



Chapter 1: The Study of American Government

Why Is Government Necessary?

- ★ Order
- ★ Liberty
- ★ Authority and Legitimacy



Forms of Government

- ★ Totalitarian
- ★ Authoritarianism
- ★ Aristocracy
- ★ Democracy

Derived from the Greek words *demos* (“the people”) and *kratos* (“authority”).

Direct Democracy

- ★ Political decisions are made by the people directly, rather than by their elected representatives
- ★ Attained most easily in small political communities.



(AP Photo/Nam Y. Huh)

Direct Democracy Today

- ★ Initiative
- ★ Referendum
- ★ Recall

Is Direct Democracy Dangerous?

- ★ Founders believed in government based on the consent of the people but were highly distrustful of anything that might look like “mob rule.”
- ★ Devised institutions to filter the popular will through elected elites.

A Democratic Republic

Democratic republic and representative democracy really mean the same thing—government based on elected representatives—except for the historical quirk that a republic cannot have a vestigial king.



(National Portrait Gallery)

A Democratic Republic (cont.)

★ Principles of Democratic Government

- Universal suffrage
- Majority rule

★ Constitutional Democracy

- Limited government

What Kind of Democracy Do We Have?

- ★ Majoritarianism
- ★ Elite theory
- ★ Pluralism

Fundamental Values

- ★ Political Socialization
- ★ Liberty versus Order
- ★ Equality versus Liberty
 - Economic Equality
 - Property Rights and Capitalism

Tensions Over Big Government

- ★ How much power should the American government have and what role should it play in the lives of citizens?
- ★ Katrina
- ★ Taxes
- ★ National Security Policies

Ideologies: Liberalism versus Conservatism

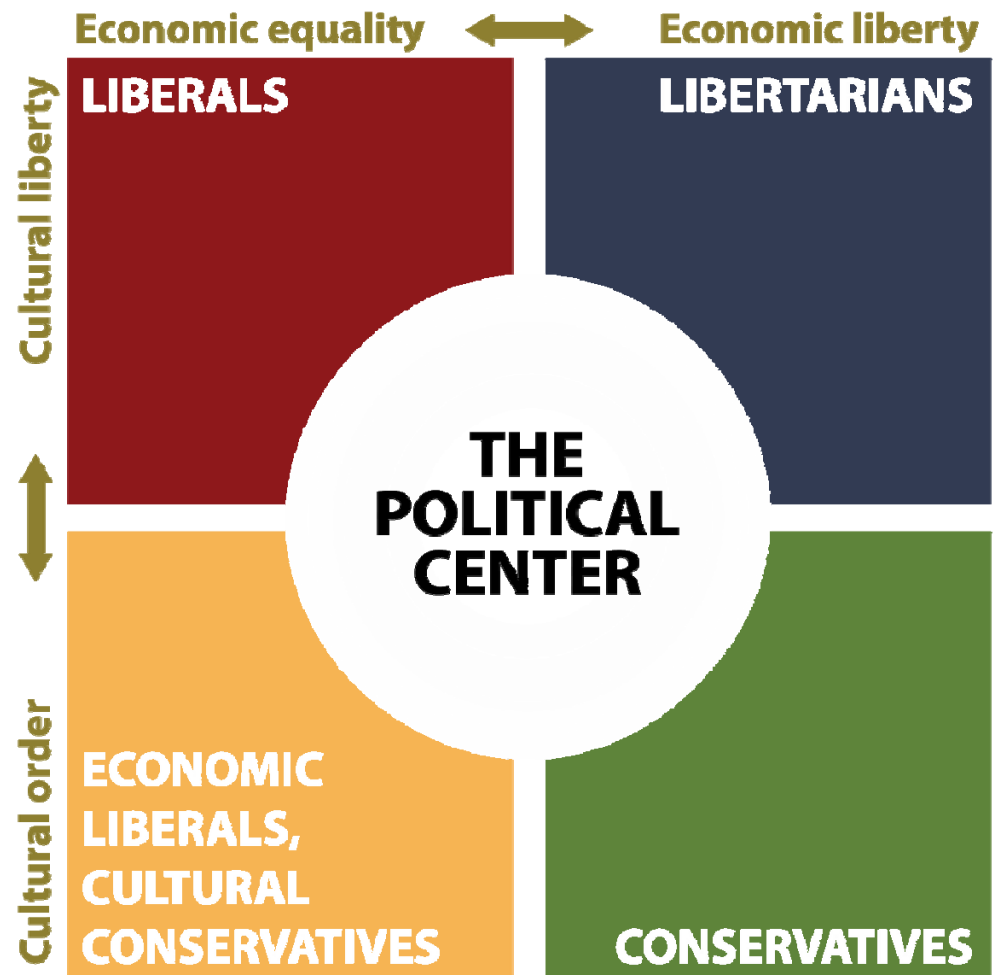
★ Conservatives

★ Liberals

Economic and Social Positions?

