

Unit III Texas Politics

- Overview of Political System
- Elements of a political system
 - **Interest Groups**
 - **Media**
 - **Party System in Texas**
 - **Elections, Campaigns and Political Behavior**

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1

Political System: Defined

- “The institutions, machinery, and processes that enable the people to select the individuals and groups who will govern and indicate to those selected what policies and programs are desired.”

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2

Functions of a Political System

- Articulate the demands of society
- Select the individuals who occupy positions of power
- Provide clues as to the policies that government should adopt

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3

Environments which Influence a Political System

- Physical- geography and natural resources
- Legal- constitution and laws
- Social- ethnic/racial balance, political beliefs, religious beliefs, educational level
- Economic- wealth levels, economic activities, wealth distribution

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4

Types of Democratic Systems

- Elitist-ruling oligarchy of interests
- Participatory-universal citizen participation
- Pluralistic-competition between interest groups creates public policy
(Pluralism with excessive interest group involvement which thwarts development of policy in public interest is known as Hyperpluralism)

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5

Political Culture

- “System of shared values, beliefs, and habits of behavior in regard to government and politics.”

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6

Elements of the Texas Political Culture

- Conservatism
 - General hostility to government activity
 - Stress on individualism
 - Belief in free market economy-(laissez-faire)
 - Emphasis on low taxes
- Pseudo laissez-faire economics
 - Support for business and wealthy
 - Belief in Social Darwinism

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7

Voters, Campaigns, and Elections

Texas Government

Suffrage and Voting

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9

Constitutional Provisions for Suffrage

- US Constitution
 - **Race- 15th Amendment**
 - **Sex- 19th Amendment**
 - **Taxes- (especially poll tax) - 24th Amendment**
 - **Age- if >18 years- 26th Amendment**
- Texas Constitution (bars voting by)
 - **Mentally incompetent**
 - **Felons**
 - **Paupers**

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10

Legal Requirements in Texas for Voting

- US Citizenship
- Over 18 years of Age
- Residency in state and county for 30 days prior to voting

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11

Registration Procedures

- Application-
 - In person
 - By mail
- Effective 31st day after application received
- Good until Dec 31 of odd numbered year
- Automatically renewed unless persons has moved or died

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12

Conditions for an Ideal Democracy

- Election campaigns are contests by opposing candidates in elections in which
 - Candidates debate issues of public policy rather than in personal insults and negative campaigns
 - Voters vote on the basis of policy issues
 - Virtually universal participation

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13

Elections in Texas

- Public Elections-
 - held by governmental body
 - to decide issues or elect public officials
- Types of public elections
 - Partisan- (1st Tues after 1st Monday in November of even year
 - Non-partisan- all other public elections in Texas

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14

Partisan Elections

- Securing a ballot position
 - Nominees of legal political parties
 - Qualified independent candidates
 - Declared write-in candidates
- Conducting the election
 - County Clerk or Election Administrator
 - Texas Secretary of State supervises
 - Cost is paid by county

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15

Non-partisan Elections

- Types of non-partisan elections
 - Special elections- called to fill interim vacancies or decide on issues
 - Called and paid for by the unit of government responsible
 - Generally conducted by this unit unless contracted to another unit of government
 - General (local) elections
 - held on one of the “uniform” election dates
 - 2nd Saturday in May/ 1st Tues after 1st Monday in odd year
 - plurality vs majority (majority requires runoff election)

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16

Types of Elections

- At-large- all voters vote on all offices to be filled
 - By-place or position- if there are multiple positions for the same office, voters chose from among candidates running for designated places or positions.
- District elections- voters may vote only for candidates in the district where they live.

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17

Ballot Listing

- Office column ballot- candidates listed by office sought. No indication of party affiliation noted on ballot.
- Party column ballot- candidates listed by party and by office sought

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18

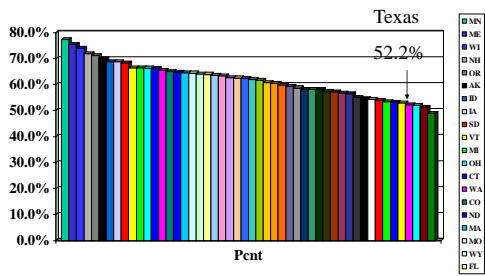
Plurality Vote
vs Majority Vote

- Plurality- candidates receiving the most votes wins. If there are more than two, a candidates may win without an absolute majority.
- Majority- candidate must receive more votes than all opponents combined. This may require a run-off election.

