WORLD SAVVY

MONITOR

Democracy Around the World in 2008

World Savvy
think beyond your borders

Letter from the Editor

In our third edition of the World Savvy Monitor, we complete a cycle in which we examined three types of topics: a conflict (Sudan), a country (China), and now an issue (Democracy in the World). In each, we tried to provide context, multiple perspectives, and a dissection of the critical internal and external variables, as well as the big-picture issues involved.

This edition is especially timely, as we are consumed with news from both ends of the democratic spectrum: the upcoming general election in the United States, and the aftermath of the disastrous election in Zimbabwe. What is clear is that democracy is a continual process, not a finite end. All countries experimenting with democracy are constantly moving along a spectrum of democratization and de-democratization. No democratic country is immune from the temptations of autocratic power; no democratic system is insulated from economic and geopolitical forces. Democracy is hard. In its most idealized form, free and fair elections bring enlightened and responsive leaders to power who govern by rule of law, protecting and promoting the civil liberties and welfare of all citizens. In its most perfect iteration, a democracy inspires citizens to participate and invest in the public good. But, history and human nature have shown us that the conditions for this rarely exist in perfect balance; and so democracies are perpetually subjected to a variety of internal and external factors that alternatively challenge and support the development of democratic ideals, institutions, and practices.

For my part, having considered many of these factors in depth in this edition, the most important variable is an elusive one. If one factor had to be singled out as the most decisive democratic catalyst, I would point to a carefully balanced time horizon. Leaders and citizens of democracies alike must be able to keep the long perspective in view, recognizing that what is expedient is rarely formative. Short and long term interests must be accommodated in an ever-changing calculus of priorities that attends to the welfare of multiple present and future generations.

Democracy is hard; yet it is generally agreed that it is worth the effort. Currently, experts have said that the current geopolitical climate is characterized by a looming democratic recession; this is worrying for numerous reasons described herein. What you won't find in these pages is an easy formula for promoting the spread or consolidation of democracy. Instead, you will find an array of interesting context, questions and provocative issues that will make you think differently about governments worldwide, including your own. Most importantly, we hope you will contemplate citizenship in its many forms, and perhaps be inspired to participate in the process, regardless of your political inclinations.

With respect to political inclinations, I offer a quick note on the use of the word democrat throughout this edition. This is democrat with a lower-case "d," referring to adherents of democracy, not of the/a Democratic Party. Similarly, the use of the term liberal is also lower case, referring to protection of civil liberties, not Liberal ideologies.

Enjoy the read,

Cate Biggs
Editor, World Savvy Monitor

World Savvy

World Savvy staff edit and produce the World Savvy Monitor. Our mission is to educate and engage youth in community and world affairs by providing educational programs and services. World Savvy's vision for the future is one in which all members of society are well informed about contemporary global affairs and act as responsible global citizens. We believe that change will occur if the public has an enhanced understanding of international affairs and is given the tools to think critically about such issues.

Cate Biggs

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Issue In Focus

Introduction: Did You Know?

- In 1974, only 39 of the world's 165 countries were democracies.

- By 1990, 76 of the world's 165 countries were democracies.

- By 1995, 117 of 191 countries were democracies.

- In 2008, 121 of 193, or 62% of the countries in the world are technically democracies, electing their leaders by popular sovereignty. With the exception of Singapore, the top 25 countries in the world on the United Nations Human Development Index (a combined measure reflecting high standards of living) are all democracies.

- The definition of democracy, however, has come to mean much more than simply holding elections. Today, most people pay attention to a more rigorous standard used to determine a country's level of democracy, taking into account the quality of elections as well as the outcomes democratically elected leaders produce for their citizens.

- This makes a difference. In 2008, less than 50% of countries in the world actually hold free and fair elections, protect the civil liberties of their citizens, and can therefore be called true electoral and liberal democracies. Over a third of the world's population lives in countries that do neither.

- Using the above definition, experts in the field believe the world is entering a democratic recession. Trends indicate that fewer countries are making the transition from authoritarian to democratic rule; many of those

that have made the transition are backsliding; and even the older established democracies are experiencing problems consolidating and deepening the benefits of the system for their populations. The United States is considered by many to be one of those struggling to combat special interests and preserve personal freedoms.

