



Unit III - Citizenship and American Government

Chapter 1 – Citizenship and Responsibility

Section 1 – Laws and Your Role as a Citizen



What You Will Learn to Do

Understand what it means to be a citizen of the United States, a representative democracy



Objectives

1. Explain authority and laws
2. Define your role as a citizen – your rights and responsibilities



Key Terms

Citizen - A member of a political community

Citizenship - The status of a citizen with its attendant duties, rights and privileges

Law - A rule of conduct or procedure established by custom, agreement or authority



Key Terms

Constituted Authority -

Power to influence or command thought, opinion, or behavior, exercised by one lawfully elected

Spirit of Association -

The fondness American citizens have for banding together in organizations to address problems of common interest



Laws and Role as Citizen

I'm only one person. What could I do that matters as a citizen?

Throughout American history, citizens have played important roles.

Consider the ones who died to save others on Flight 93 on 11 September, 2001. Do you know the story? Watch this 5 min.

video: www.tinyurl.com/njrotc-letsroll



Five of the American heroes, Tom Burnett, Jeremy Glick, Linda Gronlund, Todd Beamer and Sandra Bradshaw



Laws and Role as Citizen

Authority is the answer to the question “Who says so?”

Sometimes one person makes the laws for everyone...



Tribal Chieftain



Dictator



King



Laws and Role as Citizen

In modern democracies, the power of the government is derived from the people, through their elected legislators, to create and uphold laws on their behalf.

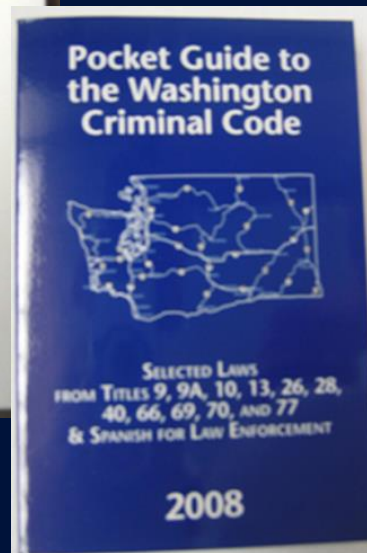
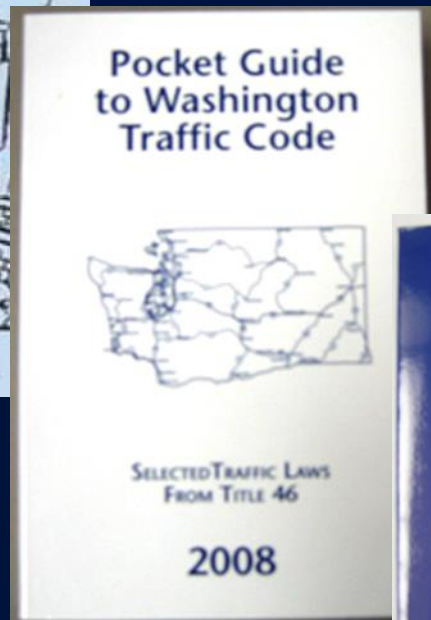
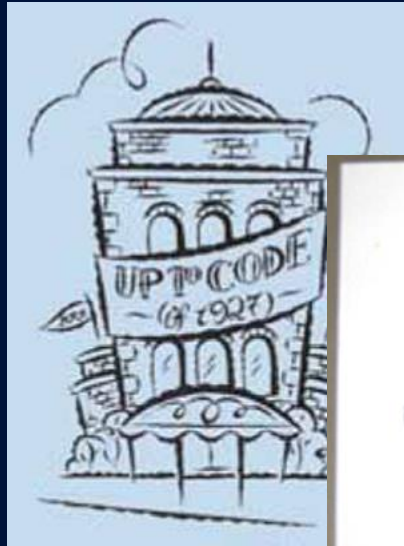
In simplest terms, laws are the **agreements by which people live**.

A castaway on a desert island would have no need of laws and could do whatever he wanted to do.





Laws and Role as Citizen



In the real world, there are laws for regulating all kinds of behavior for safety and quality of life for all members of the society.



Laws and Role as Citizen



Congress makes laws that apply to the whole nation allowing local government to adjust for their area.

National

State

County





Laws and Role as Citizen



Congress makes laws that apply to the whole nation allowing local government to adjust for their area.

