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Texas Politics

14th Edition

Ideal & Reality

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Texas Politics Ideal & Reality

14th Edition

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Texas Politics

IDEAL AND REALITY

Fourteenth Edition

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***Texas Politics: Ideal and Reality*, Fourteenth Edition**
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Brief Contents

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Texas Politics Helps You Meet the State Learning Outcomes for GOVT 2306

1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas.
6. Analyze the state and local election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
9. Demonstrate how the institutions of Texas government have dealt with such recent problems as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest, and controversies about how best to conduct elections.

Chapter in *Texas Politics*		GOVT 2306 State Learning Outcomes (SLO) that are specifically addressed in the chapter
1.	The Context of Texas Politics	SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
2.	The Constitutional Setting	SLO 1. Explain the origin and development of the Texas constitution. SLO 3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government.
3.	Interest Groups	SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
4.	Political Parties	SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 6. Analyze the state and local election process. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
5.	Voting, Campaigns, and Elections	SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 6. Analyze the state and local election process. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
6.	The Legislature	SLO 3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.

Chapter in *Texas Politics*		GOVT 2306 State Learning Outcomes (SLO) that are specifically addressed in the chapter
7.	The Governor	SLO 3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
8.	The Administrative State	SLO 3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
9.	The Judiciary	SLO 3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.
10.	The Substance of Justice	SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
11.	Local Government	SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government. SLO 6. Analyze the state and local election process.
12.	The State Economy and the Financing of State Government	SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government. SLO 3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice in Texas. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
13.	Public Policy—People	SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.
14.	Public Policy—Resources	SLO 2. Demonstrate an understanding of state and local political systems and their relationship with the federal government. SLO 4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of Texas government. SLO 5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in Texas. SLO 8. Analyze issues, policies, and political culture of Texas.

Letter to Instructors

The authors have observed and taught Texas politics for more than 125 years collectively. We remain fascinated by the foibles of Texas government and the dynamic changes that have occurred in the politics of the state since this book was first published in 1979. We write *Texas Politics: Ideal and Reality* because we think the governance of the second-largest state in the United States warrants close scrutiny and that instructors and students deserve a book that takes both a broad view and provides enough details to allow readers to evaluate their government. We are aware that most students take the Texas politics course only because the state says they must, but we hope that by emphasizing current events and recent history, we can pique the interest of both those who teach and those who learn.

The Book's Themes

The dominant theme of this book is *ideal and reality*, that is, how democratic ideals of participation, majority rule, minority rights, and equality before the law are met by the realities of politics in a state that, through most of its history, has been a one-party state—not always the same party—and that emphasizes the values of individualism and traditionalism far more than a moralistic political culture. Three other themes help to shape the book: persistent but not unchallenged *conservatism*, *conflict,* and *private influence over public policy*. As political scientists, we are trained to be analysts, not apologists, for the system. Thus, in chapter after chapter, you will see questions raised about whether political processes and practices in Texas meet the test of democratic morality and suggestions about how to improve the Texas political system. We also examine the evolution of today's political conservatism and the state's political disagreements and their consequences for public policy.

New to This Edition

In this edition, we have continued to focus on aligning our narrative with the state learning outcomes for GOVT 2306, to help students use higher-order thinking to master these objectives. New to this edition, we have introduced a strategy for addressing the skills-based core objectives required of the discipline, as defined by the Undergraduate Education Advisory Committee (UEAC) of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The 14th edition has been designed to support students' development of these core objectives, prompting students to engage in critical thinking, develop communication skills, evaluate social responsibility, and reflect on their own sense of personal responsibility. Each of these exercises is designated by icons throughout the text:

To this 14th edition of *Texas Politics: Ideal and Reality*, we add discussions of the impact of nationwide, and even worldwide, problems such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic, racial unrest, and arguments over the best way to conduct elections, to our customary

narrower focus on the underlying principles and recent developments in Texas politics. This edition also contains major substantive updates in the following chapters:

Chapter 1:

- Discussion of the COVID-19 pandemic and the mass racial protests sparked by the killings of unarmed African Americans by police, and their impact on the state's economy and politics.
- Updates of population demographics supplied by the 2020 U.S. Census.

Chapter 2:

- Discussion about conflicts over the pandemic public-health response, the governor's actions to deal with the crisis, and the constitutional rights of citizens.
- New example to illustrate the way that Texas's constitution forces tiny details of state governance to be submitted to the voters, instead of being handled by the legislature.

Chapter 3:

- Updates on numbers of lobbyists during the 2021 legislative session.
- Report on scholarly research ranking Texas as the 28th "most strenuous" state in terms of regulating interest groups.
- Update on recent lobbying activities of the Texas Medical Association, and on falling membership in the four major teachers' organizations.

Chapter 4:

- Updates on recent research into the impact of new social media on political opinions.
- Discussion of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on Texas political party organizations.
- Report on the way that Governor Abbott's actions to cope with the pandemic split the Republican party along ideological lines.
- Update on the continuing conflict between the state Republican organization and the two most recent Republican speakers of the state house of representatives.
- Report on the major parties' failed attempts to suppress third parties.

Chapter 5:

- Updates on voting turnout in the 2020 election.
- Report on the controversies between the parties over access to the ballot box, with Republicans arguing that legal changes are necessary to prevent fraud, and Democrats arguing that they are really intended to prevent Democrats from voting.
- Analysis of the 2020 election results, and the reaction of Texas politicians to defeated President Donald Trump's Big Lie that he had "really" been re-elected.

Chapter 6:

- Analysis of the different power-bases of the two presiding officers of the legislature, and discussion of the way that recent events illustrate the conclusions of that analysis.
- Report on recent rule changes in the state senate, and their possible consequences.
- Report on the most recent (2021) session of the legislature.

Chapter 7:

- Includes Governor Abbott's agenda for the 2021 legislative session along with his responses to the COVID-19 pandemic and the electricity grid crisis of early 2021.
- Added discussion of increased use of the National Guard to respond to weather, disease, and protest.

Chapter 8:

- Discussion of indictments of Attorney General Ken Paxton for securities violations, as well as his lawsuit filed with the U.S. Supreme Court in an effort to overturn the 2020 presidential election results. The lawsuit was dismissed by the Court.
- Updates on challenges of the office of the Comptroller in estimating funds for the state budget during the coronavirus pandemic in 2020–21.
- Discussion of the State Board of Education's debate over history curriculum decisions related to the causes of the Civil War.

Chapter 9:

- New data regarding the number of courts and judges in the state and the caseloads in state courts.
- Updates on law enforcement data, including the number of police officers in the state, crime statistics, prison populations, and death penalty cases in the state, as well as expanded discussion about plea bargains and conviction reversals.

Chapter 10:

- New material on women's marches in support of the Me Too movement in relation to First Amendment protections.
- Updates on challenges to building the wall along the Southern Border.
- Discussion of policing practices in communities of color and the Black Lives Matter movement, including recent incidents in Texas involving the death of Botham Jean and Atatiana Jefferson and the national protests after the death of Texas native George Floyd in Minnesota.

Chapter 11:

- Updated discussion about the conflicts between state legislature and local governments including placing restrictions on local tax increases, environmental ordinances, sanctuary city policies, and gun regulations.

Chapter 12:

- New data on the impact of COVID-19 pandemic on unemployment, economic activity, state and local tax revenue, state and local budget planning.
- Discussion about Governor Abbott's proposal to protect businesses from liability due to the COVID-19 pandemic and presents data on the 2022–23 state budget and spending in all categories.

Chapter 13:

- Assesses new data on per capita income levels, poverty income thresholds, national and Texas data on number of persons in poverty, numbers of children in poverty, and updated data on the number of Texans without health care insurance.

- Addresses the debate over the use of standardized tests and the waiving of those exams during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- New immigration and border control efforts under the Biden administration.

Chapter 14:

- Discussion of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global carbon emissions, and on the Texas petroleum industry.
- Narrative and analysis of the Big Freeze of February 2021, and its consequences for the Texas economy and political situation.
- Report on the falling costs of "renewable" energy sources such as wind and solar, and speculation on their possible impact on Texas politics.
- Updated public-opinion data on citizens' views about protecting the environment.

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From the Authors

We hope you find *Texas Politics: Ideal and Reality* to be readable, thorough, and interesting. We welcome your comments and your reactions not only to the book itself but also to the new and exciting digital features designed to make your teaching job easier.

Charldean Newell

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Letter to Students

Few students in Texas politics classes are political science majors, but every student is affected by the political processes common in the state and by the policy outcomes that are a result of the Texas political culture, the state's diversity, the attitude toward the national government, and the boom-and-bust economy. For those at a public college or university, how does diminishing support for higher education affect you personally? Most readers of this book will continue to live in Texas and be affected by its political decisions. Are the highways congested and rutted or nicely paved with free-flowing traffic lanes? Are the public schools adequate to prepare students for success in both college and the modern workforce? Is justice dispensed fairly and impartially or according to ethnicity, race, or wealth? Will citizens be able to go about their personal business without being required to wear masks? As citizens, you need to not only vote in every election but also understand the issues and the candidates. Gaining that understanding can actually be a lot of fun once you begin to realize just how "crazy" the Texas political system really is.

The Book's Themes

The dominant theme of this book is *ideal and reality*, with the themes of *conservatism, conflict* and *private influence over public policy* also appearing throughout the text. Texas politics so often presents two contrasting sides of a situation. For example, elected officials constantly rail against the national government, but also depend on it for a large share of the state's budget. Should a state always be a willing participant in the United States? Does the state meet the test of democratic morality—participation, majority rule, minority rights, and equality before the law—by the realities of its political practices? Similarly, the state is basically anti-tax, and, as the introduction to the finance chapter notes, a politician would rather handle a rattlesnake than suggest a tax increase. Resentment of taxes is a classic conservative position. Does the low-tax stance really save taxpayers money, or do they make their "contributions" in other ways such as college tuition, local utility rates, and borrowing?

Questions of democratic morality and conservatism exist in an environment of conflict. Politics is always about conflict, about disagreement, but Texas has extremes not only in its weather but also in its people—rich and poor, Anglo and non-Anglo, religious fundamentalists and non-religious humanists. Too often, these diverse groups play a "zero-sum" game, with the winner taking all and the loser receiving nothing. The room for compromise has grown smaller. Dealing with these problems is often made more difficult by the fact that Texas government's decisions are frequently made not on the basis of arguments over the public good, but on the basis of private interests exerting unfair influence.

All of these conditions affect you now and will continue to affect you in the future. We authors cannot change the future, but we hope that, by arming you with the knowledge of how Texas government works and how to change it, we will prepare you to cope with that future successfully.

Features of the Book

Some of the key features of this book are:

- **Learning objectives for each chapter** that guide the organization of and discussion of the chapter and that are also summarized at the end of the chapter
- **Key term definitions in the margins** of each chapter as well as in the glossary
- **Critical thinking questions** for review
- **A "Texas Politics and You" feature in each chapter** that asks you to become directly involved in an often controversial issue, often through social media
- **A "You Decide" feature in each chapter** that poses a question, gives pro and con arguments, and then asks you to make a decision on the issue
- **Cartoons,** mainly by Pulitzer Prize winner Ben Sargent, designed to provoke your reaction and spur discussion
- **Digital tools and interactive media** are outlined below to help you master the course material

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As a student, the benefits of using MindTap with this book are endless. With a blend of engaging narrative and media, automatically graded practice quizzes and activities presented in a visually appealing side-by-side format, and an interactive ebook, you will be able to track your scores with ease and stay motivated toward your goals.. On your computer, phone, or tablet, MindTap is there when you need it, giving you easy access to flashcards, quizzes, readings, and assignments.

From the Authors

We hope that you will enjoy *Texas Politics: Ideal and Reality* and find it a useful tool to spark your interest in state and local government and politics. At a minimum, we hope the book helps you to appreciate why you need to understand state and local politics and government and to vote regularly. Texas is a big, boisterous, sprawling state, and its politics follow suit. Think of Texas politics as a primetime soap opera.

Charldean Newell

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Resources

Students

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MindTap for *Texas Politics*

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MindTap for *Texas Politics* is an immersive, outcomes-driven online learning experience built upon Cengage content and correlated to a core set of learning outcomes. MindTap is the platform that gives you complete control of your course—to craft unique learning experiences that challenge students, build confidence and elevate performance. The design maximizes how the brain learns new information and minimizes distraction for students, guiding them through their course material. Each MindTap activity is anchored to a single concept, and pairs content and assessment in a visually captivating side-by-side presentation. These activities engage students with a variety of content types-- including graphs, infographics, and explanation videos--that extend learning experience beyond the textbook, while also providing students with

ample opportunities to check themselves for where they need extra help. The Cengage Mobile app enables greater flexibility for students to fit learning into their day, wherever they are, through bite-sized content and the ability to complete activities on a phone or tablet. In addition, the app allows instructors to create polls that foster engagement and activate learning in the classroom.

