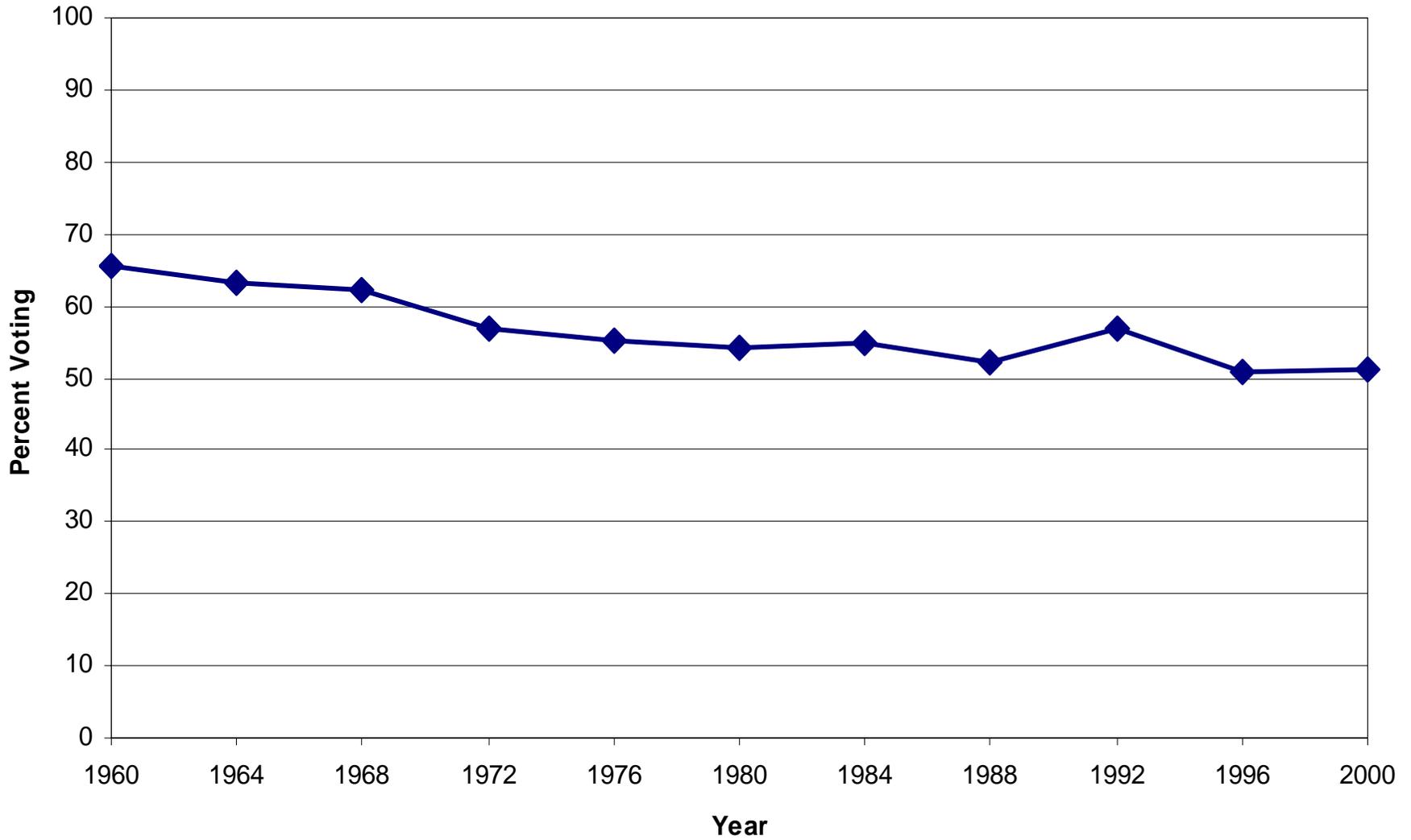


The slide features a decorative arrangement of six circles. Three solid light purple circles are positioned in the top row, and three hollow light purple circles are in the bottom row. The text is centered over these circles.