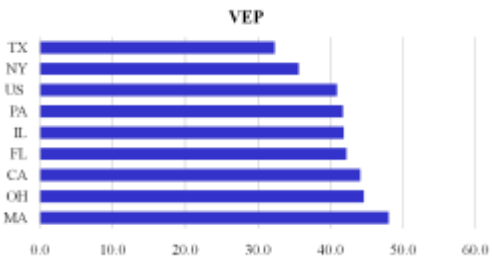
Party Primaries

- Held by the major parties primaries
 - 1st Tuesday March
 - Runoff on 2nd Tuesday in April
- Qualification of candidates
 - Filing fees
 - Petition
- Financed by
 - Filing fees
 - State of Texas

Voter Turnout in US-2008



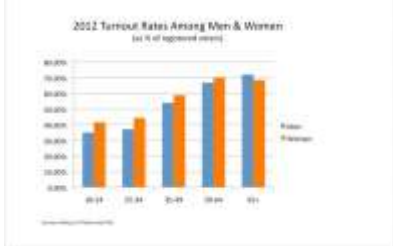
Voting Turnout Nov 2010



Gender Voting



Gender Gap by Age Brackets



Presidential Turnout 2012

- Romney (Rep) 4,569,843
- Obama (Dem) 3,308,124
- Johnson (Lib) 88,580
- Others 27,204
- Totals 8,021,055

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25

Voter Turnout Compared

STATE	TURNOUT	RANK	STATE	TURNOUT	RANK	STATE	TURNOUT	RANK
Alabama	56.1%	9 (1)	Missouri	62.1%	18 (17)	Rhode Island	58.6%	85 (21)
Alaska	73.2%	2 (2)	New Jersey	63.4%	16 (16)	South Carolina	57.1%	98 (22)
Arizona	71.1%	3 (3)	Colorado	62.0%	20 (15)	Texas	56.0%	99 (23)
Arkansas	50.8%	4 (4)	Connecticut	61.5%	21 (14)	Vermont	65.0%	40 (18)
California	60.2%	5 (5)	Delaware	61.1%	22 (13)	Washington	64.3%	41 (19)
Colorado	62.0%	6 (6)	District of Columbia	68.0%	1 (1)	West Virginia	46.9%	100 (24)
Connecticut	61.5%	7 (7)	Florida	58.3%	23 (12)	Wisconsin	62.5%	42 (20)
Delaware	61.1%	8 (8)	Georgia	58.2%	24 (11)	Wyoming	58.2%	25 (10)
District of Columbia	68.0%	1 (1)	Idaho	58.2%	25 (11)			
Florida	58.3%	23 (12)	Illinois	60.8%	26 (9)			
Georgia	58.2%	24 (11)	Indiana	58.2%	27 (8)			
Hawaii	65.0%	39 (4)	Iowa	68.2%	28 (7)			
Idaho	58.2%	25 (11)	Kansas	60.2%	29 (6)			
Illinois	60.8%	26 (9)	Kentucky	58.2%	30 (5)			
Indiana	58.2%	27 (8)	Louisiana	58.2%	31 (4)			
Iowa	68.2%	28 (7)	Maine	68.2%	32 (3)			
Kansas	60.2%	29 (6)	Massachusetts	68.2%	33 (2)			
Kentucky	58.2%	30 (5)	Michigan	68.2%	34 (1)			
Louisiana	58.2%	31 (4)	Minnesota	68.2%	35 (0)			
Maine	68.2%	32 (3)	Mississippi	58.2%	36 (0)			
Massachusetts	68.2%	33 (2)	Montana	58.2%	37 (0)			
Michigan	68.2%	34 (1)	Nebraska	58.2%	38 (0)			
Minnesota	68.2%	35 (0)	Nevada	58.2%	39 (0)			
Mississippi	58.2%	36 (0)	New Hampshire	68.2%	36 (0)			
Missouri	62.1%	18 (17)	New Jersey	63.4%	16 (16)			
Montana	58.2%	37 (0)	New Mexico	68.2%	36 (0)			
Nebraska	58.2%	38 (0)	New York	68.2%	36 (0)			
Nevada	58.2%	39 (0)	North Carolina	68.2%	36 (0)			
New Hampshire	68.2%	36 (0)	North Dakota	68.2%	36 (0)			
New Jersey	63.4%	16 (16)	Ohio	68.2%	36 (0)			
New Mexico	68.2%	36 (0)	Oklahoma	68.2%	36 (0)			
New York	68.2%	36 (0)	Oregon	68.2%	36 (0)			
North Carolina	68.2%	36 (0)	Rhode Island	68.2%	36 (0)			
North Dakota	68.2%	36 (0)	South Carolina	68.2%	36 (0)			
Ohio	68.2%	36 (0)	South Dakota	68.2%	36 (0)			
Oklahoma	68.2%	36 (0)	Tennessee	68.2%	36 (0)			
Oregon	68.2%	36 (0)	Texas	68.2%	36 (0)			
Rhode Island	68.2%	36 (0)	Utah	68.2%	36 (0)			
South Carolina	68.2%	36 (0)	Vermont	68.2%	36 (0)			
South Dakota	68.2%	36 (0)	Washington	68.2%	36 (0)			
Tennessee	68.2%	36 (0)	West Virginia	68.2%	36 (0)			
Texas	68.2%	36 (0)	Wisconsin	68.2%	36 (0)			
Utah	68.2%	36 (0)	Wyoming	68.2%	36 (0)			
Vermont	68.2%	36 (0)						
Washington	68.2%	36 (0)						
West Virginia	68.2%	36 (0)						
Wisconsin	68.2%	36 (0)						
Wyoming	68.2%	36 (0)						