Instructor Companion Website for *Texas Politics* 14e

ISBN: 9780357506875

This Instructor Companion Website is an all-in-one resource for class preparation, presentation, and testing. Accessible through **www.cengage.com/login** with your faculty account, you will find available for download: book-specific Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations, a Test Bank compatible with multiple learning management systems (LMSs), an Instructor Manual, and more.

The Test Bank, offered in Blackboard, Moodle, Desire2Learn, and Canvas formats, contains learning objective-specific multiple-choice and essay questions for each chapter. Import the test bank into your LMS to edit and manage questions, and to create tests.

The Instructor's Manual includes information about all of the activities and assessments available for each chapter and their correlation to specific learning objectives, an outline, key terms with definitions, a chapter summary, and several ideas for engaging with students with discussion questions, ice breakers, case studies, and social learning activities that may be conducted in an on-ground, hybrid, or online modality.

The Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentations are closely tied to the Instructor Manual, providing ample opportunities for generating classroom discussion and interaction. They offer ready-to-use, visual outlines of each chapter, which may be easily customized for your lectures.

A guide to teaching online presents technological and pedagogical considerations and suggestions for teaching the Introduction to Texas Politics course. Access the Instructor Companion Website for these resources and more at **www.cengage.com/login**.

Cognero for *Texas Politics*, 14e

ISBN: 9780357506912

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions, create multiple test versions in an instant, and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want. The test bank for *Texas Politics*, 14e contains learning objective-specific and core competency-specific multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions for each chapter.

Acknowledgments

Many people have helped in the preparation of the Fourteenth Edition of this book. Our colleagues also offered constructive criticism and helpful hints. Sometimes we agreed with the reviewers but were unable to comply with their suggestions because of page limitations. Nevertheless, many changes in this edition are due to their comments and the comments of colleagues across the state who called our attention to points deserving coverage or correction. We are similarly indebted to students who raised provocative questions and pointed out places where greater clarity would be appreciated.

Additionally, many other individuals offered valuable assistance in helping us find specific information or documents. They include librarians and other faculty members, graduate students, legislative and state agency staff members, and journalists. We are especially grateful to Ben Sargent, who makes his editorial cartoons from the *Austin American-Statesman* and *Texas Observer* available to us. Additionally, political science undergraduate students at Texas Christian University were very helpful in the preparation of each chapter's "Texas Politics and You" feature. We wish to thank Ann Borman, Arun Sundaramoorthy, and Daniel Saabye and the Cengage team for their assistance in preparation of the 14th edition. We would also like to thank MPS North America, LLC for authoring this edition's Instructor's Manual and PowerPoint.

Reviewers

We would also like to thank the instructors who have contributed their valuable feedback through reviews of this text:

Fourteenth Edition:

Patrick Moore, *Richland College*
Virginia Haysley, *Lone Star College-Tomball*

Previous edition reviewers:

Brenda Riddick, *Houston Community College*
Christopher Olds, *Fort Hays State University*
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Vinette Meikle Harris, *Houston Community College*

About the Authors

Charldean Newell

Charldean Newell was Richard Kraemer's co-author for the first edition of this textbook in 1979 and continued as the lead author when Kraemer retired from the project in 1992. She died in 2014, at the age of seventy-five.

A Fort Worth native, she earned her doctorate in Government at the University of Texas at Austin in 1965. In addition to this textbook, she was also the author of *The Effective Local Government Manager* (ICMA Press, 2004) and *City Executives* (SUNY Press, 1989), and editor of *Managing Local Government: Cases in Local Government Effectiveness* (ICMA Press, 2009). In her thirty-seven year career at the University of North Texas she won awards from students, colleagues, and alumni, as well as prizes from national public administration organizations. Her memorial service ended with the playing of "Singing Glory to the Green," the North Texas alma mater.

Despite her ferocious work ethic, Charldean was a cheerful and generous writing partner. Phone conversations about the next edition of this textbook were conducted amidst laughter, often including her continuing critiques of the travails of her beloved Texas Rangers baseball team, and generally included helpful advice. She always beat her deadlines, and invariably provided acute but respectful commentary on the chapter first drafts of her co-authors. Although she is no longer contributing new information to this book, many of her sentences and paragraphs continue to adorn its prose, along with continuing themes that reflect her passion for the subject matter. We are pleased that her name is still on the cover.

David F. Prindle

David Prindle was born in Los Angeles and raised in Hermosa Beach, California. He earned a BA from the University of California, Santa Cruz in 1970, an MA from UCLA in 1972, and a PhD from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1977. He was hired by the Government Department of the University of Texas at Austin in 1976.

He is the author of *Petroleum Politics and the Texas Railroad Commission* (University of Texas Press, 1981), *The Politics of Glamour: Ideology and Democracy in the Screen Actors Guild* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), *Risky Business: The Political Economy of Hollywood* (Westview Press, 1993), *The Paradox of Democratic Capitalism: Politics and Economics in American Thought* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005), *Stephen Jay Gould and the Politics of Evolution* (Prometheus Books, 2009), and *The Politics of Evolution* (Routledge/Taylor and Francis, 2015). He has won six teaching awards at the University of Texas. His hobbies include fly-fishing, reading detective novels, and getting lost in beautiful places.

James W. Riddlesperger, Jr.

James W. Riddlesperger, Jr. (PhD, University of Missouri) is Professor of Political Science at Texas Christian University (TCU). A native of Denton, he has taught American politics, with interests in Texas politics, Congress, and the Presidency, at TCU since 1982.

Recipient of the TCU Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Achievement as a Creative Teacher and Scholar and the Honor's Professor of the Year award at TCU, his publications include *The Austin-Boston Connection: Five Decades of House Democratic Leadership, 1937–1989* (Texas A&M University Press, 2009), and *Lone Star Leaders* (TCU Press, 2011); he also co-edited *The Wright Stuff* (TCU Press, 2013), a collection of the writings of former House Speaker Jim Wright, and *Reflections on Rayburn* (TCU Press, 2017). A former president of the Southwestern Political Science Association, and Chief Reader for the U.S. Government Advance Placement exam, he enjoys reading, baseball, and walking.

The San Jacinto Monument near Beaumont commemorates the 1836 battle in which Texans won their independence from Mexico.

iStock.com/PaulWolf

The Context of Texas Politics 1

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

LO 1.1 Give a brief account of the causes and consequences of the major events in Texas history, such as the Texas Revolution, slavery, Civil War, Reconstruction, the cotton and oil industries, world wars and Depression, political changes from the Old South to modern Texas, and the state's evolution to a modern economy.

LO 1.2 Summarize democratic theory, and the standards that it supplies us in order to permit us to evaluate the democratic legitimacy of any state or country.

LO 1.3 Discuss whether it is desirable, or even possible, for Texas to have a "foreign policy."

LO 1.4 Give a brief description of the three political cultures, and explain how they apply to Texas.

LO 1.5 Summarize the overall pattern of the relationship of Texas government to the Texas economy, and explain why it is difficult to determine if Texas is or is not a good place to live.

LO 1.6 Discuss the ratio of Anglos, Latinos, and African Americans in the Texas population, and explain why these ratios matter to a book about state government.

Much has changed in Texas between its entrance to the United States of American in 1845, and the present era in which journalist Erica Grieder, quoted below, described the state as a model for the nation. During the entire nineteenth century, and much of the twentieth century, the state was poor, agricultural, and sparsely settled. Today, it is the nation's second most populous state, more than four-fifths of the population lives in cities or suburbs, and it leads the country in consuming energy and producing semiconductors, among other distinctions. Yet, as we shall see, in some ways, Texas has changed little since 1845. The Lone Star State is a constantly developing mix of old and new.

In this chapter, the first topic is a summary of the history of Texas, with an emphasis on important political events and the development of the economy. Some of the most basic principles of democratic theory are then discussed, along with an explanation of why it is vital to understand them, followed by a brief look at one of democracy's problems. Two discussions then situate Texas within the American federal system and the international arena. The focus then shifts to Texas's political culture and some historically crucial social and political attitudes. The next subject is the economy of Texas and the way it interacts with the state's

> **Texas sometimes looks like the United States taken to its logical conclusion.**
>
> Erica Grieder,
> *Big, Hot, Cheap, and Right: What America Can Learn from the Strange Genius of Texas,* 2013

political system. As an introduction to some discussions later in the book, the origin and distribution of the state's population are then considered. Finally, there is a brief outline of the agenda for the rest of the book.

Texas History: A Chronology

As with a human being, a state is partly what it is because of what it has experienced. A review of Texas history will highlight the background and context of the themes, institutions, behaviors, and events we discuss in this book.

The Earliest Days

Humans have inhabited Texas for much longer than there has been such a thing as a state. Skull fragments found near Midland (dubbed "Midland Minnie") and a complete female skeleton discovered near Leander have been dated at 10,000 to 13,000 years old. At the time of the first European exploration in the sixteenth century, perhaps 30,000 to 40,000 Native Americans inhabited what is now Texas, and some estimates run as high as 130,000. Among the major groups were the Caddo tribes of North and East Texas, Tonkawas in Central Texas, Karankawas along the coast, Coahuiltecans from the Rio Grande to what is now San Antonio, Lipan Apaches and Comanches in West Texas, and Jumanos in the Trans Pecos region. Determined to keep their lands, they violently resisted European settlement. Westward advancement in Texas cost seventeen white lives per mile. One can only guess at the cost to the Native Americans, although it was undoubtedly much higher.

As early as 1519, just twenty-seven years after the European discovery of the New World and a century before the English Pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Spanish explorer Alonso Álvarez de Pineda mapped the entire Gulf Coast. Several expeditions followed, but Spanish activity was not extensive until 1685, when the French explorer René-Robert Cavelier, sieur de La Salle built a small fort in what is now South Texas. This threat of competition from their imperial rivals spurred the Spanish to establish a series of missions beginning in 1690.

The purposes of these missions were to extend the sphere of Spanish domination and civil law and to convert Native Americans to Christianity. Spanish influence extended across South Texas from Louisiana to New Mexico, and by the time of the American Revolution in 1776, about 2,300 Native Americans had been baptized.

However, Spanish power was already waning as a result of economic and military factors. After one abortive attempt, Mexico achieved independence from Spain in 1821. By that year, despite the centuries of Spanish influence, there were only three permanent European settlements in Texas—San Antonio, Nacogdoches, and Goliad—and the European population had declined to 7,000 during the previous thirty years. Although their numbers were relatively small, Spaniards and Mexicans left rich and indelible influences on Texas through their language, law, religion, and culture.

Anglo-American Colonization

Colonization from the south did not succeed in Texas because of shortsighted economic policies. The Spanish government exploited the few settlers by paying poor prices for their cattle and other products and, at the same time, by charging them high prices for trade goods. As a result, few settlers moved to the giant province.

Texas was potentially much more attractive to settlers from the neighboring United States. There, frontier land was sold to would-be settlers, but in Texas, land was free if one

could get a government grant. Spain decided to gamble that it could acculturate Anglo settlers and use them to protect Mexican interests against the growing, rambunctious democracy to the north.

Moses Austin, a native of Connecticut, abandoned his unsuccessful business activities in Missouri and turned his attention to Texas. Moses died after filing a formal application for settlement with the viceroy of Mexico in 1819. He was succeeded by his son, Stephen F. Austin, who received a generous land grant, as well as permission to bring in 300 families for colonization. The first settlements were at Columbus on the Colorado River and at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

Other colonies quickly followed and the non-Native American population jumped from 7,000 to more than 35,000 between 1821 and 1836. The great majority of the settlers came in good faith, intending to take the oath of allegiance to Mexico and be good Mexican citizens. However, the cultural differences they encountered made this difficult. Not only was Spanish the official language, but the colonists, mostly Protestant, were required to accept Roman Catholicism.

There were also disagreements about the institution of slavery. The practice of one human being owning another was illegal in Mexico. But the Anglos who arrived from Southern states universally believed that they could not sustain an economy without owning slaves. Stephen F. Austin was typical. Although privately expressing moral qualms about the institution, he wrote in 1824, "The principal product that will elevate us from poverty is cotton, and we cannot do this without the help of slaves." The Anglo immigrants to the Mexican province brought their slaves with them, and the Mexican government, while officially forbidding them to do so, always found an unofficial way to tolerate the practice.[1]

Furthermore, the new Mexican nation was suffering from violent political instability, and policy toward Texas was both inconsistent and made 900 miles away in Mexico City by men who knew little about conditions in the area. Moreover, Anglos tended to regard themselves as culturally superior to Mexicans and vice versa. Alienation between Texas and Mexico grew, much as alienation between the colonists and the British had grown prior to the American Revolution two generations earlier.