Introduction to the American Political Process

Political Participation

Turnout: Presidential Elections 1960-2000



Introduction to Political Participation

- How can citizens bring their concerns to the attention of government?
 - Public Opinion
 - Political Participation
- Key Questions:
 - What is political participation?
 - Why do some people decide to participate in the political world, while others remain silent?
 - Does participation foster political equality

What is Political Participation?

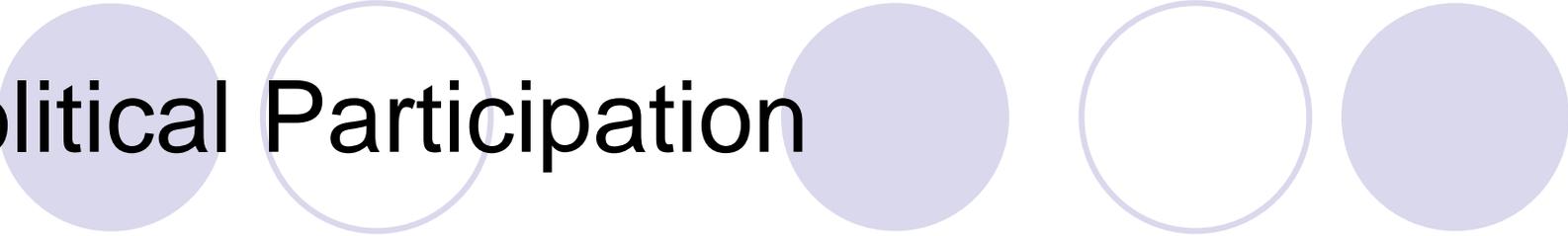
- Definitions:

- Verba, Schlozman, Brady: “activity that is intended to or has the consequence of affecting, either directly or indirectly, government action.”

- Rosenstone and Hansen: “action directed explicitly toward influencing the distribution of social goods and social values.”

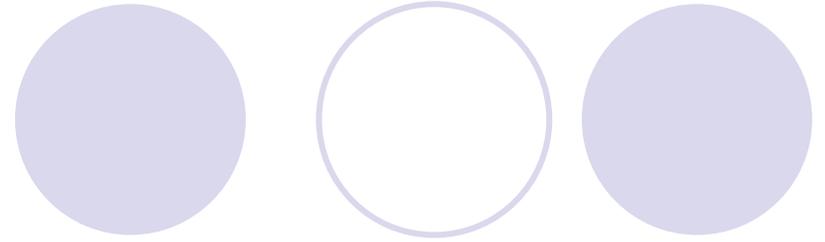
- Key: Private, goal directed activity.

Political Participation



- What acts comprise participation?
 - Examples: Voting, protesting, writing to Congress.
- Two dimensions of activity:
 1. The capacity to convey a detailed message.
 2. The extent to which they can be multiplied.

Why Participate?



- The cost/benefit calculus
 - Voting – slim benefits, tangible costs.
 - A free rider problem?

The Voting Calculus

Vote if and Only if:

$$\text{Benefits} - \text{Costs} > 0$$

$$(\text{Pr}(\text{Decisive vote}) \times \text{Benefit of Win}) - \text{Costs} > 0$$

$$(0 \times \text{Benefit of Win}) - \text{Costs} > 0$$

$$- \text{Costs} > 0$$

Prediction: Never Vote

The Cost/Benefit Calculus Reconsidered

Reformulate with Civic Duty

Vote if and Only if:

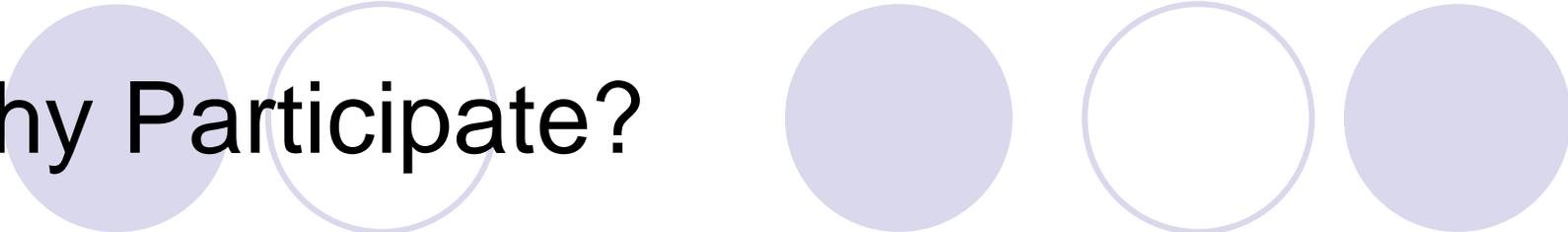
$$(\text{Benefits} - \text{Costs}) + \text{Duty} > 0$$