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26

General Election 2012

- Reg Voters 13,646,226
- VAP 18,710,830
 - % of VAP registered 74.65%
- Turnout 7,993,851
- % of turnout to registered 58.58%
- % of turnout to VAP 43.73%

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27

Primary Turnout 2014 Republican

- Reg. Voters 13,601,324
- VAP 18,915,297
 - % of VAP registered 71.91%
- Turnout 1,358,07
 - % of turnout to registered 9.98%

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28

Primary Turnout 2014 Democratic Primary

- Registered Voters 13,601,3243
- Voting Age Population 18,915,297
 - % of VAP registered 71.91%
- Turnout 560,033
 - % of turnout to reg voters 4.12%
 - % of turnout to VAP 2.96%

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29

November 2014

- Registered Voters 14,025,441
- Voting Age Population 18,915,297
 - Percentage of VAP Reg 74.15%
- Turnout 4,727,208
 - % of turnout to registered 33.70%
 - % of turnout to VAP 24.99%

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30

Trends in Texas Politics

- Impact of ideologically oriented groups
- Impact of Political Action Committees
- Inclusion of new groups
 - Women
 - Hispanics
 - Afro-Americans
 - Religious groups
- Return to partisan equality in 2014-2020?

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31

Interest Groups in the Political Process

Texas Government

Interest Groups

Organized collection of individuals
that are organized

- Are bound together by shared attitudes or concerns
- To make demands on political institutions in order to realize goals

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33

Analytical Approaches to Interest Groups

- Level of involvement
- Distribution of membership
- Membership structure
- Organizational patterns

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34

Classification by Degree of Involvement

- Primary- goals of group are completely political
- Secondary- main goals are not achieved by political means, but political goals are significant
- Incidental- generally non-political, but may become involved when necessary

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35

Distribution of Membership

- Local- membership confined to a very small geographical area
- Regional- membership spreads beyond local areas, but is not national
- National- members drawn from the entire nation

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36

Types of Membership Structure

- Individual memberships- only persons may belong to group
- Organizations- membership extended to groups
- Hybrid- both persons and groups may belong

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37

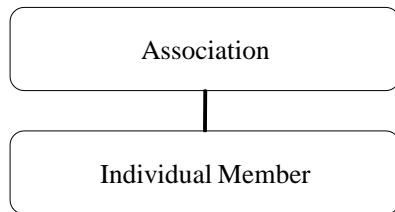
Organizational Patterns

- Unitary- only one national organization exists. Members belong directly
- Federated- may have local, state, and national units
- Confederated- groups belong, may share goals and efforts