- Concurrently, models of authoritarian government such as Russia and China are growing more powerful and influential in the world; countries on the brink of democratization are now experiencing pressure to evolve in the other direction. Most believe the decline of the United States' reputation in the world is a factor behind this trend.

Understanding the Headlines

What exactly is meant by "democracy?"

- The "thin" definition of democracy means simply that leaders are chosen by popular sovereignty (or voting with majority rule). However, most experts today use a "thick" definition that holds countries to a much higher standard if they are to be considered democracies. Under this definition, democracies must be both electoral (their elections must be "free and fair"), and liberal (the elected government must protect the civil liberties of all citizens).

- Democracy today is not black or white, in which a country either qualifies or does not under a fixed definition. Rather, all countries are seen as being in a constant state of democratization and de-democratization. The emphasis is on the quality of the electoral process and the extent to which citizens experience truly democratic outcomes.

- Democracy is often used as a synonym for freedom, and countries are often categorized based on the quality of their democracy as 'free," "partly free," or "not free."

What is the historical context of democracy in the world?

- Although democracy is now seen, in the words of democracy expert Larry Diamond, to be a "universal value and destination," it is actually an aberration in the long view of history. Humans are not democratically inclined by nature, and the prevalence of democratic government is a relatively new

phenomenon historically. Although it has its roots in ancient Greek and Roman ideals, the actual practice of democracy evolved over the past few centuries.

- Democracies in their purest forms are seen to be moral, egalitarian, and responsive; but they can be messy, violent, and painful to establish. The process of democratization is always an "unsteady march," and no democratic country has yet to reach a point where it is immune to backsliding.

- There is no guarantee that every country **will** become a true democracy. Michael Mandelbaum writes that democratization requires societies possess both the "intention" and the "capacity" to develop the necessary values, skills, habits, and institutions for democracy. This is harder than it sounds.

- There is also little evidence to support the notion that not every country **can** become a democracy. Although many advanced democracies are found in Europe and North America; they also exist elsewhere in the world - in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. With the exception of the Middle East, every region in the world has been shown to be amenable to vibrant and hearty democracy. Traditional theories about different regional and cultural proclivities for democracy have been largely discredited by the wide variety of democratic systems that exist on the planet today. Even the Middle East is said to contain democratic potential if certain challenges can be overcome.

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What factors seem to influence the development of democracy?

- These factors are both internal (relating to in-country conditions) and external (the influence of outside actors). They are both mutable (economic, institutional, personal, social) and immutable (historical, demographic, geographic).

- These factors combine in unique ways in every society; and no society has followed the same path of democratization. One must also add the influence of forcing events to internal and external factors. It is largely accepted that no replicable "formula" exists for establishing democratic governance; the most successful attempts to promote democracy worldwide have been case-sensitive and locally-driven.

What are the key debates within the study of democracy?

- The most fundamental debate has long concerned the suitability of "the people" for governing. From ancient civilizations to the Federalist Papers of the United States to the Constitution drafted by Simón Bolívar upon Bolivia's liberation, it has long been a matter of dispute whether the average citizen can be trusted with the welfare of the nation. Many feel that governing is a task more suited to elites or professionals with particular stakes and expertise. This debate plays out today as democracies determine who is allowed to vote, and how this vote is to be translated into policy.

- Another debate (related to the one above) concerns the order in which the two components of democracy – electoral and liberal – are to be introduced, and how this "sequencing" affects the quality of the democratic system that results. Some believe elections should always be the first step. If these are free and fair, protection of civil liberties will naturally follow. Others believe that institutions and laws must be established first, and the capacity of the "people" for democracy must be cultivated before the franchise (or right to vote) is extended to them.

- A debate also exists around democracy promotion. Democratic nations have long sought to promote the democratization of their fellow countries,

believing democracy to be at the core of world peace, prosperity, and human development. But to what lengths should such democracy promoters (at national, regional, and international levels) be allowed to undermine the sovereignty of another nation in pursuit of this goal?

