moral values
• School

Sources of Public Opinion

• Peers
• Media
• Adult Socialization

Measuring Public Opinion

• Public opinion surveys
• Random Samples

TABLE 6.2  Education and Public Opinion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>GRADE SCHOOL</th>
<th>HIGH SCHOOL</th>
<th>SOME COLLEGE</th>
<th>COLLEGE GRAD.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Women and men should have equal rights.</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>83%</td>
<td>86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Abortion should never be allowed.</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The government should adopt national health insurance.</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The United States should not concern itself with other nations’ problems.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Government should use to set treatment in jobs for African Americans.</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Government should provide fewer services to reduce government spending.</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTES: The American National Election Studies, 2008 data, is provided by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, University of Michigan.
Measuring Public Opinion

- Margin of Error
- Polling controversies
- Question wording
  - An example
- Non-attitudes and weak attitudes
- Do people actually know what they believe?
- Measuring opinion in elections
  - Weighting
  - What happened in 2016?!

Sample Size and Sample Error

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sampling Margin</th>
<th>.95 confidence</th>
<th>.99 confidence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>± 1</td>
<td>10,000</td>
<td>22,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>± 2</td>
<td>2500</td>
<td>5625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>± 3</td>
<td>1111</td>
<td>2500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>± 4</td>
<td>625</td>
<td>1406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>± 5</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>± 10</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How Much Do Americans Know?

- Not much
- Demographics and political knowledge
- Misinformation
- Policy paradox

How Much Do Americans Know?

- How much do you know?
  - Pew news quiz

Political Ideology

- Defining ideology
- Dimensions of ideology
- Liberal ideology
- Conservative ideology
- Your ideology?
- Labels vs. Beliefs (symbolic vs. operational)
- Motivated reasoning
Group Differences

- Gender
- Age
- Class
- Race
- Region
- Religion

Relationship between public opinion and public policy

- How much influence?
- Influence of public on government
  - Ability to govern
  - Role of intensity
- Influence of government on public
  - Presidential agenda
  - Elite leadership & Elite framing