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38

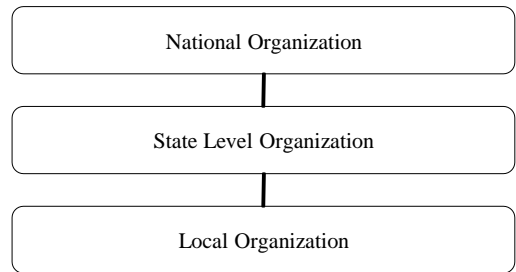
Unitary System



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39

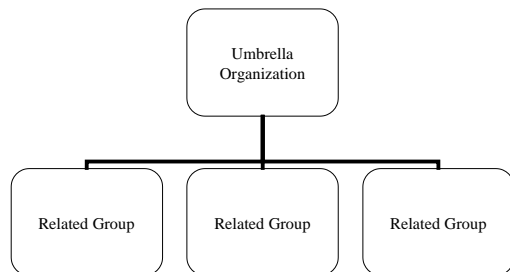
Federated Organization
(Members may belong to all levels)



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40

Confederated Organization



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41

Functional Classifications

- Economic
 - Business
 - Labor
 - Professional Groups
- Ideological
 - Minorities
 - Public Interest Groups

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42

Factors Affecting Organizational Success

- Size of membership
- Cohesion (focus)
- Geographical distribution
- Economic resources
- Leadership
- Reputation
- Public support of goals

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43

Reasons to Join Groups

- Material benefits
- Social (solitary)
- Ideological/shared beliefs

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44

Tools of Influence for Interest Groups

- Lobbying
- Influencing public opinion
- Legal action
- Direct action
- **Electioneering***
- **Campaign contributions***
- **Prohibited for a 501(C)(3) filer*

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45

Lobby Registration

<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/>

- Levels of expenditure >\$500/quarter on covered expenses
- Compensation & Reimbursement >\$1000/quarter on covered expenses (exemption if less than 5% of compensated time is spent lobbying)

See Chapter 305, Government Code, VACS

<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/statutes/305.htm#003>

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46

Costs for Registration

- Fees paid to Texas Ethics Commission
- Non-profit organization- \$100/year
- All others- \$500/year

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47

Classification of Lobbyists

- Citizen lobbyists-represent the interests of a group or self
- Paid Lobbyists
 - representatives of business, trade, labor, or professional groups
 - hired guns (lobbying firms or lawyers)
 - governmental liaison representatives

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48

Texas Political Parties and Elections

<http://www.txdemocrats.org/>



<http://www.texasgop.org>



<http://www.greenpartyus.org/>



<http://www.lp.org/>

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Texas Political Parties

- Political party- “any group, however loosely organized, seeking to elect governmental officeholders under a given label”

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50

Functions of Political Parties

- Intermediaries between electorate and government
- Recruitment of candidates
- Contest elections and mobilize voters
- Organize and manage government
- Accountability to voters
- Conflict resolution
- Agenda setting

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51

Basis of Party Conflict

- Ideology- a system of beliefs and values about the nature of society, the relationship between government and the economy, moral values, and the conduct of government
 - a) Conservatism
 - b) Liberalism

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52

Basis of Party Conflict

- Interests- something of value or some personal characteristic that people share that is affected by government activity
 - a) economic interests
 - b) personal interests- race, ethnic, religion

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53

Eras of Party History in Texas

- One party period, 1876-1952
- Modified one party, 1952-1978
- Two party era, 1978-present

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54

Classification of Parties

- Major political parties- received at least 20% of vote for Governor in last general election. **MUST** use direct primary to nominate.
- Minor parties- received less than 20% of the vote for Governor in last general election May use any legal method to nominate candidates. Usually conventions.