Why the emphasis on the United States when considering democracy in the world?

- The United States, by virtue of its wealth and its long history of democratic governance, is often seen as the pre-eminent advertisement for democracy around the world. Most experts agree that the successful American model serves as a global example of what democracy can do for you.

- However, most also agree that the American democratic example is only as good as the internal health of its own democracy. If the US were to falter (and some believe it has) in its democratic treatment of its own citizens, the power of the model would diminish worldwide, with serious implications for the growth of democracy globally.

- The US is also often at the center of discussions about democracy in the world because it has historically been an active promoter of the franchise outside its own borders. Recently, American democracy promotion efforts have come under considerable fire for what some believe are the suspect motives of the Bush Administration's Freedom Agenda in the Global War on Terror. Similarly, America's reputation as a friend of democracy internationally has been harmed by its inaction and passivity when faced with authoritarian governments with whom it has important security, commerce, and energy connections.

- All of the above trends in American domestic and foreign policy with respect to democracy impact the growth and credibility of the franchise everywhere.

What is the state of democracy in the world today?

- Most experts believe the world is entering a democratic recession as authoritarian regimes seem to be gaining strength worldwide. That many of these

autocratic governments call themselves democracies is harming the brand globally.

- After rapid growth of the franchise from the 1970s through the 1990s, fewer countries today are making the transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. Many of those that have made the transition are at great danger of backsliding.

- Having once proclaimed the triumph of democracy and "the end of history," many experts now wonder whether a major reversal is in store. As mentioned above, the domestic and foreign policy trajectories of the United States will play an important role in the fate of democracy worldwide.

Democracy Timeline

Date	Democracy in the World*
500 BCE - 44 BCE	Democratic principles integrated into the governments of Greece and Rome.
	Many independent republican polities in modern-day India exhibit democratic principles.
44 BCE – 1100 BCE	Democracy in retreat.
1100-1300	Democratic principles and individual liberties are celebrated in Renaissance Italy.
	The Magna Carta limits the power of the English king over the aristocracy.
1300-1700	Democracy as a concept temporarily recedes as power is consolidated in monarchies.
	Parliaments slowly develop as a mechanism for raising money for the monarchy from landed elite. Some representation in decision-making is granted in return.
	Protestant Reformation embraces democratic principles in rejecting the hierarchy and elitism of the Roman Catholic Church.
	Many indigenous communities of the Americas develop sophisticated political structures with elements of participatory and representative democracy. See *Indian Givers: How the Indians of the Americas Transformed the World* by Jack Weatherford for a discussion of how the political structure of the United States may have been modeled after Iroquois structures.

Date	Democracy in the World*
1700s	Democracy expands in form of parliaments and legislatures dominated by male, landed elite, facilitating the taxation of subjects and imposing some checks on the power of monarchs.
	English traditions of limited democracy spread to American colonies.
	English American colonies declare independence and proclaim the creation of a democratic republic, eventually adopting the Articles of Confederation as a first attempt at a Constitution.
1787	The United States Constitution replaces the Articles of Confederation, and formally incorporates respect for individual liberties into the principle of democracy.
	Democratic processes for electing representatives are still limited to landed, male elite. Electoral system built on fundamental distrust of "the people" to rule and fear of "tyranny of the mob."
1789	The French Revolution formally introduces popular sovereignty into the principle of democracy.
	Participation in the electoral system is increasingly seen as a fundamental right.
1800's	English system of constitutional monarchy with rule of law flourishes and spreads in Europe and to English colonies, including India.
Early 1900's	Suffrage is expanded in democracies to include voting by women and non-landowners. US Senate adopts popular election of members. American freed slaves systematically disenfranchised.
	The Industrial Revolution democratizes the economy by creating non-land based wealth and expanding the middle classes in Europe and America.
	English empire at its height, ruling over 400 million people to whom some democratic principles have been introduced.
1828-1920	The First Wave of Democratization, as coined by Samuel Huntington.
	WWI spells end of monarchies. Paris Peace Treaty emphasizes national self-determination.
	US President Woodrow Wilson advocates the creation of a League of Nations to "make the world safe for democracy." US fails to ratify the League treaty.
1920-1930	First Reverse Wave of Democratization.
	Communism takes root in Russia and China.
	African-Americans remain disenfranchised and victims of social segregation and oppression.
1930s	New Deal in US introduces additional freedoms associated with democracy (from "fear and want") and strengthen the foundations for modern social welfare capitalism.