Revolution

The Mexican government now feared further Anglo-American settlement and acted to curtail it. The settlers responded with demands for concessions, including the right to use the English language in public business and the separation of Texas from the state of Coahuila. What followed is known to virtually every schoolchild in the state: Texas's war for independence. The most celebrated engagement was the siege in San Antonio during March 1836 in which a few Anglos and Texas-Mexicans held the Alamo against a much larger Mexican force for eleven days before being massacred. Nevertheless, although it makes a stirring story, the Alamo was not a decisive engagement. That distinction belongs to the Battle of San Jacinto, which took place between the new Texas army, led by Sam Houston, and the Mexican army, led by General Antonio López de Santa Anna, on April 21 of that same year.

Surprising the Mexicans while they took a siesta in the afternoon, the Texans routed them in a mere eighteen minutes, captured Santa Anna, and ordered him to sign a document agreeing to their independence or be executed. Santa Anna signed, but repudiated the treaty as soon as he was safely across the border. Texans, however, considered themselves independent, and the Republic of Texas became a reality.

The history of the republic was eventful, but short. Independence brought sudden growth, with the population rising rapidly to about 140,000. The Mexicans invaded twice, capturing San Antonio both times before being repulsed. Resistant Native Americans continued to cause severe problems as well. The new nation soon found itself in debt and

The Alamo in San Antonio symbolizes the state's colorful political history.

Dennis Flaherty/Photodisc/ Getty Images

Competency Connection
CRITICAL THINKING

How do you evaluate the phrase "Remember the Alamo"?

with a depreciating currency. Sentiment for annexation by the United States had always been strong, and on December 29, 1845, the U.S. Congress voted to admit Texas into the Union as the twenty-eighth state.

Early Statehood

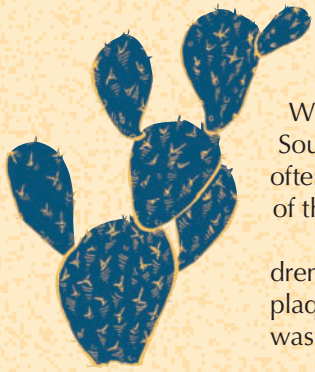
A final peace treaty with Mexico had never been signed, and the Mexican government still considered Texas merely a rebellious province. Annexation of the area by the United States precipitated the Mexican War. This conflict was short and decisive. The first engagement took place at Palo Alto, near present-day Brownsville, on May 8, 1846, and Mexico City fell to United States troops less than a year and a half later, on September 14, 1847. Under the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, the defeated nation relinquished all claim to Texas and, in return for $15 million, ceded all territory west of Texas and south of Oregon to the United States.

No political parties, as such, existed in the Republic of Texas. Sam Houston, the hero of the Battle of San Jacinto, was the dominant political figure, and political debate generally divided along pro-Houston and anti-Houston lines. For the reasons outlined below, to the extent that Texans thought about national politics, most were Democrats.

At the time of independence in 1836, Texas was home to about 5000 Black slaves.[2] By joining the United States, however, the Lone Star State plunged into the political controversy over slavery. That issue simmered at higher and higher temperatures until it boiled over with the election of an antislavery Republican, Abraham Lincoln, as president in 1860. Fearful that Republican control would mean a federal effort to emancipate their slaves, the southern states withdrew from the Union. Texas seceded in February 1861 and joined the new Confederacy in March.

Texans fought at home, on an expedition into New Mexico, and in large numbers in West Virginia, Tennessee, and elsewhere during the Civil War. Southern troops and southern generals were usually superior to their northern counterparts and won many battles. The agricultural South, however, was outgunned, outmanned, and out supplied by the industrial North, and southern political leadership was inferior to Lincoln's. As a consequence, the North ground down the South's ability to wage war over four years until the Confederacy fell apart in the spring of 1865. With the defeat of the rebellion, federal troops landed at Galveston on June 19, 1865, proclaiming the freedom of the state's 250,000 slaves. "Juneteenth" was originally celebrated by African-American Texans as Emancipation Day, and has now spread to the rest of the country as an informal holiday.

ISSUE SPOTLIGHT:
Arguing About the Past, in the Present



More than 150 years after it ended, Americans are still arguing about the meaning of the Civil War of 1861–65. One of the most contentious issues concerns the reasons that the Southern states seceded. Northern Whites and African Americans in every state assert that the cause of secession was Southern Whites' determination to preserve the institution of slavery. Southern Whites often insist that the cause was a desire to preserve the rights of states against the tyranny of the federal government.

For half a century, the Southern viewpoint was on display in a plaque that the "Children of the Confederacy" placed in the Texas capitol building during the late 1950s. The plaque stated that one of the "truths of history" was that "the war between the states was not a rebellion nor was its underlying cause to sustain slavery."

But the truth of history is better read in the document adopted by the Texas Secession Convention in early 1861, which proclaimed a "declaration of the causes which impel the State of Texas to secede from the Federal Union." That document asserted that it was the right of "white men" to preserve "the servitude of the African race," and that because the federal government threatened that right, secession was necessary.

The documentary evidence is thus clear: Texas seceded to preserve slavery. Any other view is an attempt to falsify history.

Although many White Texans still cherished the memory of the Confederacy and wanted the plaque to stay, by the second decade of the twenty-first century the plaque was an embarrassment to the leaders of the state. It was removed in January 2019.

Source: Joe Straus, "Capitol's Plaque Lies About History. Let's Remove It," *Austin American-Statesman*, August 12, 2018, E2.

Competency Connection
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

What is your opinion? Should the plaque have stayed or been removed?

Post–Civil War Texas

Confusion and bitterness followed the war. Despite President Lincoln's stated policy of "with malice toward none, with charity for all," the reaction of Whites in Texas, as in other parts of the South, was to continue to oppose national policy even though the war was over. Confederate officials and sympathizers were elected to state and local office; Black Codes that severely restricted the activities of the former slaves were passed by state legislatures. (It was Anglo refusal to grant full citizenship to Blacks, as much as the scorching Texas summers, that inspired a famous statement by Union General Phil Sheridan in 1866, "If I owned hell and Texas, I'd rent out Texas and live in hell.")[3] This defiance by the defeated South strengthened the position of the Radical Republicans in Congress and caused a hardening of policy, and Lincoln's assassination prevented him from moderating their desire to punish the states of the defunct Confederacy for their rebellion. During the period known as Reconstruction, military government was imposed on the South, and former Confederate officials and soldiers were largely excluded from voting and from holding public office.

These actions by the federal government intensified the hostility with which most White Texans viewed the Republican Party. African Americans, as one might expect, voted for Republican candidates, giving White Texans even more reason to support the Democrats.

The best remembered governorship of this Reconstruction period was that of E. J. Davis, one of a number of Texans who had fought for the Union during the war. A Republican, Davis held office from 1870 to 1874. Using the substantial powers granted by the state's Constitution of 1869, Davis acted like a true chief executive and implemented policies consistent with the philosophy of the Radical Republicans in Washington. To his credit, Davis reformed the penal system and greatly improved public education. To his discredit, during his tenure, state indebtedness increased considerably, and there were allegations of financial impropriety. But whatever the merits of his administration, to White Texans he was a traitorous agent of the hated Yankees.

In 1873, after political restrictions against former Confederate officials and soldiers were removed, a Democrat, Richard Coke, defeated Davis in his reelection bid by a two-to-one margin. Just as important as the return of the Democratic party to power was the repudiation of the Constitution of 1869 and its replacement with Texas's current basic law, the Constitution of 1876. The adoption of this document represented the end of Reconstruction and a substantial return to the traditional principles of the Jeffersonian Democrats, including very limited government and low taxes.

The Late Nineteenth Century

Texas did not suffer the physical destruction that burdened other Confederate states, and economic recovery and development came quickly after the Civil War. The Hollywood version of this era in Texas is one of cowboys, cattle drives, and range wars. There is some basis for the mythical view of post–Civil War Texas as a land of ranches and trail drives, for between 1866 and 1880 four million cattle were driven "north to the rails."[4] Nevertheless, the actual foundation of the state's economy was King Cotton. In East Texas, the fields were worked largely by African Americans, and in West Texas, by Mexican Americans. Cotton remained the cash crop and principal export well into the twentieth century. However, in terms of the self-image of Texans, the myth of cow culture has been far more important than the reality of cotton farming.

Texas has few navigable rivers, and therefore transportation was a major problem. Because of the size of the state, thousands of miles of railroad track were laid. In 1888, railroad construction in Texas exceeded the total for all of the other states and territories combined. In all, more than 32 million acres of land were given to the railroads, thus establishing early on the easy relationship between the state government and large corporations.

Race relations were difficult statewide, but particularly in East Texas. "Jim Crow laws," severely limiting the civil rights of African Americans, began to make their appearance, and violence against the former slaves was common and often fatal. Between 1870 and 1900, an estimated 500 African Americans died as a result of mob violence. Although citizenship is much more equal today than it was in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, there is still ethnic conflict in Texas, and some parts of the state continue to display "Old South" racist patterns of behavior.

Throughout most of the final quarter of the nineteenth century, conservative Democrats maintained control of the state. Their rule was based on appeals to White supremacy and the violent emotional reaction to the Radical Republican Reconstruction era. But other political parties and interest groups rose to challenge them.

With the penetration of the state by railroads and the increase in manufacturing came organized labor. Most notable were the militant Knights of Labor, which struck the Texas & Pacific Railroad in 1885 and won concessions. Another strike a year later, however, turned violent. Governor John Ireland used troops, ostensibly to protect railroad property, and the strike was broken. In the optimistic and growing economy of the 1880s, labor unions were less

acceptable in the South than elsewhere. In Texas, they were viewed as "Yankee innovations" and "abominations." Although a combination of capital was called a corporation and given approval by the state to operate under a charter, combinations of labor, called unions, were frequently labeled restraints of trade by the courts and forbidden to operate. Laws and executive actions also restricted union activities. These biases in favor of capital and against organized labor are still common in Texas.

More important than early labor unions was the agrarian movement. By the 1870s and 1880s, many of those who worked the land in Texas—whether White, African American, or Mexican American—were tenant farmers. Having to borrow money for seed and supplies, they worked all year to pay back what they owed and rarely broke even. Money and credit were scarce even for those who owned land, and railroad rates were artificially high.

The National Grange, or Patrons of Husbandry, was founded in 1867 in Washington, D.C., to try to defend farmers against this sort of economic hardship. The first chapter was established in Texas in 1872 and the organization grew quickly. Grangers were active in local politics, and the state organization lobbied the legislature on issues relevant to farmers. The Grange not only was influential in establishing Texas Agricultural & Mechanical College (now A&M University) and other educational endeavors, but also played a significant role in writing the Constitution of 1876.

James S. Hogg, representing a new breed of Texas politician, was elected governor in 1890 and 1892. The first native Texan to hold the state's highest office, Hogg was not a Confederate veteran. He presided over a brief period of reform that saw the establishment of the Railroad Commission, regulation of monopolies, limitations on alien ownership of land, and attempts to protect the public by regulating stocks and bonds. Unfortunately, it was also an era that saw the enactment of additional Jim Crow laws, including the requirement for segregation of African Americans from Whites on railroads.

Both major political parties were in turmoil, and in the 1890s, opposition to the Democrats in southern states was most effectively provided by the new People's, or Populist, Party. Populists represented the belief that ordinary people had lost control of their government to rich corporations, especially the banks and railroads. Populists advocated monetary reform, railroad regulation, control of corporations, and other programs aimed at making government responsible to the citizens. Populists reached their peak strength in Texas in 1894 and 1896, but failed to unseat the Democrats in statewide elections. The dominant party adopted some Populist programs, and most farmers returned to the Democratic fold. However, Populism, although not the dominant sentiment, is still influential in Texas. Texans who are usually political conservatives can sometimes be roused to vote for candidates who argue that government is making policy at the behest of wealthy insiders rather than ordinary people. The Populist streak makes Texas politics less predictable than it might otherwise be.

Jim Hogg left the governorship in 1895, and the brief period of agrarian reform waned, due in large measure to changes in the membership of the legislature. In 1890, about half the representatives were farmers, but by 1901, two-thirds were lawyers and businessmen. The representation of these professions is similarly high today.

The Early Twentieth Century

Seldom has a new century brought such sudden and important changes as the beginning of the twentieth century brought to Texas. On January 10, 1901, an oil well came in at Spindletop, near Beaumont. Oil had earlier been produced in Texas, but not on such a scale. In 1900, the state had supplied 836,000 barrels of oil—about 6 percent of the nation's production. The Spindletop field exceeded that total in a few weeks and, in its first year, gushed out 3.2 million barrels.