A Four-Cornered Ideological Grid

In this grid, the colored squares represent four different political ideologies. The vertical choices range from cultural order to cultural liberty. The horizontal choices range from economic equality to economic liberty.



Ideologies: The Traditional Political Spectrum

- ★ Socialism
- ★ Libertarianism

Classical Liberalism

- ★ Liberal once meant limited government and no religion in politics.

The Traditional Political Spectrum

	SOCIALISM	LIBERALISM	CONSERVATISM	LIBERTARIANISM
How much power should the government have over the economy?	Active government control of major economic sectors	Positive government action in the economy	Positive government action to support capitalism	Almost no regulation of the economy
What should the government promote?	Economic equality, community	Economic security, equal opportunity, social liberty	Economic liberty, morality, social order	Total economic and social liberty

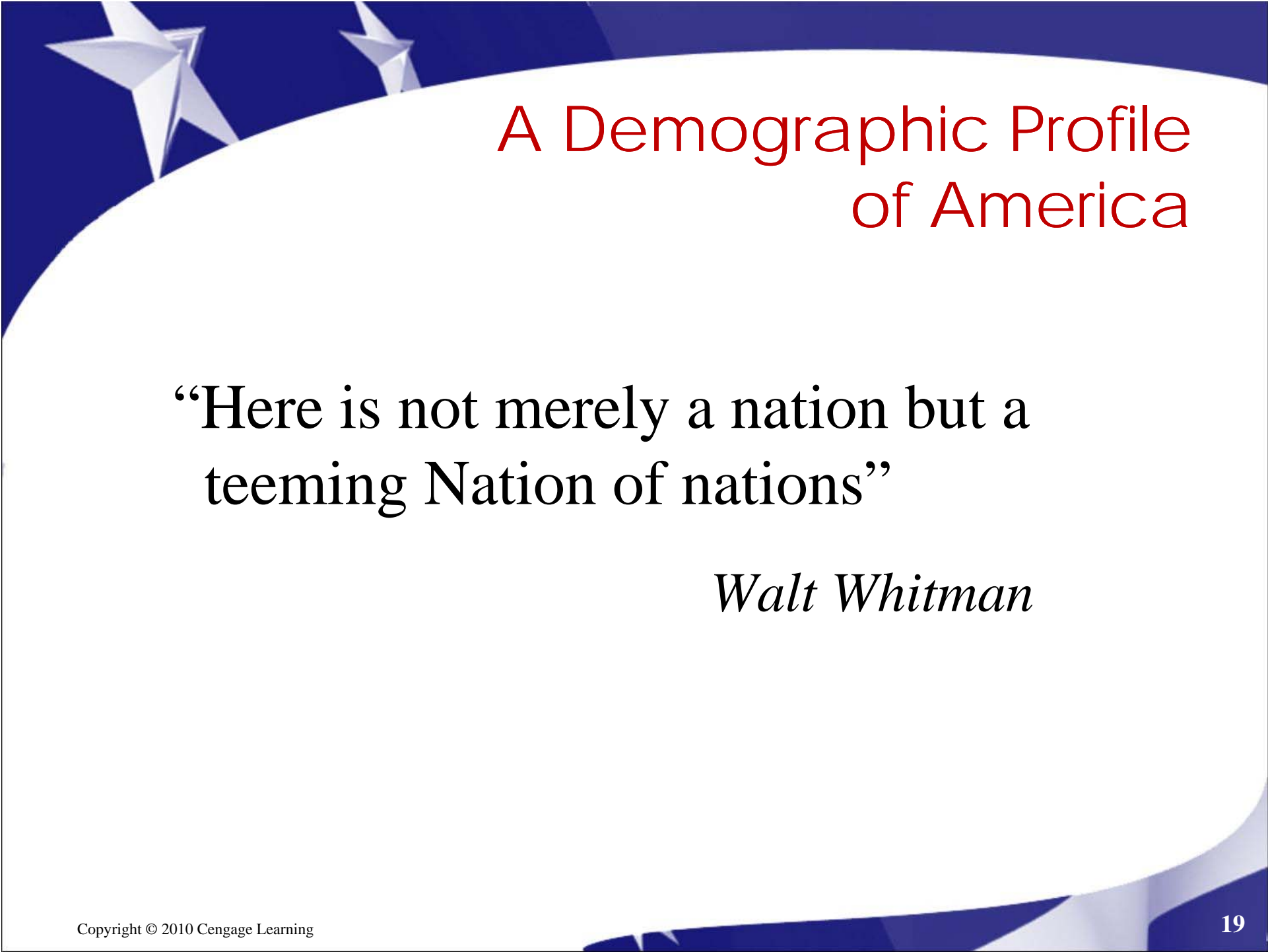
Other Ideologies

★ Communism

★ Fascism

Ideologies in the Islamic World

- ★ While communism and fascism are the historical ideologies that totalitarianism was coined to describe, our current international concern is with the radical and fundamentalist interpretation of Islam known as Islamism.

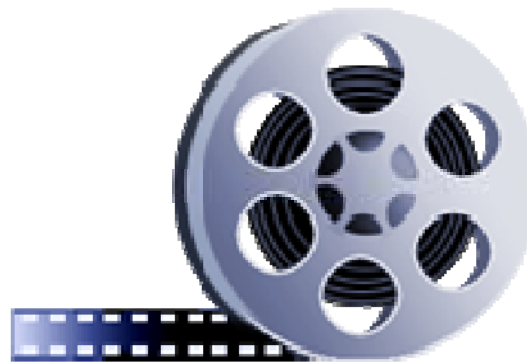


A Demographic Profile of America

“Here is not merely a nation but a
teeming Nation of nations”

Walt Whitman

Obama Election Night



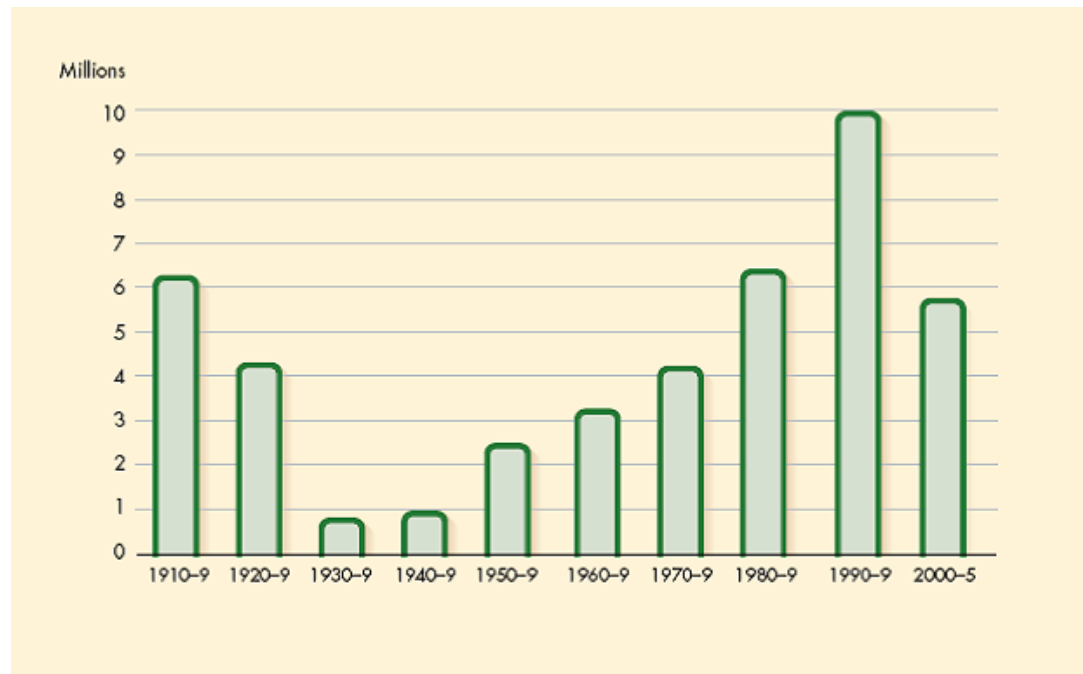
[Click the icon to open the movie](#)
[Video Supplied by Motion Gallery](#)

Questions

- ★ Was Obama's election a direct result of the changing demographic breakdown in the U.S.?
- ★ Does ethnic background become more or less important for future candidates?
- ★ Where does Obama fall on the ideological grid?

