



# Public Opinion in the 21st Century: Let the People Speak? (New Directions in Political Behavior)

*By Russell Brooker, Todd Schaefer*

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### **Review**

Note: Each chapter includes a Conclusion, Suggested Reading, and Notes. I. Introduction 1. A Decent Respect to the Opinions of Mankind What is Public Opinion? Public Opinion in Practice The Approach of this Book The People Speak: Public Opinion and the Democratic Dialogue Public Opinion and the Democratic Dilemma Recent Views on the Role of Public Opinion 2. Measuring Public Opinion: Survey Research Types of Surveys Cross-Sectional Surveys versus Panel Studies The Population and the Sample Probability Sampling and Randomness How Samples Can Be Biased Questions and the Questionnaire Sampling Error and Other Errors Advantages and Disadvantages of Survey Research Two Variants of Survey Research Who Conducts Public Opinion Research? A Crisis in Survey Research? Interactive Learning Exercise: Gathering Survey Research Data 3. Measuring Public Opinion: Other Methods Other Quantitative Methods Qualitative Methods Informal Ways to Measure Public Opinion Interactive Learning Exercise: Analysis of Community Opinion II. The Context of Public Opinion 4. Organizing Public Opinion Party identification Ideology Self-Placement on the Liberal-Conservative Continuum The Relationship Between Party Identification and Ideology Interactive Learning Exercise: Classifying Students Along the Liberal-Conservative Continuum 5. Sources of Public Opinion: Political Socialization The Significance of Political Socialization The Socialization Process Agents of Socialization Adult Socialization 6. The Mass Media and Public Opinion The Importance of the Media to the Public and Democracy Media Impact on Public Opinion: How Great? Media in the Democratic Dialogue: Covering Public Opinion The Democratic Dilemma and the Relationship Between the Media and the Public III. Voices of the People: Public Opinions on Political Matters 7. Historical Development of Political Issues The Four Issue Domains Why Opinions Change 8. Public Opinion Today Income: Economic and Social Welfare Issues Gender and the Gender Gap Race and Racial Issues Is There a "Principle-Implementation Gap" Among Whites? The Issue Domains Today and the American Party System Interactive Learning Exercise: Analyzing Public Opinion IV. The People Speak: Expressing Public Opinion in Practice 9. Speaking Up: The People Tell the Government What They Think Types of Political Engagement and Participation Political Engagement and Participation by Groups Participants' Opinions versus Nonparticipants' Opinions Interactive Learning Exercise: Political Socialization and Political Participation 10. The Government Listens: Taking the Pulse of the People The History of Polling Uses of Political Polling and Focus Groups Interactive Learning Exercise: Analysis of Opinions on Drunk Driving V. Listening to the People? Government Responsiveness to Public Opinion 11. Should Government Listen? The Democratic Dilemma The Political Capacity of the Public The Case Against the Public (or the Incompetent Public) The Rebuttal: The Rational Public Public Support for Democracy Interactive Learning Exercise: Test Your Political Knowledge 12. Does the Government Listen? The Democratic Dialogue The Relationship Between Public Opinion and Public Policy Does the Government Listen to the People? Three Competing Views 13. The "New Referendum:" Presidential Approval Public Opinion and Presidential Performance Analyzing Presidential Approval The Politics of Public Support Interactive Learning Exercise: Using Presidential Approval to Apply What You've Learned VI. Conclusion 14. Public Opinion and American Politics at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century Revisiting the Democratic Dilemma Distortions in the People's Voice The People's Voice Grows

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