At first, Texas competed with Oklahoma and California for oil production leadership. However, with the discovery of the huge (6 billion barrels) East Texas field in 1930, the Lone

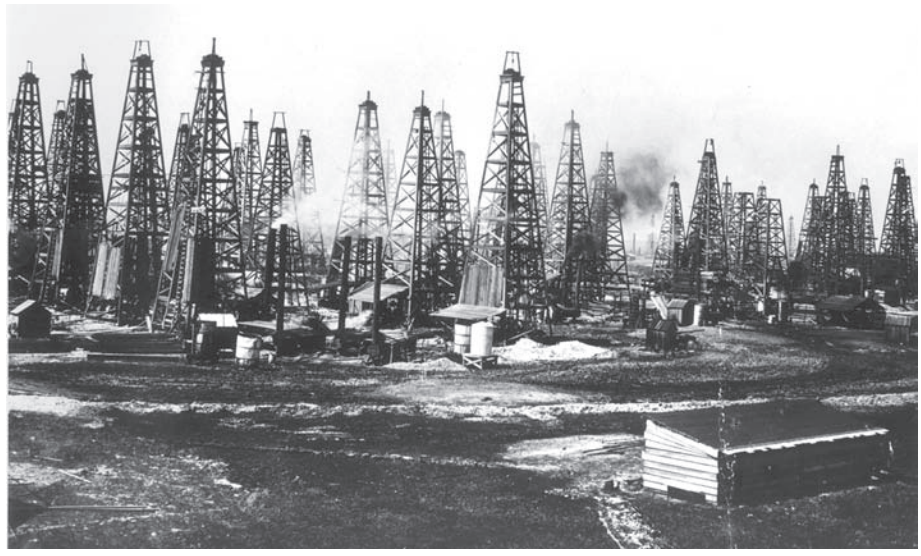
Star State became not only the nation's leading producer, but the world's. Petroleum created secondary industries, such as petrochemicals and the well-service business. More large fields were discovered in every part of the state, except the far western deserts and the central hill country. Oil, combined later with natural gas, replaced cotton and cattle as the state's most important industry. Severance (production) taxes became the foundation for state government revenue.

The rise of the oil industry created considerable conflict, as well as prosperity. Through shrewd and ruthless means, the Standard Oil Company had made itself into a monopoly in the Northeastern states. Texans were determined to prevent the expansion of this giant corporation into their state. Beginning in 1889, the Texas attorney general began bringing "antitrust" suits against local companies affiliated with Standard Oil. After Spindletop, attorneys general were even more energetic in trying to repel the expansion of the monopoly. By 1939, the state had brought fourteen antitrust actions against oil companies.[5] People in other states often see Texas as dominated by the oil industry, when in reality, as this brief summary illustrates, the state has had an ambivalent relationship with the industry. Texans generally celebrate small, independent firms. However, they are suspicious of the major corporations and state politicians sometimes reflect that suspicion. This is one expression of the Populist tradition in state politics.

The agrarian movement had ended, but the spirit of progressivism was not completely dead. In 1903, the legislature passed the Terrell Election Law, which provided for a system of primary elections rather than the hodgepodge of nomination practices then in use. The legislature also curtailed child labor by setting minimum ages for working in certain industries. National child labor legislation was not passed until thirteen years later. Antitrust laws were strengthened, and a pioneer pure food and drug law was enacted. Farm credit was eased, and the legislature approved a bank deposit insurance plan—a program not adopted by Washington until the 1930s.

Running counter to this progressive spirit, however, was the requirement that a poll tax be paid as a prerequisite for voting. Authorities differ as to whether African Americans, Mexican Americans, or poor Anglos were the primary target of the law, but African Americans were hit especially hard. Their voter turnout, estimated to be 100,000 in the 1890s, dropped to about 5,000 by 1906.

Even this small number, however, was too many for the advocates of White supremacy. In 1904, the legislature permitted, and in 1923 it required, counties to institute the "White primary," which forbade African Americans and Latinos to participate in the party contest to



A cluster of oil derricks close together in the Spindletop oil field during the boom of the early 1900s near Beaumont.

AP Images/HO

nominate candidates for the general election. Because in that era Texas was a one-party Democratic state (see Chapter 4, Political Parties), the winner of the Democratic primary was always the winner in the general election. Thus, even if minority citizens managed to cast a ballot in November, they could only choose among candidates who had been designated by an all-White electorate in April.[6]

Early efforts to ensure conservation of the state's natural resources enjoyed little success. Many improperly drilled oil wells polluted groundwater. Fifteen million acres of virgin pine trees in East Texas were clear-cut, leading to severe soil erosion. By 1932, only a million acres of forest remained, and wood products had to be imported into the state. As we will discuss in more detail in Chapter 14 (Public Policy—Resources), conservation and environmental protection are still uphill battles in Texas.

Wars and Depression

World War I, which the United States entered in 1917, brought major changes to Texas. The state became an important military training base, and almost 200,000 Texans volunteered for military service. Five thousand lost their lives, many dying from influenza rather than enemy action.

America's native hatemongering organization, the Ku Klux Klan, flourished in the early 1920s. Originally founded after the Civil War to keep African Americans subjugated, after World War I the Klan expanded its list of despised peoples to include immigrants and Catholics. Between 1922 and 1924, the Klan controlled every elective office in Dallas, in both city and county government. In 1922, the Klan's candidate, Earle Mayfield, was elected to the U.S. Senate. Hiram Evans of Dallas was elected imperial wizard of the national Klan, and Texas was the center of Klan power nationwide.

When Alfred E. Smith, a New Yorker, a Roman Catholic, and an anti-prohibitionist, was nominated for the presidency by the Democrats in 1928, Texas party loyalty frayed for the first time since Reconstruction. Texans voted for the Republican candidate, Herbert Hoover, a Protestant and a prohibitionist. Because of such defections from the formerly Democratic "Solid South" and because of the general national prosperity under a Republican administration, Hoover won. Democrats continued to win at the Congressional and state levels, however.

Partly because the state was still substantially rural and agricultural, the Great Depression that began with the stock market crash of 1929 was less severe in Texas than in more industrialized states. Further, a year later C. M. "Dad" Joiner struck oil near Kilgore, discovering the supergiant East Texas oil field. This bonanza directly and indirectly created jobs for thousands of people. Houston became so prosperous because of the oil boom that it became known as "the city the Depression forgot."

The liquid wealth pouring from the earth in East Texas, however, also created major problems. So much oil came from that one field so fast that it flooded the market, driving prices down. The price of oil in the middle part of the country dropped from $1.10 per barrel in 1930 to $0.25 a year later. With their inexpensive overhead, the small independent producers who dominated the East Texas field could prosper under low prices by simply producing more. However, the major companies, with their enormous investments in pipelines, refineries, and gas stations, faced bankruptcy if the low prices continued. The early 1930s was therefore a period of angry conflict between the large and small producers, with the former arguing for production control and the latter resisting it.

prorationing
Government restraint, suppression, or regulation of the production of oil and/or natural gas resources, with the dual purpose of conserving the resources and propping up prices.

The Railroad Commission attempted to force the independents to produce less, but they evaded its orders, and millions of barrels of "hot oil" flowed out of the East Texas field from 1931 to 1935. There was confusion and violence before the state found a solution to the overproduction problem. After much political and legal intrigue, the Railroad Commission devised a formula for the "**prorationing**" of oil that limited each well to a percentage of its total

production capacity. By restricting production, this regulation propped up prices, and the commodity was soon selling for more than $1 per barrel again.

As part of this system of controlling production and prices, in 1935, Texas Senator Tom Connally persuaded Congress to pass a "Hot Oil Act," which made the interstate sale of oil produced in violation of state law a federal crime. The major companies thus received the state-sanctioned production control upon which their survival depended. Meanwhile, the Railroad Commission was mollifying the independents by creating production regulations that favored small producers. For four decades, the Railroad Commission was in effect the director of the Texas economy, setting production limits, and therefore price floors, for the most important industry in the state. The commission's nurturing of the state's dominant industry was a major reason the Depression did not hit Texas as hard as it had many other states.

Most Texans were thus able to weather the Depression, but there were still many who were distressed. Unemployment figures for the period are incomplete, but in 1932, Governor Ross Sterling estimated that 300,000 citizens were out of work. Private charities and local governments were unprepared to offer aid on this scale, and in Houston, African Americans and Hispanics were warned not to apply for relief because there was only enough money to take care of Anglos. The state defaulted on interest payments on some of its bonds, and many Texas banks and savings and loans failed. A drought so severe as to create a dust bowl in the Southwest made matters even worse. Texans, with their long tradition of rugged individualism and their belief "that government is best which governs least," were shaken and frustrated by these conditions.

Relief came not from state or local action but from the national administration of the new liberal Democratic president, Franklin D. Roosevelt. Texas Democrats played prominent roles in Roosevelt's New Deal (1933–45). Vice President John Nance Garner presided over the U.S. Senate for eight years, six Texans chaired key committees in Congress, and Houston banker Jesse Jones, head of the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, was perhaps Roosevelt's most important financial adviser and administrator. The New Deal poured more than $1.5 billion into the state in programs ranging from emergency relief to rural electrification to the Civilian Conservation Corps.

As it had during the first global conflict, Texas contributed greatly to the national effort during World War II from 1941 to 1945. More than 750,000 Texans served in the armed forces and thirty-two received Congressional Medals of Honor. Secretary of the Navy Frank Knox claimed that Texas contributed a higher percentage of its male population to military service than did any other state.

Post–World War II Texas

By 1950 profound changes had occurred in Texas society. The state's population had shifted from largely rural to 60 percent urban in the decade of the 1940s, the number of manufacturing workers had doubled, and Texas had continued to attract outside capital and new industry. Aluminum production, defense contracting, and high-technology activities were among the leaders. In 1959, Jack Kilby, an engineer employed by Texas Instruments, developed and patented the microchip, a tiny piece of technology that was to transform the state, the nation, and the world.

Texas politics continued to be colorful, however. In 1948, Congressman Lyndon B. Johnson opposed former Governor Coke Stevenson for a vacant U.S. Senate seat. The vote count was very close in the primary runoff which, with Texas still being dominated by the Democratic Party, was the only election that mattered. As one candidate would seem to pull ahead, another uncounted ballot box that gave the edge to his opponent would be conveniently discovered in South or East Texas. The suspense continued for three days, until Johnson finally won by a margin of eighty-seven votes. Historical research has left no doubt that the box that put Johnson over the top was the product of fraud on the part of the political machine that ruled Duval County. Among students of American politics, this is probably the most famous dirty election

in the history of the country. The circumstances surrounding the election have attracted so much attention because "Landslide Lyndon" Johnson went on to become majority leader of the U.S. Senate, vice president, and then in 1963, the first Texas politician to attain the office of president of the United States.

After the war, the state's politics were increasingly controlled by conservative Democrats. As a former member of the Confederacy, Texas was one of the twenty-two states that had laws requiring racial segregation. The 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision (*Brown v. Board of Education,* 347 U.S. 483) declaring segregated public schools unconstitutional caused an uproar in Texas. State leaders opposed integration, just as their predecessors had opposed Reconstruction ninety years earlier. Grade-a-year integration of the schools—a simple and effective solution—was rejected. Millions of dollars in school funds were spent in legal battles to delay the inevitable.

Also in the postwar period, Texas experienced an influx of immigrants. Immigration in the nineteenth century had been primarily from adjacent states, Mexico, and west, central, and southern Europe. Today, immigrants come not only from all fifty states, but also from all of Latin America and a variety of other areas, including those of the Middle East and Asia.

Gradual Political Change

Since the 1950s, Texas has become increasingly diverse politically as well. Politicians such as U.S. Senator Ralph Yarborough (1957–71), Commissioner of Agriculture Jim Hightower (1987–91), and Governor Ann Richards (1991–95) demonstrated that liberals could win statewide offices. Republicans also began winning, first with U.S. Senator John Tower (1961–84) and later with Governor Bill Clements (1979–83 and 1987–91). Furthermore, candidates from formerly excluded groups enjoyed increasing success, especially after the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Morris Overstreet was the first African American elected to statewide office, gaining a seat on the Court of Criminal Appeals in 1990. That same year, Mexican Americans Dan Morales and Raul Gonzalez were elected attorney general and justice of the Supreme Court, respectively. Kay Bailey Hutchison broke the sex barrier in statewide elections to national office by being elected U.S. Senator in 1993.

Late Twentieth-Century Texas

Tied as it was to the fortunes of the petroleum industry, the state's economy went through a boom and a bust in the 1970s and 80s. With the world price of oil climbing upwards after 1973, the Texas petroleum industry prospered, and the state government enjoyed billion-dollar surpluses. But when the price began sliding in 1981, and cratered in 1985, its economy, and its government, fell on hard times. For every $1 drop in world oil prices, 13,500 Texans became unemployed, the state government lost $100 million in revenue from severance taxes, and the gross state product contracted by $2.3 billion.[7] Northern consumers smiled as they filled the gas tanks of their cars, but the oil industry and the state of Texas went into shock.

