Aim: Who governs and to what ends?

Do Now: What is politics?
Who gets what, when, and how. (and where) - Harold D. Lasswell
Machiavelli

- Machiavelli’s name is synonymous with tough and dirty politics
- Author of *The Prince*. One of history’s first political scientists.
Machiavelli Quotes

• “The ends justify the means.”
• “It is better to be feared than loved.”
• “By no means can a prudent ruler keep his word. Because all men are bad and do not keep promises to you, you likewise do not have to keep your promises to them.”
What is power? What is authority?

**Power:** the ability of one person to get another person to act in accordance with the first person’s intentions

**Authority:** The right to use power

**Legitimacy:** Political authority conferred by law or by a state or national constitution
What is Democracy?

Democracy in Aristotle’s view is “rule by the many”

- In this view, all or most citizens participated directly in holding office or making policy
- This is called “direct” or “participatory democracy
- Who governs?
- How does government affect our lives?
A different form of Democracy

Joseph Schempter: “The democratic method is that institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals [leaders] acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote”

• This method is called Representative Democracy
• AKA Elitist Theory of Democracy
Views of Government

• **Majoritarian**: Actions of elected officials must follow the preferences of citizens very closely
  – Issues that are clear and are of great concern to most people

• **Elite**: Representatives act without knowing or necessarily caring about the public’s opinion on certain issues.
  – A small but unrepresentative minority constitute the elites
Marxist Theory: government is dominated by capitalists

- Control the economic system = control the political system.
- Politicians require massive funding to win elections, and rely on corporations to supply them.
Power Elite:

- C. Wright Mills

- government is dominated by a few top leaders, most of whom are outside of government

- C. Wright Mills: corporate leaders, top military officials, and a handful of elected officials

- Today, some have added communications media chiefs, labor union officials, heads of various special interest groups
Bureaucratic View

Max Weber

- government is dominated by appointed officials.
- They are career government workers who exercise vast power by deciding how to translate public laws into administrative actions.
- Based on the ideas of Max Weber (1864-1920)
• **Pluralist View:** The belief that competition among all affected interests shapes public policy
  – They concede that power may be distributed unevenly, but political haggling and compromise among competing interests allows for political resources to be sufficiently divided

• **Hyper Pluralist View:** Competition among too many groups makes it almost impossible to obtain efficiency and meaningful results
Which theory is most plausible?