$$((\text{Pr}(\text{Decisive vote}) \times \text{Benefit of Win}) - \text{Costs}) + \text{Duty} > 0$$

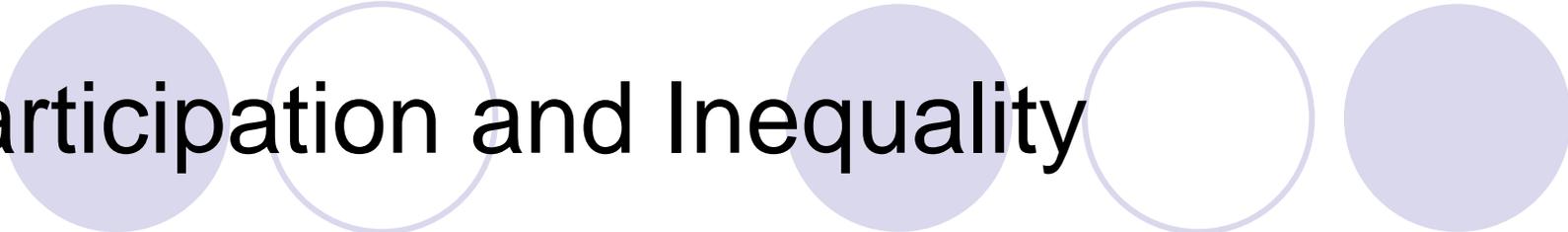
$$((0 \times \text{Benefit of Win}) - \text{Costs}) + \text{Duty} > 0$$
$$\text{Duty} - \text{Costs} > 0$$

Prediction: Maybe Vote

Why Participate?



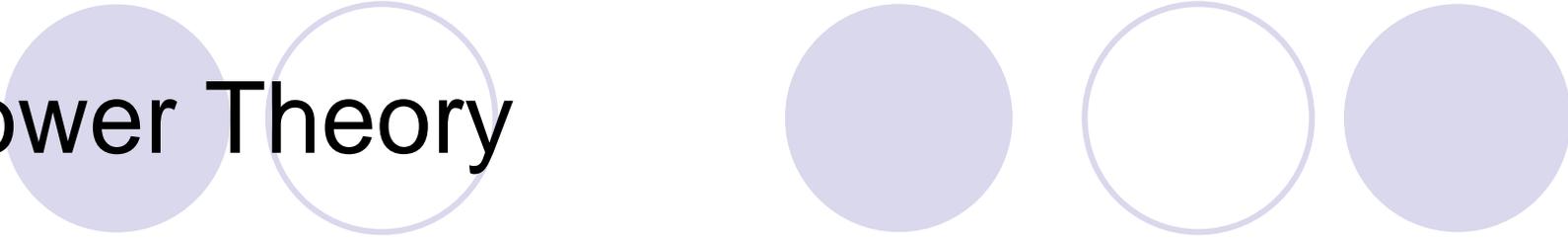
- Changing the calculus: The benefits of participation
 - Material benefits
 - Purposive benefits
 - Soldiery benefits
- Paying the costs of participation
 - Resources
 - Engagement
 - Recruitment/mobilization
- The importance of resources
 - Resource advantage lower costs of participation



Participation and Inequality

- The effects of resource inequalities
 - Disparities in political activity parallel the fault lines of social and political divisions