Date	Democracy in the World*
1945-1960s	Second Wave of Democratization.
	Democracies are triumphant in WWII; totalitarianism is discredited through aggressive acts of USSR and rise of Maoist China.
	Germany and Japan become democracies under tutelage and protection of US and Western Europe. US Marshall Plan links economic recovery to prospects for democratic government.
	Colonies of victors and losers alike gain independence throughout Asia and Africa.
	The United Nations is formed with an emphasis on human rights. UNHDR is issued.
	Freedom House is founded to monitor freedom and democracy throughout the world.
1960-1964	Civil Rights Movement in the US establishes social and political freedoms for African-Americans.
1965-1974	Second Reverse Wave of Democratization.
	Cold War leads to repression of free speech in US in an age characterized by McCarthyism and government surveillance of citizens under Nixon.
	Communist triumphs in Vietnam and Cambodia burnish totalitarian reputations of USSR and China.
	Post-colonial military governments and dictatorships thrive in Asia and Africa.
	Lebanon, once a bastion of Middle Eastern democracy, teeters on the brink of civil war.
	Emergency Rule is declared in India by Indira Gandhi and democracy there is suspended.
	By 1974, only 39 of 165 countries in the world are democracies.

Date	Democracy in the World*
1975-1995	Third Wave of Democratization. Beginning with democracy in Portugal, Spain, and Greece, massive proliferation of democratic governments ensues. Democracy Promotion becomes stated goal of American foreign policy, especially under Carter, Reagan, and Clinton. Communist regimes fall in Eastern and Central Europe; the USSR disintegrates. Tiananmen Square incident shakes Communist China. By 1990, 76 of 165 countries in the world are democracies. By 1995, 117 of 191 countries in the world are democracies. "Snowballing" effect is observed by Huntington. Many experts presume democracy to be triumphant and predict the fall of autocracy everywhere. European Union formed with democracy as an organizing principle.
Late 1990s	Third Reverse Wave of Democratization begins with a military coup that unseats democracy in Pakistan. Democratic momentum comes to a halt. Few new democracies are added; established democracies begin to falter. Experts such as Fareed Zakaria begin to question the credentials of illiberal democracies as compared with liberal autocracies. Backlash ensues against poorly governed democracies and further erodes the reputation of democratic systems and their promoters. Populist authoritarian governments come to power in Latin America, Asia, and Africa. Populist dictator Hugo Chavez seeks to extend his influence from Venezuela throughout Latin America.
2000	Democracy is no longer seen as the only viable path to development as China and Singapore offer powerful non-democratic alternative models. Globalization exacerbates inequalities of wealth, further discrediting democratic governments. Democratic regression in Russia illustrates the power of authoritarian nostalgia. No democratic movement in Middle East. Democracy is generally endangered in key strategic nations such as Nigeria, Thailand, Phillipines, Venezuela. League of Democracies is founded by US and UK to advance the interests of democracies in the world.