Economic poverty was only one of the miseries that visited Texas in the 1980s. The state's crime rate shot up 29 percent.[8] Most of the crimes committed were related to property and were probably a consequence of the demand for illegal drugs, which constantly increased despite intense public relations and interdiction efforts at the national level. Texans insisted upon better law enforcement and longer sentences for convicted criminals just as the state's tax base was contracting. The combination of shrinking revenues and growing demand for services forced Texas politicians to do the very thing they hated most: increase taxes. In 1984, the legislature raised Texas taxes by $4.8 billion. Then, faced with greatly reduced state income, it was forced to act again. First came an increase of almost $1 billion in 1986, and then in 1987, there was a boost of $5.7 billion, the largest state tax increase in the history of the United States up to that time. The system of raising revenue, relying even more heavily on the sales tax, became more

regressive than ever. To make matters worse, the increase came just as Congress eliminated sales taxes as a deductible item on the federal income tax. By the end of the 1980s, Texans were battered, frazzled, and gloomy.

However, the situation reversed itself again in the 1990s. As the petroleum industry declined, entrepreneurs created other types of businesses to take its place. Computer equipment, aerospace, industrial machinery, and scientific instruments became important parts of the economy. The state began to export more goods. Despite the fact that Texas oil production reached a fifty-year low in 1993, by the mid-1990s the economy was booming, even outperforming the nation as a whole. The boom continued to the end of the century, at which point the state had the eleventh largest economy in the world. The entry into a new economic era was underscored by the fact that by 1997, more Texans were employed in high-tech industries than by the oil industry.

Prosperity brought another surge in immigration, and in 1994, the Lone Star State passed New York as the second most populous in the country, with 18.4 million residents.[9]

Even the crime rate was down. The election of the state's governor, George W. Bush, to the presidency of the United States in 2000 seemed to guarantee a rosy future for Texas.

Modern Times

The new century contained many surprises for Texans and Americans, however, many of which were unpleasant. The national economy began to stagger during the spring of 2001. Economic troubles were joined by political disaster on September 11, when radical Muslim terrorists highjacked four jet planes, flying two into, and ultimately destroying, the World Trade Center in New York, flying another into the Pentagon building in Washington, D.C., and crashing another into farmland in Pennsylvania. The national grief and fury over the 3,000 murders resulting from these attacks were accompanied by many economic problems as the United States struggled to spend money to prevent such outrages in the future. Although not a direct target of the attacks, Texans were as much involved in their consequences as the residents of other states. Efforts to guard borders and protect buildings were hugely expensive, and debates about the ways to interdict terrorists while protecting the civil liberties of loyal citizens were as intense in Texas as elsewhere.

The 2000s were also fraught with perils created by nature rather than by human action. In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina flooded New Orleans in Louisiana, sending hundreds of thousands of refugees across the state border to Houston. Texas state government paid for housing many of the storm refugees in the Astrodome. Just two weeks later, Hurricane Rita roared ashore on the Texas-Louisiana border, causing major flooding in East Texas and draining the state government of more funds. Then, in 2008, Hurricane Ike devastated Galveston with a 16-foot storm surge and 110 mile-per-hour winds, and caused destruction and loss of life in Houston and the Beaumont-Port Arthur area. Two years later, the state's insurance bill for Ike's damage had approached $12 billion, on top of more than three dozen deaths.[10]

But the most spectacular example of nature's fury was the devastation visited on the Houston area in August 2017 by Hurricane Harvey. In four days, the storm dropped more than thirty inches of rain on an area of southeastern Texas the size of New Jersey, and more than fifty inches in some specific spots. Harvey tied with Hurricane Katrina as the costliest tropical cyclone in the U.S. history, inflicting at least $125 billion in damages. It killed at least 88 people (thankfully many less than the 6,000 who were lost to the 1900 Galveston hurricane). When the deluge finally moved north from Harris County and into other states as a tropical storm, a third of Houston was under water. Great numbers of people in the area lost their homes, their cars, their pets, and their jobs.[11]

Two years later, when tropical storm Imelda dropped more than forty inches of rain in the area of Houston and its suburbs, it almost seemed that Nature had decided that Texas had to be punished for some sort of cosmic misbehavior.[12]

Texas Politics and You: How Do You Remember the Alamo?

Although it was not the decisive engagement of the Texas war for independence, the siege and battle of the Alamo from February 23 to March 6, 1836 is of far greater importance to modern Texans. It is, in fact, the most important incident in what historians call the "collective memory" of citizens of the state—the shared stories of past events that help to form their identities and values. But as a memory both factual and mythical, it has a different significance to different groups. To Anglos, as one historian put it, the Alamo represents "the ultimate story of sacrifice in the name of liberty." To others, especially to Texans of Mexican descent, it can have a more ambiguous meaning.

The perils of tinkering with collective memory are illustrated by the very different public reactions to two motion pictures about the siege. The 1960 film, directed by and starring John Wayne as a fearlessly determined Davy Crockett, and depicting the doomed Anglo defenders as heroic freedom-fighters, was a box-office success. The 2004 version, starring Billy Bob Thornton as an emotionally conflicted Crockett, and taking pains to show the Mexican perspective on the war, was one of the biggest flops in Hollywood history, losing more than $100 million at the box office.

Not just in movies, but in politics also, the way the events of the Alamo struggle are depicted touches deep nerves of state patriotism. When he became Commissioner of the State Land Office in 2015, George P. Bush took over the managing of the actual Alamo site in San Antonio from a private organization, the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. His office launched an ambitious project to update the memorial, make it more tourist-friendly, and bring it more in line with known historical facts. In the words of one journalist, his office "brought in historical preservation experts from a Philadelphia design firm, who approached the Alamo as a historical site instead of a place of popular imagination."

The reaction was immediate and furious. Conservative Anglos from all over the state objected, claiming that Bush's plan represented an attempt to impose liberal "political correctness" on Texas history. At one protest in October 2017, "one speaker decried Bush as part of a cabal that 'wants to destroy our Western sense of identity.'" Running against Bush in the March 2018 Republican primary, Jerry Patterson repeatedly accused him of failing to fulfill his obligation to preserve the glory of Texas history.

Bush quickly saw his mistake, backtracked, drastically changed the plans for updating Alamo Plaza, and started portraying himself as the steward of the state's collective memory. He survived Patterson's challenge in the primary, and was returned to office in the general election in November 2018.

But the question remains for students of Texas history and Texas politics.

Sources: Keith J. Volanto, "Strange Brew: Recent Texas Political, Economic, and Military History," in Walter L. Buenger and Arnoldo De Léon, eds., *Beyond Texas Through Time: Breaking Away from Past Interpretations* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2011), 110; Gregg Cantrell and Elizabeth Hayes Turner, "Introduction: A Study of History, Memory, and Collective Memory in Texas," in Gregg Cantrell and Elizabeth Hayes Turner, eds., *Lone Star Pasts: Memory and History in Texas* (College Station: Texas A & M University Press, 2007), 4–5; Gregg Cantrell, "The Bones of Stephen F. Austin: History and Memory in Pre-Progressive Era Texas," in ibid., 41; Randolph B. Campbell, "History and Collective Memory in Texas: The Entangled Stories of the Lone Star State," in ibid., 275; Tom Dart, "George P. Bush's Struggle in Texas May Signal End of 70-Year Political Dynasty," *The Guardian*, March 3, 2018; Christopher Hooks, "George P. Bush's Last Stand at the Alamo," *Texas Monthly*, March 2018; election and box-office results from various websites.

Competency Connection
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

How should we remember the Alamo?

Through these natural disasters, however, the Texas society and economy seemed to be resilient and healthy. Although, in the aftermath of the popping of a national real-estate bubble in 2008, the Lone Star State, like the rest of the country, experienced an economic downturn, in a few years it was again on the upswing. By 2013, the state's economy was doing better than

the country as a whole, and various Texans (including Erica Grieder, quoted at the beginning of this chapter) proclaimed that this improvement ratified the Lone Star State's traditional deference to business needs and suspicion of government activity.[13] By October of 2017, the state's unemployment rate had fallen to an all-time historical low of 3.9 percent, and a 2018 report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas proclaimed that the state's economy was "firing on all cylinders."[14]

But Nature was not finished with Texas, or with humanity. In the Spring of 2020, the COVID-19 virus, sprung from China but enveloping the world, descended on the citizens of the Lone Star State. As worried Texans withdrew from public activity, "sheltering-in-place" in their homes to avoid being infected, Governor Greg Abbott issued orders that virtually shut down businesses and other public institutions (such as churches) everywhere, and the state's economy went into cardiac arrest. By the end of April, the unemployment rate had spiked at a record-breaking 12.8 percent, and was headed upward. Sales tax revenue was down 13.2 percent, creating anxiety attacks in every governmental institution, from school districts to the legislature.[15]

All this was bad enough. But it was only the beginning of the calamities that descended upon the state in the Spring of 2020. A world-wide glut of oil sent prices tumbling, and would have caused major unemployment in this key Texas industry even if the pandemic had not slashed demand.[16] In April alone, the industry laid off 26,300 workers; oil-production ("severance") taxes fell 75% in May from the year before.[17]

And, in a convulsion that was morally-based, but had both economic and public-health consequences, on May 25, and continuing for weeks afterward, American society erupted in outrage after an almost-nine-minute video went viral of a White Minneapolis police officer kneeling on the neck of a prostrate and handcuffed African American motorist named George Floyd, until Floyd died. Both Black and Anglo citizens, in Texas and across the country, staged massive demonstrations in cities to demand the end of racism in general and the end of police brutality against Blacks in particular.

We will discuss the issues raised by the cry to end American and Texas racism in several chapters of this book. Here, it suffices to point out that the 2020 political protests, some of them accompanied by violence and looting, put further pressure on an economy that was already in deep trouble. Perhaps worse, the close physical association of throngs of protestors, some wearing surgical masks but many bare-faced, served to spread the virus that was already sickening and killing thousands of Texans.

No one, and especially not textbook authors, can reliably predict the future. But it did seem, by 2021 that Texas was entering a new era without having solved many of the problems left over from its previous history. Whether its traditional political attitudes will be adequate to deal with the challenges of the new era is a question that will be considered in the course of the discussion.

Texas as a Democracy

democracy The form of government based on the theory that the legitimacy of any government must come from the free participation of its citizens.

legitimacy People's belief that their government is morally just, and that therefore they are obligated to obey its laws.

In this book, one of the major themes will be the concept of **democracy** and the extent to which Texas approaches the ideal of a democratic state. A democracy is a system of government resting on the theory that political legitimacy is created by the citizens' participation. **Legitimacy** is the belief people have that their government is founded upon morally right principles and that they should therefore obey its laws. According to the moral theory underlying a democratic system of government, because the people themselves (indirectly, through representatives) make the laws, they are morally obligated to obey them.

Complications of this theory abound, and a number of them are explored in each chapter. Because some means to allow people to participate in the government must exist, free elections, in which candidates or parties compete for the citizens' votes, are necessary. There must be some connection between what a majority of the people want and what the government actually

does; how close the connection must be is a matter of some debate. Despite the importance of "majority rule" in a democracy, majorities must not be allowed to take away certain rights from minorities, such as the right to vote, the right to be treated equally under the law, and the right to freedom of expression.

In a well-run democracy, politicians debate questions of public policy honestly, the media report the debate in a fair manner, the people pay attention to the debate, and then vote their preferences consistently with their understanding of the public interest. When candidates lose an election, they accept the outcome and resolve to do better next time; they do not, without evidence, claim that they have "really" won because the official results were based on fraud, and file meritless lawsuits while whipping up their base supporters into a paranoid frenzy.

In a well-run democratic state, government decisions are made on the basis of law, without anyone having an unearned advantage.

In a badly run or corrupt democracy, politicians are dominated by special interests, but seek to hide the fact by clouding public debate with irrelevancies and showmanship, the media do not point out the problem because they themselves are either corrupt or lazy, and the people fail to hold either the politicians or the media accountable because they do not participate or because they participate carelessly and selfishly. Government decisions are made on the basis of special influence, inside dealing, and ignorance of facts. A good democracy, in other words, is one in which government policy is arrived at through public participation, debate, and compromise, and based on an awareness of the real state of the world. A bad democracy is one in which mass apathy, private influence, and wishful thinking are the determining factors.

All political systems that are based on the democratic theory of legitimacy have elements of both good and bad. No human institution is perfect—no family, church, or government—but it is always useful to compare a real institution to an ideal and judge how closely the reality conforms to the ideal. Improvements come through the process of attempting to move the reality ever closer to the ideal. Although many of them could not state it clearly, the great majority of Americans, and Texans, believe in some version of the theory of democracy. It is therefore possible to judge our state government (as it is also possible to judge our national government) according to the extent to which it approximates the ideal of a democratic society, and to indicate the direction that the political system must move to become more democratic. Chapters in this book will frequently compare the reality of state government to the ideal of the democratic polity, and ask readers to judge whether they think there is room for improvement in Texas democracy.