National

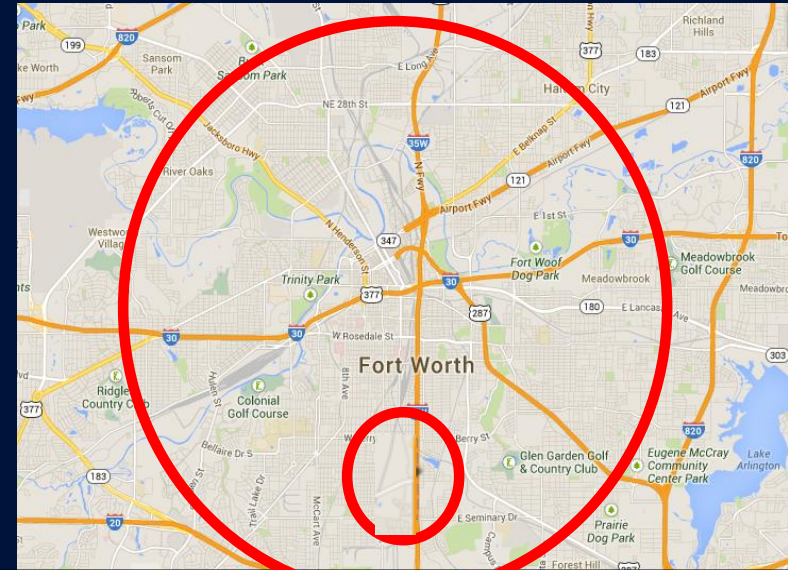
State

County

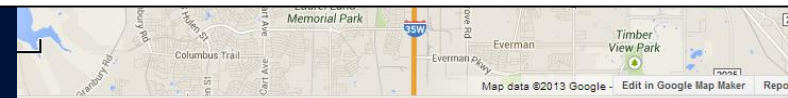
City

Community

Tarrant County



Worth Heights Community





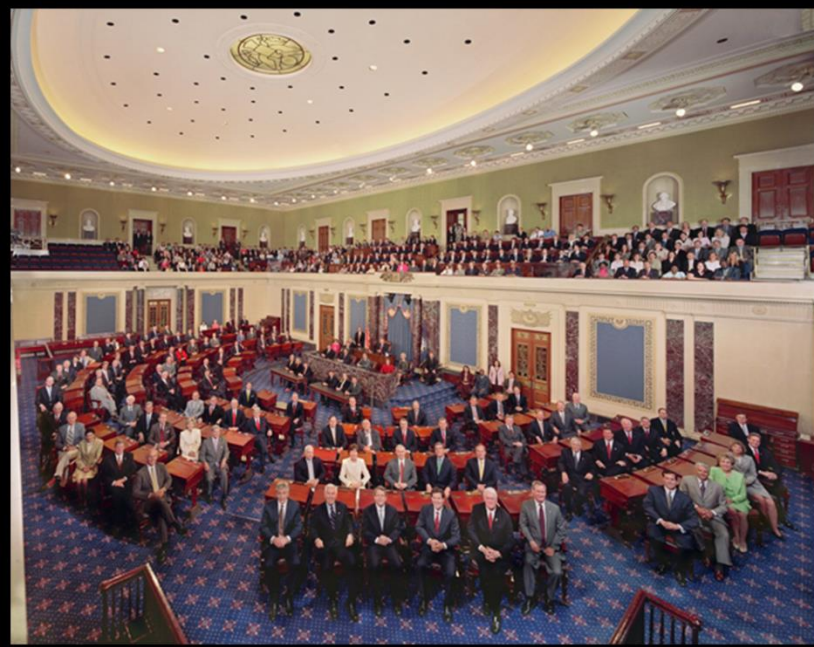
Laws and Role as Citizen

All major members of local and national governments are elected by citizens.





Laws and Role as Citizen



All the laws passed by governments at federal or local levels have the **force and consent** of the people behind them.



Laws and Role as Citizen

Since Congress is a **Constituted Authority**...



...its members were
“appointed to an office or
lawfully elected.”

This applies to both the
Senate and House of
Representatives.



Laws and Role as Citizen

As an American citizen, it is your **right** and **responsibility** to:

- Accept the authority of the constituted authoritative body
- Exercise your voice by voting for those who represent you





Laws and Role as Citizen

Responsibilities and Rights:

- Authoritative bodies make assurances to the people (**rights**) for granting those bodies the authority (**by vote**) to continue governing.
- **Civil rights** protect people in their private lives.
- **Apolitical rights** allow people to participate in their own governance.



Three Ways to Become an American Citizen

Birth



Naturalization



Act of Congress



A person becomes a citizen by just being born in the U.S. or in one of the U.S. territories. A person who enters the U.S. legally can become a citizen by completing the process of naturalization. It doesn't matter if his parents are citizens or not.



Three Ways to Become an American Citizen

Native-born or Naturalized, all citizens have the same responsibilities:



- Respect and obey the laws of the U.S.
- Participate by voting at every opportunity
- Be willing to defend the nation against foreign aggression



The Privilege of Voting

- The **26th amendment** to the Constitution, passed in 1971, lowered the voting age to **18**.
- You can begin the voting process early by voting in school, club and organization elections.





The Founding Fathers

- Tried to initiate change through the existing laws until they felt conditions had become intolerable
- Showed measure to loyalty with explanation of reasons for separation
- Recognized their responsibilities to justify their change of allegiance





The Founding Fathers

The founders of our country were willing to sacrifice everything to establish our nation.



“...we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor.”