Power Theory

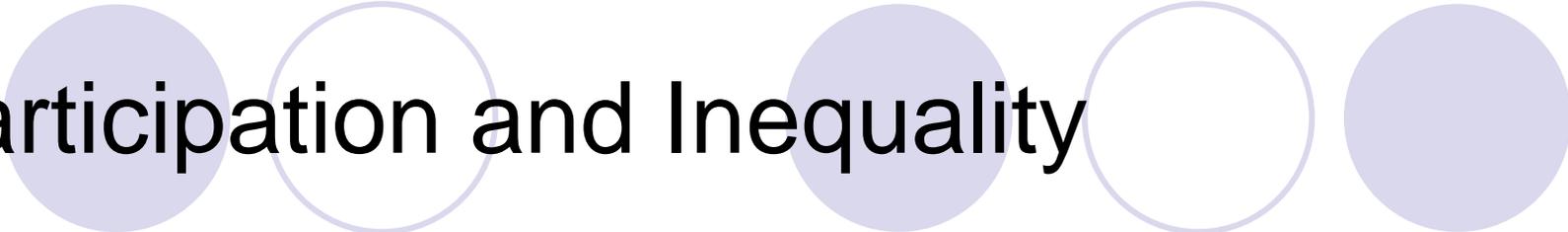


- Pluralism

- Political resources are diverse
- Political inequalities are dispersed, not cumulative
- Political inaction = political quiescence

- The Critics

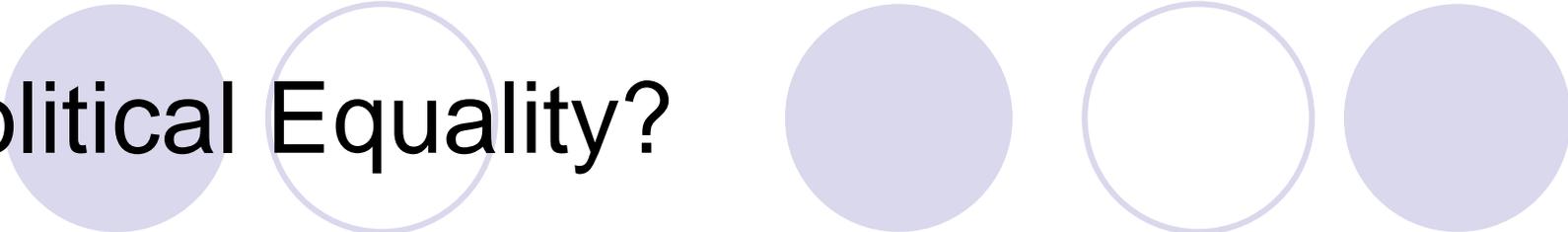
- Ask: Who is excluded from the political process, and why?
- Look at non-participants
- Political inaction \neq political quiescence



Participation and Inequality

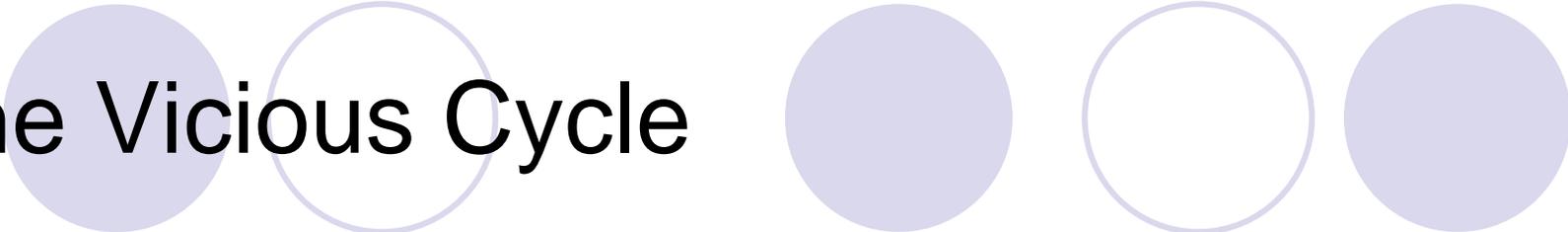
- The Causes and Consequences of Inequality
 - Not everyone is heard in the political system
 - Political silence is rooted in resource deficiencies
 - Participation creates biases

Political Equality?



