

Outline Topic III

DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

I. Assumptions of Democratic Citizenship.

Citizens must be:

- **Active**
- **Informed**
- **Tolerant**
- **Rational**

II. American Citizens Not Very Active

- A. Voting -- The lower the level of the election, the less people participate**
- B. Other Electoral Activities --No more than 25% of citizens ever are involved in campaigns.**
- C. Non-Electoral Activities**
 - **Contacting Public Officials**
 - **Attend public meetings**
 - **Political Protest Activities**
 - **Communal (i.e. Group activities)**
- D. Following Politics in News and on TV**
- E. Levels of Political Involvement**
 - **Gladiators**
 - **Transitionals**
 - **Spectators**
 - **Apathetics**

III. The Quality of Participation is Poor

A. American's not well informed about government and politics

- **Less Knowledge about local than national politics**
- **Elites know more than masses**

B. American's has a mixed record on tolerance

- **History of Intolerance -- racism, anti-Semitism, lynchings, the Klan,**
- **Substantial support for minority rights in the abstract**
- **Much less support for the rights of specific minorities**
- **Elites more tolerant of minority rights than masses**
- **Or Are They? Different Objects of Hate**

C. American's not very rational

D. Citizens of other nation's are as bad or even worse.

IV. But Why is Citizenship So Weak

A. Elitists emphasizes two explanations:

- **Human Nature**
- **Satisfaction with the Status Quo**

B. Democrats emphasize

The undemocratic nature of the political system (i.e. We are taught through experience that the Political System does not respond to us.)

V. Why don't citizens participate more.

A. Who Votes and Who Doesn't?

- **Socioeconomic Status**
 - **Income**
 - **Education**
 - **Occupation**

- **Age**

- **Race**

- **Sex**

- **Ethnicity**

- **Urban, rural, suburban**

Opportunity vs Motivation

B. Limits on Political Opportunity

1. Formal (Restrictions set in the law)

- **Citizenship**
- **Age**
- **(sex, race, literacy, grandfather rule, etc)**

2. Informal (Restrictions based on the difficulty or inconvenience of voting)

- **Long lines**
- **Elections on work days/during working hours**
- **Bad weather**
- **Too many elections**
- **Polls located too far from home**
- **Threats/intimidation**
- **REGISTRATION REQUIREMENT**

Motor Voter Law

C. Sources of Voter Motivation

1. Political Interest

Competitive Elections

Candidates/Party you identify with

2. Political Efficacy

- **Personal competence**
- **System responsiveness**

3. Strong concern for a political issue or candidate

4. Civic Duty

5. Sense of Alienation (stranger in your own land)

VI. Is it rational to Participate?

Cost vs. Benefit Analysis of voting

VII. Cultivating Democratic Citizens -- Compelling Participation?