

35-Interest Groups

Public opinion-generic term for what the majority of the public believes about an issue, can be very misleading (questions can be skewed by changing the wording)

Interest Groups

-a group of people who have similar interests or concerns about an issue

Bias

-a term that refers to a one sided opinion on an issue

Impartial-having no set opinion on an issue

Forming Opinions

Many factors influence public opinion

Mass media-TV, magazines, major internet sites, social media, etc.

Public officials-ex. President

Special interest groups-ex. NRA

Types of Interest Groups

Economic Groups

Business organizations, professional organizations, labor unions

Specific Groups of People

Ethnic-ex.

Age-Ex.

Sex-Ex.

Particular Causes-ex.

Measuring Public Opinion

Public Opinion Polls

Random Samples

-polling method where attempts are made to include a wide segment of the population so that the poll is not biased

Effects of polls-Ex. Frontrunner effect

Lobbying

-the act of trying to influence people on the behalf of an interest group

Functions of interest groups

Give information, represent their members, support certain candidates that support their interests

Lobbyists work at all levels of government.

Regulation of Lobbying

Past activities of lobbyists have been unethical/illegal

Government regulation

-to prevent bribery and corruption
-must report lobbying activities