As indicated, one of the major causes of shortcomings in democratic government, in Texas as elsewhere, is *private influence over public policy.* Ideally, government decisions are made to try to maximize the public interest, but too often, they are fashioned at the behest of individuals who are pursuing their own special interests at the expense of the public's. This book will often explore the ways that powerful individuals try to distort the people's institutions into vehicles of their own advantage. It will also examine ways that the representatives of the public resist these selfish efforts to influence public policy. Part of the political process, in Texas as in other democracies, is the struggle to ensure that the making of public policy is truly a people's activity rather than a giveaway to the few who are rich, powerful, and well-connected.

federal system A system of government that provides for a division and sharing of powers between a national government and state or regional governments.

Texas and American Federalism

This book is about the politics of one state. Just as it would be impossible to describe the functions of one organ of the human body without reference to the body as a whole, it would also be misleading to try to analyze a state without reference to the nation. The United States has a **federal system**. This label means that its governmental powers are shared among the national and state governments. A great many state responsibilities are strongly influenced by the actions

of all three branches of the national government. Further, the states and the federal government frequently disagree, and often their disagreements become connected to larger political conflict.

Texas politics is thus a whole subject unto itself and a part of a larger whole. Although the focus of this book is on Texas, it contains frequent references to actions by national institutions and politicians. In Chapter 2, The Constitutional Setting, we will discuss in more detail the way that the Lone Star State fits into, or refuses to fit into, the federal system.

Texas in the International Arena

Despite the fact that the U.S. Constitution forbids the individual states to conduct independent foreign policies, Texas's shared border with Mexico has long exercised an important effect on its politics. Not only are many Texas citizens of Mexican (and other Latin) background, but the common border of Texas and Mexico, the Rio Grande, flows for more than 800 miles through an arid countryside, a situation that almost demands cooperation over the use of water. Furthermore, with the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993, Texas became important as an avenue of increased commerce between the two countries. (In 2018, NAFTA was theoretically replaced by the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement—USMCA—but the "new" agreement was better described as a slightly tweaked improvement on NAFTA). Interstate Highway 35, which runs from the Mexican border at Laredo through San Antonio, Austin, and the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex, then north to Duluth, Minnesota, has become so important as a passageway of international trade that it is sometimes dubbed "the NAFTA highway." As a result of their geographic proximity, Mexico is an important factor in the Texas economy and Texas politics, and vice versa.

One of many possible examples from the early years of the twenty-first century illustrates the interconnections of Texan and Mexican politics. In Chapter 14, we will discuss the political fights over water policy within Texas. Here, we will recount how the need for water causes trouble between Texas and Mexico.[18]

In 1944, the two countries signed a treaty to balance the availability of water with the needs of their populations and agricultural industries. Because much of the southwestern United States contains fertile land but is arid, it would be easy for American farmers to soak up every drop of the Colorado River (the one that flows from the state of Colorado through Utah and along the California–Arizona border, not the identically named one in Texas) for their crops. But that would mean that the river, which flows through Mexico for its last few miles to the Gulf of California, would dry up, depriving Mexican farmers of their access to the water. So, in the 1944 treaty, the countries came to an agreement that the United States would permit a certain amount of Colorado River water to flow through to Mexico, and, in return, Mexico would send an equal amount from its Rio Grande tributaries to farmers in Texas.

The agreement worked for decades. But, as a severe drought gripped both Texas and northern Mexico for much of the first thirteen years of the twenty-first century, Texans needed the Rio Grande water more, just as Mexicans became unwilling to supply it (wanting to keep it for their own farms). Mexico began to cut back its shipment of water to Texas to about half of its agreed-upon volume.

In 2013, Texas politicians launched a campaign to persuade or pressure Mexican officials to release more Rio Grande water to Texas. In April of that year, the Texas house of representatives voted unanimously on a resolution imploring the federal government to persuade Mexico to live up to its 1944 treaty obligations. At the same time, Governor Rick Perry sent a letter to President Barack Obama, asking him and Secretary of State John Kerry to apply diplomatic pressure to do the same thing. Shortly thereafter, Texas's two United States Senators attempted to induce the International Boundary and Water Commission, which is responsible for enforcing water treaties between the United States and Mexico, to get tough with the Mexicans.

You Decide: Should Texas Have a Foreign Policy?

As the world has become more integrated, and especially as economies have become globalized, Texas leaders have attempted to establish institutions for dealing with foreign governments. Their efforts in this area have been particularly enthusiastic in regard to Mexico. The state opened a trade office in Mexico City in 1971, helped establish the Border Governors' Conference in 1980, began the Texas–Mexico Agricultural Exchange in 1984, has participated in the Border States Attorneys General Conference since 1986, and established the Office of International Coordination to deal with the problem of retrieving child support payments from fugitive fathers in 1993. Texas governors now have special advisers on the economy and politics of foreign countries, and they take trips to visit foreign politicians in hopes of increasing commerce between their state and foreign countries.

In its attempts to establish regular relationships with foreign countries, Texas comes close to having a state "foreign policy." However, is it wise for a state, as opposed to the United States national government, to be so deeply involved in foreign affairs?

Pro ☑

- The Constitution does not forbid states to enter into voluntary, informal arrangements with foreign governments, and the Tenth Amendment declares that anything not forbidden to the states is permitted.
- Most state foreign policy initiatives, such as Texas's trade agreements with Mexico, deal with friendly relations, not disputes.
- Since when is competition a bad thing? If citizens want to keep labor unions strong and the environment clean, they should vote for candidates who will support such policies.
- Texas's domestic actions already have an impact on relations with foreign countries. It would be better to acknowledge this fact frankly and make state policy with the conscious intent of furthering the state's interests.

Con ☒

- A major reason that the independent states came together to form the union in 1787 was so that they could stop working at cross-purposes in foreign policy and present a united front to the world. That is why Article I, Section 10 of the Constitution says that "No state shall . . . enter into any Agreement or Compact . . . with a foreign Power . . ."
- The Logan Act of 1799 prohibits U.S. citizens from "holding correspondence with a foreign government or its agents, with intent to influence the measures of such government in relations to disputes or controversies with the United States."
- If states (and cities) are allowed to compete for business with foreign countries, their rivalry will cause them to lower standards of labor and environmental protection.
- If all fifty states have independent relations with foreign countries, it will cause confusion and chaos between the federal government and those countries.

Source: Julie Blase, "Has Globalization Changed U.S. Federalism? The Increasing Role of U.S. States in Foreign Affairs: Texas-Mexico Relations," PhD dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2003.

Competency Connection SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Should Texas Have a Foreign Policy?

As the drought eased after 2011, however, so did the diplomatic conflict. In 2017, the two countries signed a document extending the water-sharing agreement for another five years.[19] As we will discuss in Chapter 14, however, such agreements depend upon the cooperation of Mother Nature. When another bad drought descends upon the region, as it certainly will, the cross-border conflict will flare again.

Thus, what happens in Texas has an impact, not only on the rest of the United States, but also on foreign countries. The reverse is also true—events in other countries, and especially in Mexico, are vitally relevant to Texas government.

political culture A shared framework of values, beliefs, and habits of behavior with regard to government and politics within which a particular political system functions.

moralistic The culture, dominant in the northern tier of American states, in which citizens understand the state and the nation as commonwealths designed to further the shared interests of everyone, citizen participation is a widely shared value, and governmental activism on behalf of the common good is encouraged.

individualistic The culture, historically dominant in the middle tier of American states, in which citizens understand the state and nation as marketplaces in which people strive to better their personal welfare, citizen participation is encouraged as a means of individual achievement, and government activity is encouraged when it attempts to create private opportunity and discouraged when it attempts to redistribute wealth.

traditionalistic The culture, historically dominant in the southern tier of American states, in which citizens technically believe in democracy but do not encourage participation, and government activity is generally viewed with suspicion unless its purpose is to reinforce the power of elites.

The Texas Political Culture

Like the other forty-nine states, Texas is part of a well-integrated American civil society. It is also a separate and distinctive society with its own history and present-day political system. Our political system is the product of our political culture. **Political culture** refers to a shared system of values, beliefs, and habits of behavior with regard to government and politics. Not everyone in a given political culture accepts all of that culture's assumptions, but everyone is affected by the beliefs and values of the dominant groups in society. Often, the culture of the majority group is imposed on members of a minority who would prefer not to live with it.

Political scientist Daniel Elazar and his associates have extensively investigated patterns of political culture across the fifty states. Elazar identifies three broad, historically developed patterns of political culture.[20] Although every state contains some elements of each of the three cultures, politics within states in identifiable regions tend to be dominated by one or a combination of two of the cultures.[21]

In the **moralistic** political culture, citizens understand the state and the nation as commonwealths designed to further the shared interests of everyone. Citizen participation is a widely shared value, and governmental activism on behalf of the common good is encouraged. This culture tends to be dominant across the extreme northern tier of American states. The states of Washington and Minnesota approach the "ideal type" of the moralistic culture.

In the **individualistic** political culture, citizens understand the state and nation as marketplaces in which people strive to better their personal welfare. Citizen participation is encouraged as a means of individual achievement, and government activity is encouraged when it attempts to create private opportunity and discouraged when it attempts to redistribute wealth. This culture tends to be dominant across the "middle north" of the country from New Jersey westward. Nevada and Illinois approach the ideal types of the individualistic culture.

In the **traditionalistic** political culture, citizens technically believe in democracy, but emphasize deference to elite rule within a hierarchical society. While formally important, citizen participation is not encouraged and the participation of disfavored ethnic or religious groups may be discouraged. Government activity is generally viewed with suspicion unless its purpose is to reinforce the power of the dominant groups. This culture tends to be dominant in the southern tier of states from the east coast of the continent to New Mexico. The ideal types of states with traditionalistic cultures are Mississippi and Arkansas.

Table 1-1 summarizes the three political cultures as they are expressed across a number of important political and social dimensions. It is important to understand that the general tendencies displayed in the table permit many exceptions. They only report broad patterns of human action; that is, they describe the way many people in the groups have often behaved through history. They do not apply to everyone, nor do they prescribe a manner in which anyone must behave in the future.

The research that has been done on Texas places it at a midpoint between the traditionalistic and individualistic political cultures.[22] Historically, the state's experience as a slave-holding member of the Confederacy tended to embed it firmly in traditionalism, but its strong business

TABLE 1-1 The Three Political Cultures

Type	Moralistic	Individualistic	Traditionalistic
Attitude Toward Participation	Encouraging	Encouraging	Supports if on behalf of elite rule; otherwise, opposes
Attitude Toward Political Parties	Encouraging	Strong party loyalty	Discouraging
Attitude Toward Government Activity	Supports if activity is on behalf of the common good	Supports if on behalf of individual activity; opposes if on behalf of redistribution of wealth	Supports if on behalf of elite rule; otherwise, opposes
Attitude Toward Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	Strongly supportive	Ambivalent; support rights for themselves, but indifferent to rights of others	Indifferent; often hostile to the liberties and rights of minorities
Religious Groupings Most Commonly Supporting	Congregationalists, Mormons, Jews, Quakers	Lutherans, Roman Catholics, Methodists	Baptists, Presbyterians, Pentecostals
Geographic Area of Strongest Impact	Northernmost tier of states, plus Utah and Colorado	Middle north tier of states	Old South, plus New Mexico

A CAUTION: These are descriptions of general historical patterns only. They do not necessarily apply to the behavior of any specific family, individual, or group.

SOURCES: Daniel J. Elazar, *American Federalism: A View from the States*, 3rd ed. (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), 109–173; Ira Sharkansky, "The Utility of Elazar's Political Culture: A Research Note," in Daniel J. Elazar and Joseph Zikmund II, eds., *The Ecology of American Political Culture: Readings* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, 1975), 247–262; Robert L. Savage, "The Distribution and Development of Policy Values in the American States," in ibid., 263–286, Appendices A, B, and C.

Competency Connection
PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

Does your own family fit into the categories of this table, or is it an exception?

orientation, growing more important every decade, infused its original culture with an increasingly influential individualistic orientation. Many of the political patterns discussed in this book are easier to understand within the context of the Texas blend of cultures.

Not all Texans have shared the beliefs and attitudes that will be described here. In particular, as will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 (Voting, Campaigns, and Elections), African Americans and Mexican Americans have tended to be somewhat separate from the political culture of the dominant Anglo majority. Nevertheless, both history and present political institutions have imposed clear patterns on the assumptions that most Texans bring to politics.

A discussion of political cultures is mainly a discussion about general attitudes. It is not always easy to understand how general attitudes are translated into specific policies. But political culture is also related to political **ideology**—the cluster of beliefs and values that applies to specific governmental actions.

ideology A system of beliefs and values about the nature of the good life and the good society, and the part to be played by government in achieving them.