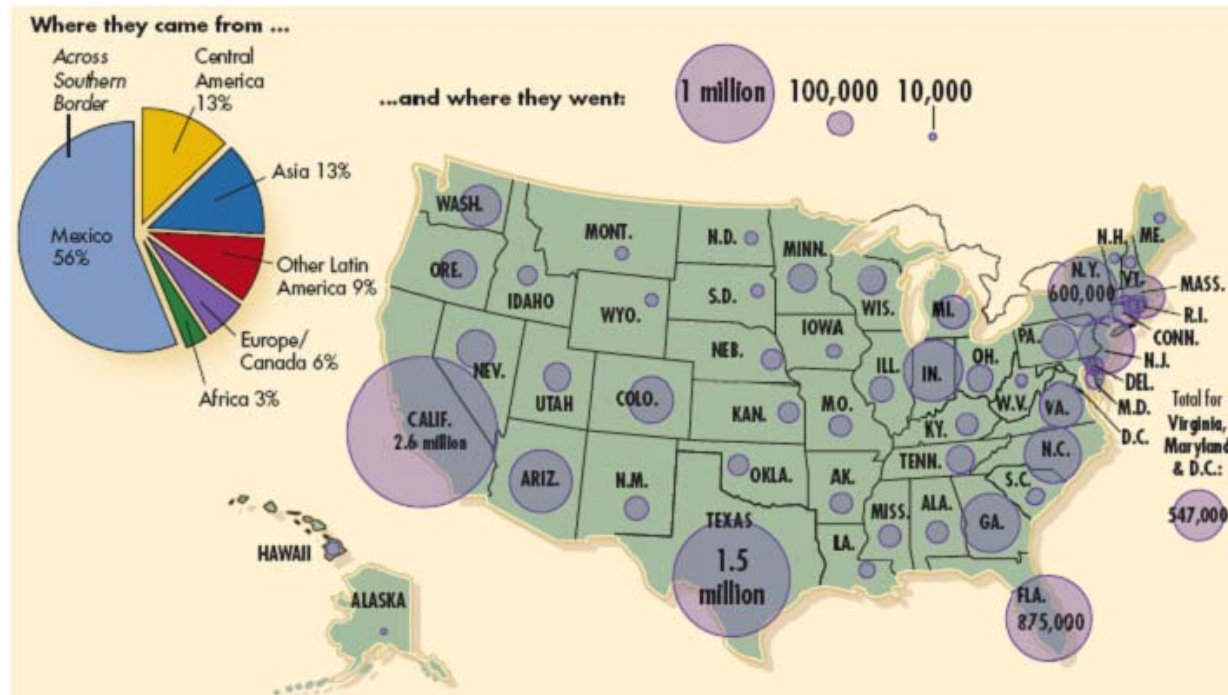


Immigration and Ethnic Diversity



Source: *Yearbook of Immigration Statistics*, 2005, Table 1. (www.usics.gov)

Illegal Immigrants



SOURCE: *Washington Post, National Weekly Edition*, May 29–June 4, 2006, 8.

Religious Diversity

- ★ Although a large majority (83%) of Americans still identify as Christians, Americans now claim affiliation with 1600 different religious affiliations and denominations.

The Changing Face of America

- ★ Aging
- ★ Population Growth
- ★ Ethnic Change
 - Changes in Hispanic Community
- ★ Women in the Workforce