Date	Democracy in the World*
2001-2003	United States attacked by al Qaeda terrorists. US goes to war in Afghanistan to liberate it from the repressive Taliban regime which had harbored the Islamist terrorists.
	US PATRIOT (Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) Act passed giving the US government wide latitude to suspend civil liberties in order to counter terrorist threats domestically and abroad.
	US invades Iraq on the suspicion that Saddam Hussein is aiding terrorist groups and developing Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMDs).
2004-2008	Backlash grows against US in the wake of the invasion of Iraq and further damages democracy's image in the world.
	US Democracy Promotion remains a central part of American foreign policy under George W. Bush's Freedom Agenda, but is seen as neo-imperialistic by others.
	Russian democracy is officially deemed suspended. A brief democratic upswing occurs with Color Revolutions in Eastern Europe and the Cedar Revolution in Lebanon.
	China supports Sudan against Western sanctions and intervention designed to reform the totalitarian government and stop state-sanctioned violence in Darfur.
	Russia and China both aggressively counter US democratization efforts through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).
	Democratic elections bring anti-US factions with terrorist connections to power: Hamas, Hezbollah, and the Muslim Brotherhood prevail in key countries of the Middle East.
	China continues to thrive economically as a totalitarian state; the international community experiences great difficulty dealing with virulently anti-democratic "rogue" nations of Sudan, Zimbabwe, North Korea, and Burma.
	EU Constitution is voted down.
	New, expanded electronic surveillance laws pass in the US despite concerns over the abuse of civil liberties. US democratic credentials are sullied by torture scandals.
	US Presidential Candidate John McCain advocates the invigoration of a League of Democracies or Concert of Democracies to supplement and eventually replace the United Nations. Idea holds little favor outside the US.

*This timeline's early emphasis on the development of Western democratic principles is meant to reflect the traditions upon which dominant present-day Western democracy is thought to have been codified.

What is Democracy?

The study of democratic governance is its own industry. Numerous non- partisan organizations rigorously study countries around the world and apply variables to determine whether a democracy exists, and to determine its quality and the extent to which it is considered durable. Freedom House, the Center for Systemic Peace (which maintains the Polity IV data set), and the *The Economist* Intelligence Unit of the *The Economist* magazine all annually evaluate the state of democracy in the world. The US National Endowment for Democracy also conducts research and fields expert opinions. Supplementing these are the World Values Survey and the work of other polling organizations such as Pew and Gallup, which routinely measure the attitudes and values of people all over the world as they pertain to preferences and proclivities for types of governments.

The concept of democracy is often expressed in terms of "thin" and "thick" definitions. At its most fundamental (or thin) incarnation, democracy is synonymous with popular sovereignty or majority rule: a system of governance in which the people choose their leaders by casting votes. Also known as **electoral democracy**, this definition describes the processes by which a government derives its authority or mandate. But, most agree that this is only one piece of the equation. What the government does with this mandate, how it rules, and the outcomes that are produced must also be factored into a (thick) designation of democracy. Thus, what we know as democracy in its ideal form generally also includes governance by rule of law and the protection of civil liberties, or **liberal democracy**. Though how these two basic components of democracy – electoral and liberal – are represented may differ, it is widely accepted that a truly democratic system of governance must comprise both. The extent to which it does so will determine its quality and durability. In the words of Thomas Jefferson, without liberal democracy, electoral democracy is "nothing more than mob rule where 51% of the people may take away the rights of the other 49."

Freedom House expresses this critical combination in terms of "political rights" and "civil liberties." Democracy expert Michael Mandelbaum writes in terms of the "who" and "how" of governing. Other definitions are more organic and do not use a binary distinction between the two. The definition used by *The Economist* Intelligence Unit is "a government based on majority rule and the consent of the governed, the existence of free and fair elections, the protection of minorities, respect for basic human rights, (presupposing) equality before the law, due process, and political pluralism." Expert Marc Plattner defines democracy as "a regime based on majority rule, tempered by the separation of powers, the rule of law and constitutional protections for individual liberties." Another expert Larry Diamond writes in terms of "popular sovereignty, accountability of rulers, freedom, and rule of law." **The key take-away is that simply electing leaders democratically does not ensure that the citizens of a country will experience the benefits of a democratic society.** Thus, often confusingly, the term democracy is used to describe both a means and an end.

It is also important to note that democracy is generally recognized to be, in the words of scholar Chan Heng Lee, an "elastic" concept. Unlike pregnancy, where you either are or aren't, countries are widely seen as occupying temporary, ever-shifting spots along a spectrum of democratization, in constant motion, democratizing and de-democratizing as institutions, values, and attitudes change.