Part of the larger American political tradition is a basic philosophy toward government and politicians that was most famously expressed in a single sentence attributed to President Thomas Jefferson: "That government is best which governs least." Jefferson's philosophy has had a powerful presence in the United States in contemporary times. The name usually given to that philosophy is **conservatism**, and it has dominated Texas politics since the end of the Civil War.

conservatism A political ideology that, in general, opposes government regulation of economic life and supports government regulation of personal life.

The term *conservatism* is complex, and its implications change with time and situation. In general, however, it refers to a general hostility toward government activity, especially in the economic sphere. Most of the early White settlers came to Texas to seek their fortunes. They cared little about government and wanted no interference in their economic affairs. Their attitudes were consistent with the popular values of the Jeffersonian Democrats of the nineteenth

century: The less government the better, local control of what little government there was, and freedom from economic regulation, or "**laissez faire**" (a French phrase loosely translated as "leave it alone"). Conservatism is, in general, consistent with the individualistic political culture on economic issues (anti-welfare, for example) and consistent with the traditionalistic political culture on social issues (indifferent to civil rights, for example).

In general, Texas conservatism minimizes the role of government in society and in the economy, in particular. It stresses an individualism that maximizes the role of businesspeople in controlling the economy. To a Texas conservative, a good government is mainly one that does not regulate business very much, and keeps taxes low.

The resistance to government aid to the needy has resulted in many state policies that mark Texas as a state with an unusually stingy attitude toward the underprivileged. For example, among the fifty states and the District of Columbia, in the second decade of the twenty-first century, Texas ranked forty-fourth out of fifty-one in per-capita state and local government expenditures for public welfare programs.[23]

The policy areas discussed so far—regulations on business to protect workers and the environment, and spending to support society's less well-off—fall under the heading of what political scientists call "**economic issues**." On those issues, conservatives are anti-government. But there is another area of policy, called "**social issues**," in which conservatives tend to be pro-government. Social issues are those areas of potential government regulation of personal rather than economic life—abortion, prayers in public schools, and LGBTQ+ rights are three examples. Conservatives generally favor government activity to impose their version of moral behavior on people who would otherwise choose to behave differently than the conservatives would prefer them to.

There is another general attitude toward government, called either **liberalism** or **progressivism**, that accepts or even endorses government activity in regard to economic issues. Liberals support regulations on business to protect workers and the environment, and endorse government support of society's less fortunate. While being pro-government activity in the area of economic issues, however, liberals tend to oppose government activity in the area of social issues—they believe that whether or not a woman has an abortion should be up to the woman, not the government; they oppose official prayers in public schools; they believe that homosexuals should have the same rights to marry and otherwise participate in society as heterosexuals.

As a result of these contradictions in ideological beliefs, American political rhetoric can be confusing. Conservatives are loudly anti-government on economic issues, and loudly pro-government on social issues. Liberals are just as loud, but in defense of the opposite attitude toward government activity.

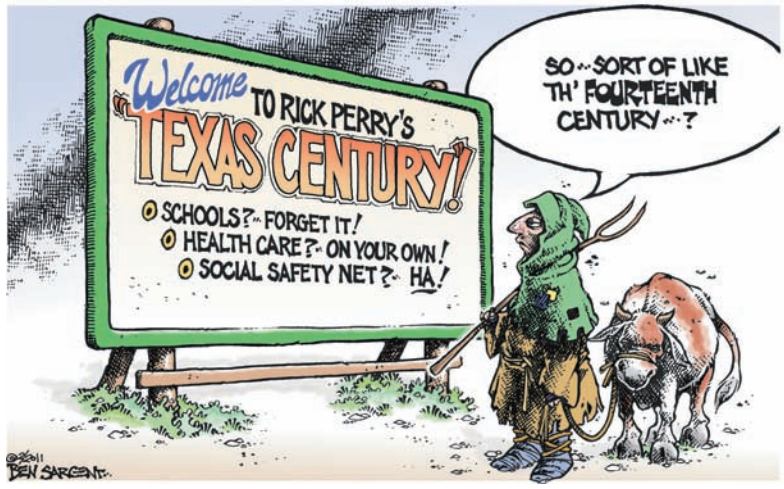
laissez faire A French phrase loosely meaning "leave it alone." It refers to the philosophy that values free markets and opposes government regulation of the economy.

economic issues Disputes over government policy regarding regulation of business to protect workers and the environment, types of and rates of taxes, and support for poor people.

social issues Disputes over government policy in regard to personal life, such as abortion, sexual behavior, and religion in public arenas such as the schools.

liberalism A political ideology that, in general, supports government regulation of economic life and opposes government regulation of personal life.

progressivism An alternative way of labeling the political ideology also known as "liberalism."



Liberal editorial cartoonist Ben Sargent presents the progressive view of conservative political ideology, as represented by former Governor Rick Perry.

Courtesy of Ben Sargent

Competency Connection
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Do you agree or disagree with Sargent?

Although conservatives have dominated Texas politics through most of its history, liberals have occasionally been elected to public office, and liberal ideas have sometimes been adopted as state policy. The conflict between liberalism and conservatism underlies much political argument in the United States. The way these two ideologies have formed the basis for much of Texas politics will be explored in Chapter 4.

Economy, Taxes, and Services

For much of the century after it won its freedom from Mexico in 1836, Texas was poor, rural, and agricultural. As summarized earlier in this chapter, however, in the twentieth century, its economy was transformed: first by the boom in the oil industry that began at Spindletop in 1901, and then by its diversification into petrochemicals, aerospace, computers, and many other industries. Metropolitan areas boomed along with the economy, and the state became the second most populous in the nation.

The state's political culture, however, has not changed as rapidly as its population and its economy. Texas's basic conservatism is evident in the way the state government treats business and industry. In 2018, for example, cable television business-channel CNBC ranked Texas as "America's Top State for Business" (Alaska came in last).[24] The ranking merely continued a tradition of the state being proclaimed as the best one for private industry. In 2020, for instance, an organization that counts the number of capital-investment projects in every state awarded Texas its "Governor's Cup," as the best state for business, for the eighth consecutive year.[25]

While in the short run, a favorable business climate consists of low taxes, weak labor unions, and an inactive government, in the long run these policies may create a fragile economy. Other observers are less admiring of the Texas economy and less optimistic about its future. For example, Prosperity Now is a private organization that sometimes grades each state in terms not only of its economic health at any one time, but also its capacity for positive growth in the future. It uses measures of the equality of wealth distribution, the opportunity for upward mobility, and the fairness of the tax laws to arrive at an overall estimate of a state's readiness to prosper in the future. In 2020 it ranked Texas only 39th, largely because of the state's large discrepancies of wealth between ethnic groups and its government's unwillingness to take on such projects as public transportation (Vermont came in first, Mississippi last).[26] Moreover, as the information in Table 1-3 illustrates, various rankings of quality of life do not paint Texas in such rosy tones. Whether or not the Lone Star State is a good place to live, in other words, depends on what is being measured.

Because of the Jeffersonian conservative philosophy underlying much of the activities of Texas government, it generally does little, compared to the governments of other states, to improve the lives of its citizens. As Table 1-2 illustrates, on several measures of state services, Texas ranks near the bottom. The state spends comparatively little on education, health, welfare, the environment, and the arts. Furthermore, it raises the relatively small amount of revenue it does spend in a "regressive" manner; that is, in a manner that falls unusually lightly on the rich and unusually heavily on the poor. The philosophy that dominates Texas politics holds that if government will just keep taxes low—especially on its wealthier citizens—and stay out of the way, society will take care of itself.

Liberals, viewing the facts on display in Tables 1-2 and 1-3, would argue that Texas's laissez faire ideology has had a pernicious effect on its quality of life. Texans, as a group, are so patriotic that it is difficult for them to believe that their state may be a comparatively undesirable place to live, but liberals would point to the sorts of evidence illustrated in Table 1-3. As the table emphasizes, the state ranks relatively low on measures of air cleanliness, the general health of its population, its freedom from crime, the educational status of its citizens, and other measures of civilized living. Liberals would argue that the policies evident in the first table have caused the problems evident in the second table. Whether the liberal critique of the state's conservative policies is justified is something that will be explored during the remaining chapters of this book.

TABLE 1-2 Texas Rank Among States in Expenditure and Taxation

Category	Year	Rank
a. Per-capita personal income	2017	30 (1 is richest)
b. State government per-capita spending	2017	47 (50 spends the least)
c. Per-capita state and local government expenditures for education	2017	23 (50 spends the least)
d. Average public-school teacher salary	2019	26 (1 pays the most)
e. Medicaid spending per enrollee	2017	21 (51 is lowest)
f. Average monthly benefit, Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Special Nutrition Program	2019	33 (50 is lowest)
g. Average monthly payment, Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)	2018	35 (50 is lowest)
h. Per capita state spending on arts agency	2020	33 (50 is lowest)
i. Per-capita state spending on environmental protection	2008	45 (50 is least)
j. Regressivity of state and local taxes	2019	2 (1 is most regressive)

*Includes Washington, D.C.

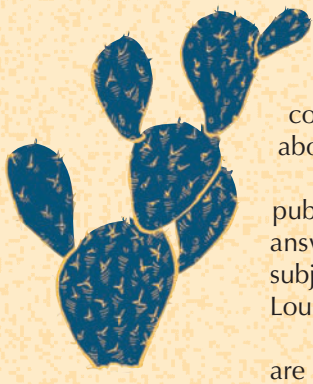
SOURCES: a from Kathleen O'Leary Morgan and Scott Morgan, *State Rankings 2020: A Statistical View of America* (Sage: Thousand Oaks, California, 2020), 102; b from ibid., 350; c from ibid., 137; d from ibid., 123; e from ibid., 537; f from ibid., 554; g from ibid., 546; h from ibid., 164; i from David M. Konisky and Neal D. Woods, "Environmental Policy," in Virginia Gray, Russell L. Hanson, and Thad Kousser, eds., *Politics in the American States: A Comparative Analysis*, 11th ed. (Los Angeles: CQ Press/Sage, 2018), 464; j from *Who Pays Taxes in America in 2019?* 6th edition (Washington, D.C.: Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy, 2019).

TABLE 1-3 Texas Rank in Measures of Quality of Life

Measure of Quality of Life	Year	Rank
a. Violent crime rate	2018	17 (1 is highest)
b. Overall crime rate	2018	21 (1 is highest)
c. Incarceration rate	2017	6 (1 is highest)
d. Percent of children living in poverty	2018	11 (1 is poorest)
e. Overall child well-being	2020	43 (1 is best)
f. Total fossil fuel emissions	2017	1 (1 is dirtiest)
g. Toxic releases: Surface water discharges	2018	1 (1 is dirtiest)
h. Average SAT score	2019	43 (1 is best)
i. Overall education score	2020	34 (1 is best)
j. "Environmental quality" rank	2018	43 (1 is cleanest)
k. "Economic well-being"	2020	37 (1 is most livable)

SOURCES: a from Kathleen O'Leary Morgan and Scott Morgan, *State Rankings 2020: A Statistical View of America* (Thousand Oaks: Sage/CQ Press, 2020), 33; b from ibid., 30; c from ibid., 58; d from ibid., 521; e "Kids Count Data Book Overall Rank," from the website of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.aecf.org; f from Morgan and Morgan, *State Rankings 2020*, 230; g from ibid., 235; h from Allen Cheng, *"Average SAT Scores by State,"* October 6, 2019, https:blog/prepsccholar.com/average-sat-scores-by-state-most-recent; i from *US News and World Report, "Education Rankings: Measuring How Well States Are Educating Their Students,"* 2020; j from WalletHub, 2018: https://wallethub.com/edu/greenest-states/11987/; k from Annie E. Casey Foundation, cited above in e.

ISSUE SPOTLIGHT:
Don't Worry, Be Happy



The measures of quality of life reported in Table 1-3 are *objective*. That is, they summarize how Texas ranks in the sorts of living situations that can be measured from the outside. On those measures, Texas looks like a comparatively poor place to live. But what about the *subjective*—the way people feel about themselves on the inside?

In 2009, researchers led by Professor Andrew Oswald of the University of Warwick published their conclusions after examining a 2005 survey of 1.3 million Americans' answers to questions about their satisfaction with their lives. On the basis of that subjective measurement, Texas was one of the happiest states, ranking number fifteen. Louisiana scored as the happiest state, while New York was the least happy.

So, is Texas a good place to live? The answer may depend on what measurements are used as evidence.

Source: "Louisiana the Happiest State, Study Says," *Austin American-Statesman*, December 18, 2009, A13.

Competency Connection
SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Which measurement do you prefer?

The People of Texas

In many ways, Texas is the classic American melting pot of different peoples, although it occasionally seems more like a boiling cauldron. The state was originally populated by various Native American tribes. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Spaniards conquered the land, and from the intermingling of the conquerors and the conquered came the "mestizos," persons of mixed Spanish and Native American blood. In the nineteenth century, Anglos wrested the land from the heirs of the Spaniards, and the remaining Native Americans. They often brought Black slaves with them. Soon waves of immigration arrived from Europe and Asia, and more mestizos came from Mexico. After a brief outflow of population as a result of the oil price depression of the late 1980s, the long-term pattern of immigration resumed and brought many more thousands during the 1990s and beyond.