- Politicians share the Pluralist view
- Officials listen to participators
- Interests and agendas of government reflect biases in participation

The Vicious Cycle



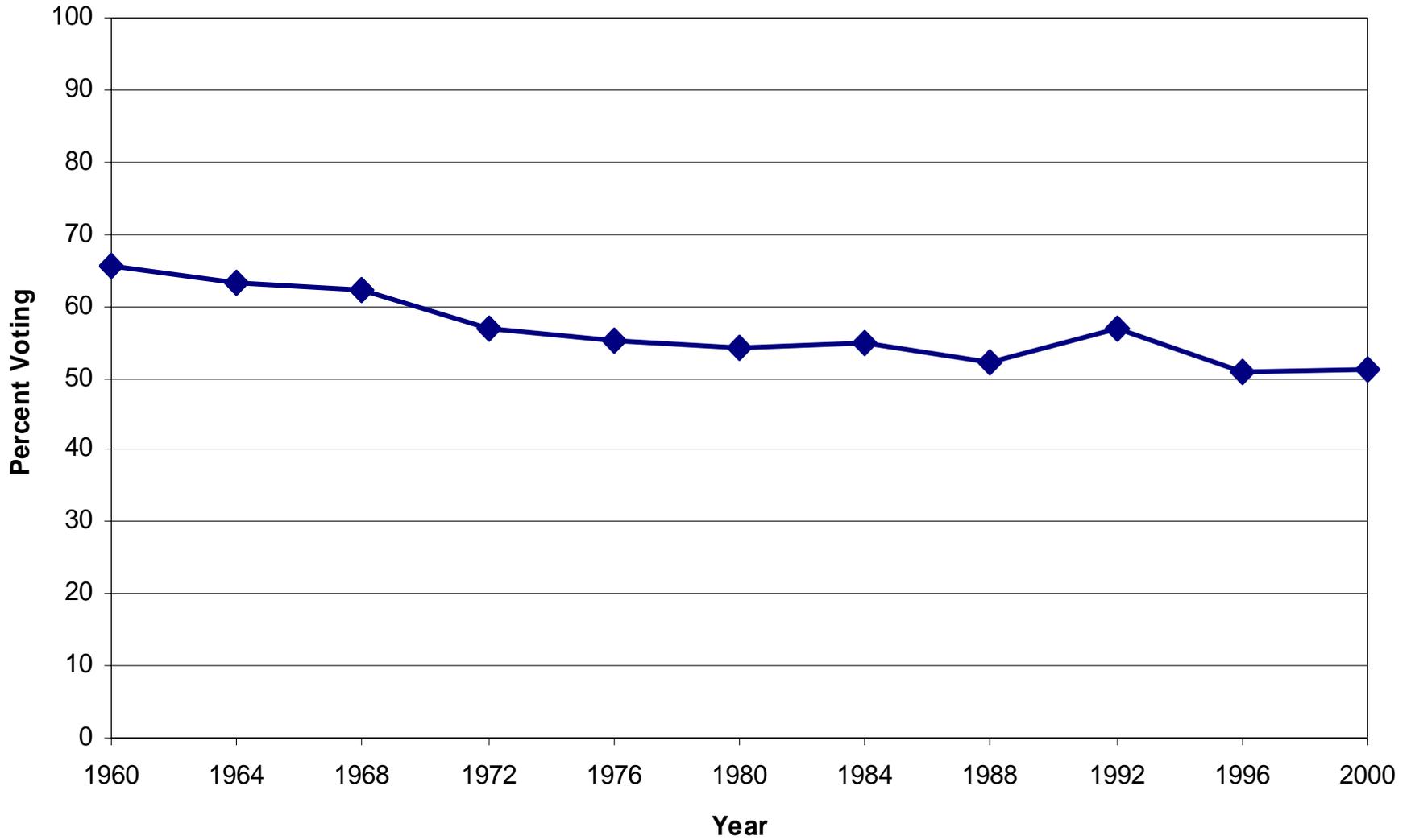
- Inequalities in participation have compounding effects
- Breaking the cycle
 - Mobilization
 - Examples: The New Deal, Civil Rights movement