Often, a great way to understand a concept is to examine its opposite. Authoritarian governments or autocracies can be said to occupy the lowest end of the democratic spectrum. Leaders come by their positions through heredity, conquest, coup, or appointment. Once in power, all rights and responsibilities are vested in the government over which they preside. Citizens have some rights and some responsibilities doled out to them at the government's discretion, but they do not enjoy any expectation of consistency or impartiality in the way these are distributed. **Any powers not specifically given to the people are reserved by the government**; and these designations may change at the whim of leaders. No categorical limitations are placed on government activities; there is generally no recourse for any abuses or excesses visited upon citizens by their leaders. The power flows in one direction.

In contrast, in the truest form of democracy at the furthest end of the spectrum, all rights and responsibilities are vested with the people; and it is the people who then confer a subset of these upon the government by electing leaders and writing constitutions. The people enter into a contract with the government to pursue policies associated with the collective good of society. **Any powers not specifically given to the government are reserved by the people.** A system of majority rule prevails within an established set of policies and institutions to determine an approximation of the "public good," yet every effort is made to observe the rights of minorities within this realm. The power flows in two directions: between the people and their government, guided by a codified system of laws and applied universally and transparently without discrimination. Electoral democracy is the process by which leaders gain public office; liberal democracy results when clear limits are placed on what they can do when they get there. As mentioned above, electoral democracy alone only gets you so far on the spectrum; liberal democracy kicks in when citizens are guaranteed protection of their civil liberties from

infringement by the government or by other citizens. Civil liberties are similar to human rights as delineated in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. See Key Foundation Documents for a list.

The Process of Democratization

It is generally assumed that most countries lie somewhere on the spectrum between pure autocracy and pure democracy. It is important to note that there are democratically elected government that do not protect civil liberties, just as there are autocratic governments that do protect some civil liberties. True democratization must occur on both the electoral and liberal fronts and is thought to progress along four stages, first described by Doh Chull Shin, with the potential for movement occurring in both directions:

- **Decay of authoritarian rule:** This can be the result of foreign intervention or war, but is usually brought on by the failure of the government to perform its basic functions in securing the well-being of the people over whom it rules. As the state fails, popular discontent grows and resistance builds through violent or nonviolent means. Opposition becomes, in the words of Peter Ackerman and Jack Duvall, "personal, collective, and strategic" as the "people's acquiescence begins to come apart," and the regime's legitimacy is "ruptured."

- **Transition:** This is often characterized by an autocratic regime's last attempts to regain legitimacy through reform. Often, the reforms are cosmetic and serve to vent popular frustration. These reforms ultimately shore up the authoritarian regime and extend its life, resulting in no actual fundamental transition. (Post-Tiananmen Square China is an example here – see the June 2008 edition of the Monitor). In other cases, as Samuel Huntington has noted, many transitions from totalitarian rule are actually the "unintended consequences of reforms meant to forestall bigger reforms." He cites the fall of the apartheid regime in South Africa and the fall of Communist Soviet Union as examples of this. Both South Africa's Botha and the USSR's Gorbachev opened up a small space for dissent that ultimately became their undoing. In such cases, momentum builds until the divided house can no longer stand. Elections by popular sovereignty or majority rule are

the end stage of the transition period and necessitate some form of rudimentary constitutionalism to establish offices and procedures for voting.

· **Consolidation:** This is no less crucial than the transition and is when, in the words of Michael Mandelbaum, "institutions, skills, habits, and values" are developed and take root. The rule of law is established through government systems, the expansion of constitutions, and the development of accountability mechanisms. It bears remembering that the US Constitution we know today was not the one that accompanied the transition phase. It was not until a decade after independence that the Articles of Confederation were thrown out and a Constitutional Convention called to re-evaluate and consolidate democracy in the new nation. Consolidation can take generations and occurs when a democratic culture matures around rule of law. This occurs once the expectations and responsibilities that run horizontally between the branches of government and vertically from the government to the people are codified and practiced with success, often in the context of internal and external stressors or tests.