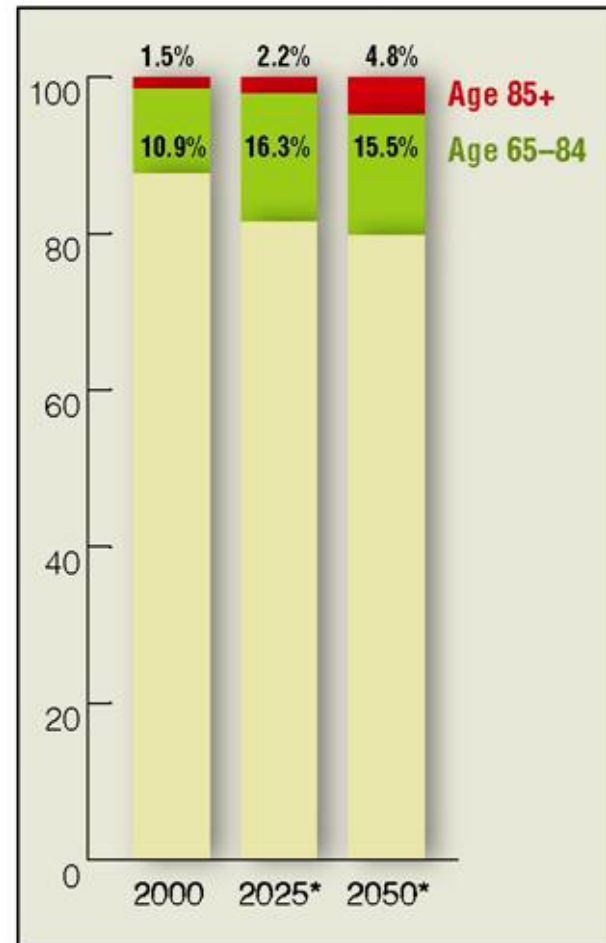
The U.S. Population



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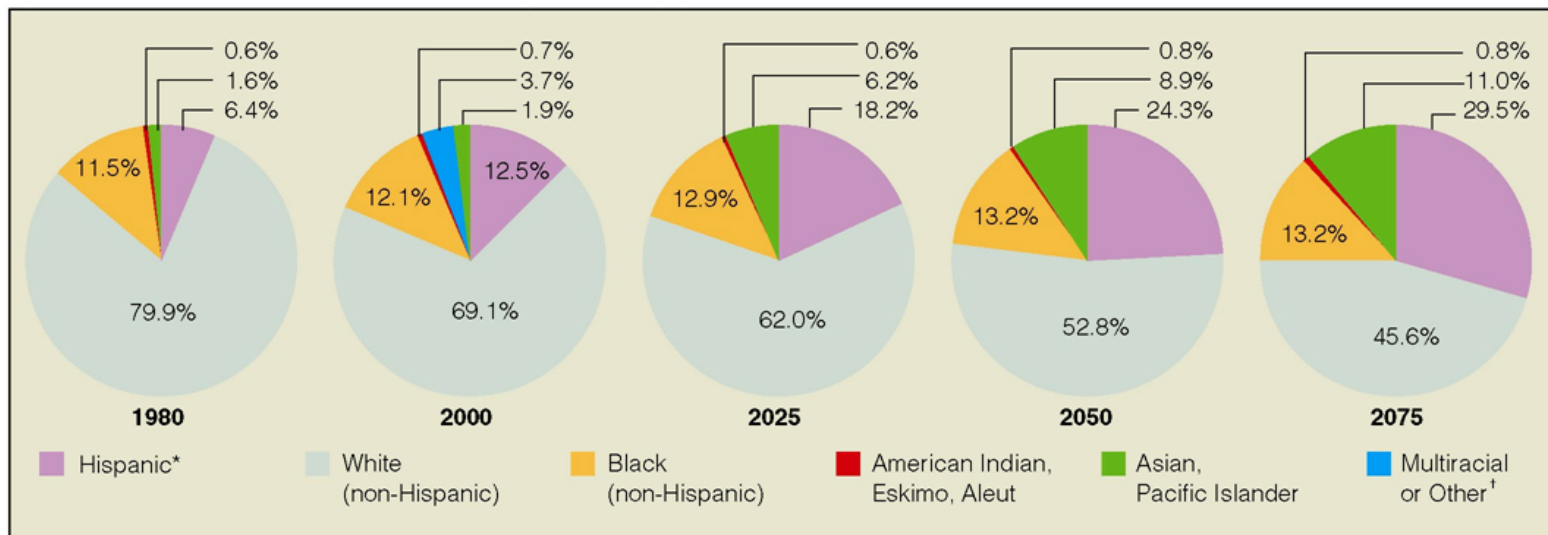
[Click here to go to the U.S. POPClock Projection](#)

The Aging of America



*Data for 2025 and 2050 are projections.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Changing U.S. Population



Data for 2025, 2050, and 2075 are projections.

*Persons of Hispanic origin can be of any race.

†The "multiracial or other" category in 2000 is not an official census category but represents all non-Hispanics who chose either "some other race" or two or more races in the 2000 census.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.



Questions for Critical Thinking

- ★ Do you think a direct democracy is a rational option for governing in the United States?
- ★ Describe the forms of direct democracy that exist and discuss the pros and cons of these mechanisms.



Questions for Critical Thinking

- ★ Do you think some people in American society equate security and order with protection against fellow citizens who are racially, culturally, or economically different?
- ★ Do you think protection against discrimination should be considered a security issue as well as an issue of equality?

Web Links

- ★ [U.S. Census Bureau](#)
- ★ [U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services](#)