Opinion Polls Revisited

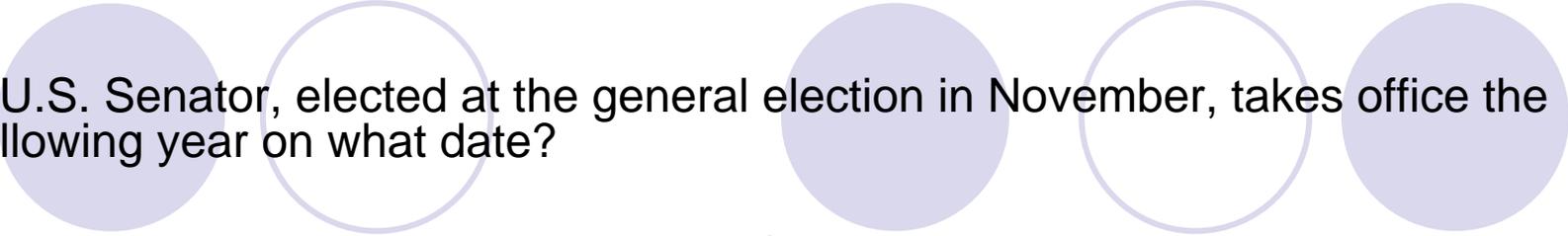
- How do polls look now?
 - Polls have flaws, but they ensure all citizens are heard
- Opinion polls and participation
 - Polls can complement participation
 - Strengths and weaknesses balance out
 - Together give a richer and more equal view of public will

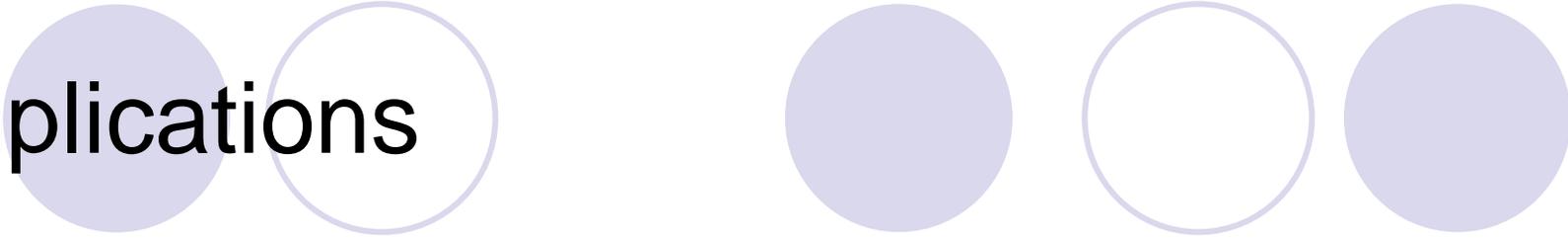
Turnout: Presidential Elections 1960-2000



The Decline in Turnout: Revisited

- The costs of voting: The puzzle deepens
 - Rise in education
 - Easier to register
 - Easier to vote
- The usual suspects
 - Psychological factors: cynicism and efficacy
 - The 25th Amendment
 - Decline in mobilization
 - The denominator

- 
1. A U.S. Senator, elected at the general election in November, takes office the following year on what date?
 2. Appropriation of money for the Armed Services can be only a period limited to ___ years.
 - 3: The electoral vote for President is counted in the presence of which two bodies?
 4. True or False: State legislatures decide how presidential electors may be chosen.
 5. If it were proposed to join Mississippi and Alabama to form one new state, what groups would have to vote approval for this to be done?
 6. The only laws which can be passed to apply to an area in the federal arsenal are those passed by _____, provided consent for the purchase of the land is given by _____.
 7. If election of the President becomes the duty of the House of Representatives and it fails to act, who becomes president, and when.



Implications

- Is democracy in trouble?
 - Expectations
 - Historical perspective

Voter Turnout: Presidential Years 1788-2000