The Census

At the end of each decade, the national government takes a census of each state's population. Table 1-4 shows the official Texas numbers for 1990 and 2010, and the estimated percentage of the population for the three major ethnic groups in 2017. (We are unable to report on the exact population of each ethnic group in 2020 because the U. S. Census did not release that information until after our book went to press). The Census always fails to count a few people because of accident and evasion, and many observers suspected that the number of uncounted was greater than usual in 2020 because of the problems created by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the official 2020 figures for Texas showed a population of 29,183,290, an increase of 16.4% since 2010. The extra 4,103,290 Texans entitled the Lone Star State to an additional two seats in the U. S. House of Representatives, bringing its total to thirty-eight.

The most significant fact revealed by all the censuses of the past four decades is the continuing increase in the proportion of Texas residents who are of Hispanic origin. Whereas Hispanics (a term used interchangeably with Latino), the great majority of whom, in Texas, are either Mexican or

TABLE 1-4 The Texas Population, 1990 to 2017

Ethnic Group	1990	2010	2017 Percent of total Estimated by Census
Anglo (Non-Hispanic White)	10,291,680	11,370,300	42.0%
African American	2,021,632	2,866,500	12.7
Hispanic or Latino* (of any race)	4,339,905	9,538,000	39.4
Other	378,565	1,305,200	5.9

*The great majority of Hispanics in Texas are Mexican American or Mexican.

NOTE: Only the total state population, not individual demographic counts by state, was available from the 2020 U. S. Census when this book went to press.

SOURCES: For 1990, *1992–93 Texas Almanac and State Industrial Guide* (Dallas: A. H. Belo Corp., 1991); for 2010, http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/48000. html; for 2017 estimate, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/tx,US/PST045217

Mexican American, constituted 21 percent of the state's population in 1980, they totaled more than 40% in 2020. The other important minority group, African Americans, comprised about 12 percent of the state's citizens, a percentage that has not changed appreciably over the last several decades.

The inevitable consequence of the increasing trend-line of the Latino population had arrived in 2005, when the Census Bureau announced an estimate that Texas's population consisted of 50.2 percent Black plus Latino.[27] Subsequent censuses confirmed the increasing proportion of the state's population that was minority, and the falling percentage that was Anglos. If present population growth rates continue, Hispanics will soon constitute a majority of Texans.

The distribution of population in Texas shows evidence of three things: the initial patterns of migration, the influence of geography and climate, and the location of the cities. The Hispanic migration came first, north from Mexico, and to this day is still concentrated in South and West Texas, especially in the counties that border the Rio Grande. Likewise, African Americans still live predominantly in the eastern half of the state. As one moves from east to west across Texas, annual rainfall drops by about five inches per 100 miles. East Texas has a moist climate and supports intensive farming, while West Texas is dry and requires pumping from underground aquifers to maintain agriculture. The overall distribution of settlement reflects the food production capability of the local areas, with East Texas remaining more populous. Cities developed at strategic locations, usually on rivers or the seacoast, and the state's population is heavily concentrated in the urban areas.

The Political Relevance of Population

Our division of the Texas population into Anglos, Latinos, and African Americans reflects political realities. All citizens are individuals, form their own opinions, and have the right to choose to behave as they see fit. No one is a prisoner of his or her group, and every generalization has exceptions. Nevertheless, it is a long-observed fact that people in similar circumstances often see things from similar points of view, and it therefore helps to clarify political conflict to be aware of the shared similarities.

In this book Anglos, Latinos and African Americans will often be discussed as groups, without an intent to be unfair to individual exceptions. Historically, both minority groups have been treated badly by the Anglo majority. Today, the members of both groups are, in general, less wealthy than Anglos. For example, according to a 2015 estimate by the U.S. Census, the mean household income of both Latinos and Blacks was about 62 percent of the figure for Anglos in the state. On the one hand, this represented a narrowing of the income gap between minorities and Anglos that existed in 1990. On the other hand, the difference in wealth was still very substantial and large enough to cause economic conflict.[28]

Political differences often accompany economic divisions. As will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5, Mexican Americans and African Americans tend to hold more liberal political opinions than do Anglos and to vote accordingly. This is not to say that there are no conservative minority

citizens and no liberal Anglos. Nevertheless, looked at as groups, Latinos, African Americans, and Anglos do display general patterns of belief and behavior that can be discussed without being unfair to individual exceptions. As a result, as the minority population increases in size relative to the Anglo population, its greater liberalism is likely to make itself felt, sooner or later, in the voting booth. Furthermore, Texans of Asian background are a relatively small, but growing proportion of the population (about 5 % according to a 2016 census estimate). As their population becomes larger, they may exert an independent influence percent on the political process. Texas's evolving mix of population is therefore constantly changing the state's politics.

Summary

LO 1.1 **Texas history is filled with major events that are politically and economically relevant to the state today.** The themes of this chapter are that parts of the Texas experience have changed a great deal—its transition from a rural, agricultural state to an urban, industrial one, for example—and parts have changed very little—the continuing political conservatism of its citizens, for example.

LO 1.2 **Democratic theory can be used to compare the reality of Texas politics to the democratic ideal.** This textbook examines the way Texas actually functions and compares it to the ideal democratic polity.

LO 1.3 **There are pro and con arguments about whether it is desirable, or even possible, for Texas to have a "foreign policy."** But whether the "con" arguments are good or bad, Texas will go on interacting with foreign countries, because it is important for the state's economy to do so.

LO 1.4 **Three political cultures apply to Texas history and the state's politics today.** Historically, the dominant Anglo culture has combined both the traditionalist and the individualist cultures into its own blend of values. This combination of political cultures has resulted in a state pattern of political conservatism in most eras, including the present.

LO 1.5 **There is an overall pattern to the relationship of Texas government to the Texas economy that influences whether the state is or is not a good place to live.** There is a politically conservative culture that has resulted in a government that is almost always friendly to business, both in having very low tax rates and in refraining from passing regulations to protect workers and the environment. Some evidence exists to support the claim that, objectively, Texas is a rather poor place to live compared to the other states, as well as the liberal claim that Texas's conservative public policies have caused the state to rank low on the indicators of the good life.

LO 1.6 **The ratios of Anglos, Latinos, and African Americans in the state's population matter to a book about Texas government.** The percentage of Latinos in the state's population is growing, with several possible future consequences of that growth.

Critical Thinking

1. If you were asked to evaluate the legitimacy of a state, or a national government, by the standards of democratic theory, what indicators would you look for? That is, what sort of observable measures would supply you with the kind of evidence you needed for an evaluation?
2. Would you say that the members of your family, in general, would fit into the moralistic, traditionalistic, or individualistic political cultures? What sort of examples of personal statements or behavior would you use to answer this question? Are there individual members of your family who seem to have a different "personal political culture" from the other members? Again, what sort of evidence would you use to answer this question?

(Top) The nine judges of the Texas Court of Criminal Apeals and (bottom) the nine justices of the Supreme Court of Texas, as of January, 2021.

Texas Judicial Branch

The Constitutional Setting 2

Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you should be able to:

LO 2.1 Understand the nature of federal systems of government.

LO 2.2 Understand the purposes of constitutions as well as the extent to which these are reflected in the Texas Constitution.

LO 2.3 Explain how the rights written into constitutions and other rights assumed but not written sometimes conflict with one another, and how those conflicts have recently emerged in Texas politics.

LO 2.4 Describe the history of Texas constitutions.

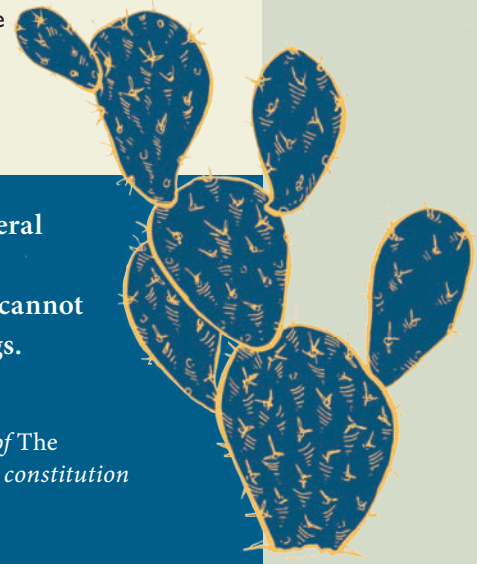
LO 2.5 Discuss the key aspects of the present Texas Constitution.

LO 2.6 Analyze the need for and politics of constitutional change.

Since its ratification in 1789, the U.S. **Constitution** frequently has been used as a model by emerging nations. State constitutions, however, seldom enjoy such admiration. Indeed, the constitution of the state of Texas is more often ridiculed than praised because of its length, its obscurity, and its outdated, unworkable provisions.

Indeed, state constitutions in general tend to be very rigid and include too many specific details. They do not follow the advice of Alexander Hamilton (cited below). As a result, Texas and many other states must resort to frequent **constitutional amendments**, which are formal changes in the basic governing document.

In federal systems, which are systems of government that provide for a division and sharing of powers between a national government and state or regional governments, the constitutions of the states complement the national Constitution. Article VI of the U.S. Constitution provides that the Constitution, laws, and treaties of the national government take precedence over the constitutions and laws of the states. This provision is known as the "supremacy of the laws" clause. Although the U.S. Constitution is supreme, state constitutions are



> **Constitutions should consist of only general provisions; the reason is that they must necessarily be permanent, and that they cannot calculate for the possible change of things.**
>
> Alexander Hamilton,
> *American statesman and one of the authors of* The Federalist Papers *urging adoption of the U.S. constitution*

still important because state governments are responsible for many basic programs and services, such as education, that affect citizens daily.

This chapter begins by describing federalism, and then examines purposes of constitutions. It outlines the development of the several Texas constitutions. It elaborates the principal features of the state's current document, and provides an overview of constitutional change, including both amendments and the movement for constitutional reform.

American Federalism

constitution The basic law of a state or nation that organizes government, both assigns and limits governmental authority, and enumerates citizens' rights.

constitutional amendments A change in a constitution that is approved by both the legislative body, and, in Texas, the voters. National constitutional amendments are not approved directly by voters.

The way in which the national constitution establishes the relationship between the nation and the states was unique when the U.S. Constitution was written in 1787. The only existing models were totally centralized governments on the one hand, or loose alliances of regions, clans, or tribes on the other. As noted in Chapter 1, the American system is known as *federalism*, which divides power between the central and regional governments. Twenty-six countries now have a federal system, but the dominance of the central government varies greatly across nations such as the United States, Australia, Canada, India, Mexico, and Venezuela.

Division of Power

reserved clause Governmental powers reserved for the states and the people by the Tenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.

dual federalism (layer cake) A division of powers between the nation and the states that emphasizes each level operating independently.

cooperative federalism (marble cake) A concept of federalism emphasizing cooperative and collective interaction between the nation and the states.

picket fence federalism A refinement of the concept of cooperative federalism that also emphasizes the role of the bureaucracy and of private interest groups in policy implementation.

The Tenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution states, "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people." This provision is known as the **reserved clause** because it assigns powers to the states and the people if they have not previously been reserved for the national government or legally prohibited. No such provision exists in state constitutions; the local governments—cities, counties, and special districts—are creatures of the state and have only the powers given to them by the state government.

In trying to understand American politics, scholars often find it helpful to use metaphors—figures of speech that compare one thing to another. Metaphors about federalism have changed over time. Originally, people discussing American federalism thought of the authority of the federal government, and the authority of the state governments, as being quite separate. States, for example, were not expected to intervene in foreign policy, and the national government left education policy to the states. The technical term for this arrangement was **dual federalism.** Observers used the metaphor of a **layer cake**, in which the chocolate layer sat on top of the vanilla layer without blending with it, to help themselves understand the idea.[1] During the 1960s, however, as the national government became ever more involved in many state policies such as education, observers realized that the layer-cake metaphor was misleading. Political scientists started using the technical term **cooperative federalism** to describe a system in which both layers of authority seemed to be involved in a complicated relationship of policy making. They began to apply the metaphor of a **marble cake**, in which the chocolate and vanilla portions are swirled together in an unorganized pattern, to describe the way the American system actually worked.

More recently, observers have begun to use the metaphor of **picket fence federalism** to describe a variant of cooperative federalism in which all levels of government work cooperatively. The added element in picket fence federalism is the factor of the "pickets," which are the governmental functions involving complex bureaucratic and interest group relationships that affect policy implementation. The rails are the levels of government. For example, disaster relief involves national, state, and local governments as well as the Red Cross and other charitable organizations, and a variety of interest groups ranging from those concerned with public health to those concerned about economic interests.