- Declaration of Independence



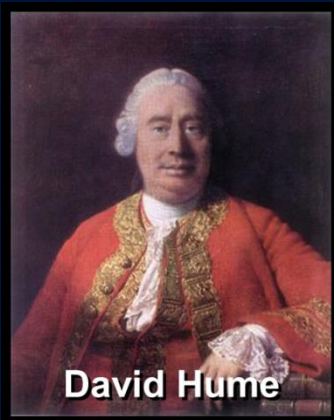
Alexis de Tocqueville

- French political thinker impressed by equal opportunities available to early Americans
- Asked the question, *“How can a society so devoted to materialism produce civic spirit?”*
- Believed that their **spirit of association**, made local self-government work for the benefit of all

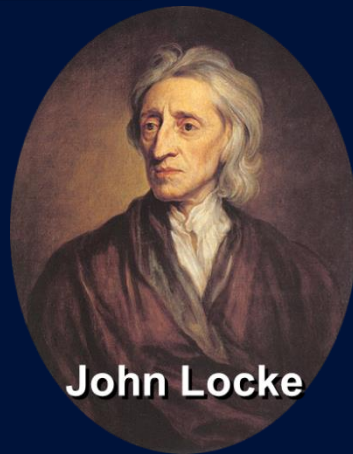
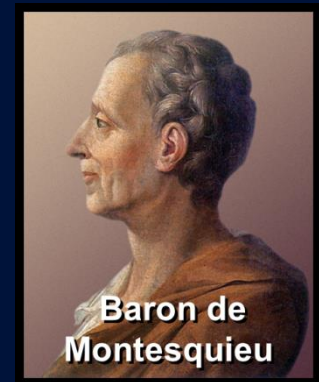




The "American Experiment"



Drew on the ideas
and the thinking
of many different
philosophers.





Characteristics of a Good Citizen

1. Value, respect, and defend rights guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution.
2. Accept the basic idea of majority rule under the U.S. Constitution.
3. Believe in equal opportunity for everyone.
4. Respect and uphold the law and its agencies.
5. Vote!



Characteristics of a Good Citizen

6. Accept taxes as the price of necessary public services and pay them promptly.
7. Accept civic responsibilities, and carry them out to the best of their ability.
8. Support efforts to prevent war but stand ready to defend the country if necessary.
9. Know how to work with others on social action
10. Know a democracy needs citizens who are well-informed



Characteristics of a Good Citizen

11. Understand that democracy requires citizens to be educated.
12. Respect property rights and regulations and meet contract obligations.
13. Support fair business practices and fair relationships between employers and employees.
14. Take responsibility for making our free-market economy work.



Characteristics of a Good Citizen

15. Have some understanding of other economic systems, including political and social issues
16. Accept family responsibilities; uphold standards in neighborhood and community
17. Understand other cultures and ways of life
18. Put the general welfare above their own when they must choose



Characteristics of a Good Citizen

19. Understand how people depend on each other and need to work together.
20. Understand that people will govern themselves better than any other group or individual in the world.
21. Take responsibility for wise use of natural resources.



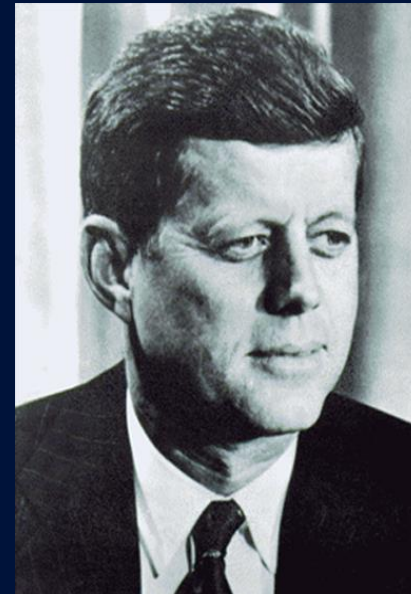
Characteristics of a Good Citizen

22. Rely on democratic principles as guides in evaluating their own and others' behavior
23. Feel they have inherited an unfinished experiment in self-government, which they carry forward
24. Cultivate qualities of personal character such as courage, wisdom and generosity toward others



Characteristics of a Good Citizen

“Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country.”



President John F. Kennedy



Bill of Responsibilities: Preamble

- Freedom and responsibility are mutual and inseparable;
- We can ensure enjoyment of the one only by exercising the other.
- Freedom for all of us depends on responsibility by each of us.



Bill of Responsibilities: Preamble



To secure and expand our liberties, therefore, we accept these responsibilities as individual members of a free society.



Bill of Responsibilities

1. Be fully responsible for our own actions and the consequences of those actions
2. Respect the rights and beliefs of others
3. Give sympathy, understanding and help to others
4. Do our best to meet our own and our families' needs



Bill of Responsibilities

5. Respect and obey laws
6. Respect the property of others, both public and private
7. Share with others your appreciation and obligations of freedom
8. Participate constructively in the nation's political life



Bill of Responsibilities

9. Help freedom survive by assuming personal responsibility for its defense
10. Respect the rights and meet the responsibilities on which our liberty rests and our democracy depends



Questions?