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55

Legal Requirements for Parties

- Maintain required machinery
- Nominate by methods required by law and follow laws on internal procedure
- Make all report required by law
 - **financial**
 - **officers**
 - **procedures**

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56

Required Structure for Parties

- Committees
 - **State Executive Cmt**
 - 31 Committeemen
 - 31 Committeewomen
 - Chair/Vice-Chair
 - Others
 - **County Executive Cmt**
 - County Chair
 - Precinct Cmt Members
- Conventions
 - State Convention
(Date in June, Even Year)
 - County Convention
(2nd Sat after primary in March)
 - Precinct Convention
(Night of primary, 2nd Tues in March)

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57

The Texas Media



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Newsgathering Sources

- Capitol News Corps- full-time -approximately 60 full-time staffers
 - Associated Press
 - Major dailies
 - Television bureaus
 - News radio stations

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59

Types of Mass Media in Texas Newspapers

- Newspapers
 - Major dailies- *Houston Chronicle, Dallas Morning News, Fort Worth Star-Telegram, Austin American Statesman, San Antonio Express-News, El Paso Times*
 - Other dailies- approximately 80
 - Weeklies- no really accurate count, number constantly changes

For detailed listings see
<http://www.texaspress.com/onlinepapers.html>

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60

Types of Mass Media in Texas Magazines

- Newsmagazines (with political content)
 - *Texas Monthly*
 - *Texas Observer*
 - *Texas Tribune*

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61

Types of Mass Media in Texas Electronic

- Radio Stations
 - News radio stations
 - Drive music (rock, country, oldies, black music, Hispanic)
 - National Public Radio
 - Local AM community stations
 - Religious stations- generally AM/low power

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62

Types of Mass Media in Texas Electronic

- Television (approximately 20 separate markets)
 - Major markets- Houston, Dallas/Ft Worth, Austin-San Antonio, Rio Grande Valley, El Paso
 - Secondary markets- less than million- examples- Tyler/Longview, Bryan/College Station, Victoria, Corpus Christi, Beaumont-Port Arthur-Orange
 - Cable News- CNN, Cspan, MTV, BET, Hispanic Channels

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63

Roles of the Mass Media

- Agenda setting- selection of events, level of coverage
- Agenda building- shapes climate for political action
 - proactive - seeks to initiate change
 - reactive- reacts which issues are made public

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64

Trends in Mass Media

- Concentration of ownership/ cross-ownership
 - Hearst Corp- *Houston Chronicle*, *SA Express-News*, *Beaumont Enterprise*, *Midland Reporter-Telegram*, *Plainview Daily Herald*, *Laredo Morning Times*
<http://www.hearstcorp.com/>
 - A.H. Belo- *Dallas Morning News*, *Arlington Daily News*, *Garland Daily News*, *Grand Prairie Daily News*, *Irving Daily News*, *Mid-Cities Daily News*, *Richardson Daily News*, *Metrocrest News*, WFAA (Dallas), KHOU (Houston)
<http://www.belo.com/compa.html>
 - Clear Channel Corporation 1200 radio stations, 100 TV stations
<http://www.clearchannel.com/>

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65

Trends in Mass Media

- Lin Broadcasting-KXAS-TV (Dallas-Ft Worth), KXAN-TV (Austin)
- Cox Enterprises- *Austin American-Statesman*, *Longview News-Journal*, *Lufkin Daily News*, *Daily Sentinel* (Nacogdoches), *Waco Tribune-Herald*
- Hart-Hanks Communications- *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, *Abilene Reporter-News*, *San Angelo Standard-Times*, *Harte-Hanks Community Papers*, KENS (Houston)
- Capital Cities/ ABC- *Ft Worth Star Telegram*, KTRK-TV

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66

Major Newsgathering Concerns

- Pack journalism
- “flacks”- role of paid public relations agents for agencies and politicians
- Shield laws
- Media bias
- Open meetings/ open records

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67

Major Media Organizations

- Freedom of Information Foundation- political arm which works on Open Meeting/Records
 - <http://www.foift.org/>
- Texas Media- lobby arm of media organization
- Texas Daily Newspaper Association*
- Texas Press Association*
- Society of Professional Journalists*
 - *501(C)(3) organization

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68

Media and Campaigns

- Focus of coverage- horserace aspect/polls
- Coverage techniques
 - Sound bites
 - Press conferences
 - Psuedo-events
- Advertising techniques
 - Fluff/ feel good
 - Negative attack ads

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69