· **Deepening and Expansion:** It can be argued that every successful democracy is perpetually in this stage as codes, laws, and norms are perennially tested, re-evaluated, and improved. It becomes a question of resilience as it is ensured that each and every citizen feels a stake in democracy's survival in the face of ever-shifting demographic, economic, social, environmental, and geopolitical contingencies. One of the most overlooked truisms about democracy is that it is not a natural state of human organization or natural order of government. A long view of history reveals that democratic countries are, in fact, the exception, not the norm. The troubling trend of de-democratization in places like Russia today illustrates how all democracies are constantly subject to negative forces embedded in human nature that exert a powerful pull away from civil liberties. In addition, crisis situations perpetually threaten consolidated institutions and values. All democratic countries are theoretically one epidemic, war, or terrorist event away from significant backsliding along the spectrum. Many would argue that even the United States is, to this day, experiencing both forward and backward movement within this stage.

Measuring the Health of a Democracy

How a country progresses along this process will determine the health of the resulting democracy, earning it a moniker such as those proposed by David Collier and Steven Levitsky in their work "Democracy with Adjectives" including "oligarchic democracy, restrictive democracy, illiberal democracy, tutelary democracy, delegative democracy," and so on. Such a designation may also be simplified into a scale in which countries receive scores based on their level of commitment to democracy.

Freedom House is one of the most widely accepted authorities on the state of democracy in individual countries around the world. The below checklist is used by the non-partisan American-based organization to quantifiably evaluate how far along the democratization spectrum a country has progressed. Scores reflect the extent to which governments have achieved both electoral (political liberties) and liberal (civil liberties) democratization. On a scale of 1-7, countries are considered "free," "partly free," or "not free," with 1 being the most "free." Within these categories, there is a tremendous range, and countries on the brink of tipping into another category are monitored for critical developments that will move them either up or down the scale.

Political Rights

Electoral Process
1. Is the head of government or other chief national authority elected through free and fair elections?

2. Are the national legislative representatives elected through free and fair elections?

3. Are the electoral laws and framework fair?

Political Pluralism and Participation
1. Do the people have the right to organize in different political parties or other competitive political groupings of their choice, and is the system open to the rise and fall of these competing parties or groupings?

2. Is there a significant opposition vote and a realistic possibility for the opposition to increase its support or gain power through elections?

3. Are the people's political choices free from

domination by the military, foreign powers, totalitarian parties, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies, or any other powerful group?

4. Do cultural, ethnic, religious, or other minority groups have full political rights and electoral opportunities?

Functioning of Government

1. Do the freely elected head of government and national legislative representatives determine the policies of the government?

2. Is the government free from pervasive corruption?

3. Is the government accountable to the electorate between elections, and does it operate with openness and transparency?

Additional Discretionary Political Rights Questions

1. For traditional monarchies that have no parties or electoral process, does the system provide for genuine, meaningful consultation with the people, encourage public discussion of policy choices, and allow the right to petition the ruler?

2. Is the government or occupying power deliberately changing the ethnic composition of a country or territory so as to destroy a culture or tip the political balance in favor of another group?

Civil Liberties

Freedom and Expression of Belief

1. Are there free and independent media and other forms of cultural expression? (Note: In cases where the media are state-controlled but offer pluralistic points of view, the survey gives the system credit.)

2. Are religious institutions and communities free to practice their faith and express themselves in public and private?

3. Is there academic freedom and is the educational system free of extensive political indoctrination?

4. Is there open and free private discussion?

Associational and Organizational Rights

1. Is there freedom of assembly, demonstration, and open public discussion?

2. Is there freedom for nongovernmental organizations? (Note: This includes civic organizations, interest groups, foundations, etc.)

3. Are there free trade unions and peasant organizations or equivalents, and is there effective collective bargaining? Are there free professional and other private organizations?

Rule of Law

1. Is there an independent judiciary?

2. Does the rule of law prevail in civil and criminal matters? Are police under direct civilian control?

3. Is there protection from political terror, unjustified imprisonment, exile, or torture, whether by groups that support or oppose the system? Is there freedom from war and insurgencies?

4. Do laws, policies, and practices guarantee equal treatment of various segments of the population?

Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights

1. Does the state control travel or choice of residence, employment, or institution of higher education?

2. Do citizens have the right to own property and establish private businesses? Is private business activity unduly influenced by government officials, the security forces, political parties/organizations, or organized crime?

3. Are there personal social freedoms, including gender equality, choice of marriage partners, and size of family?

4. Is there equality of opportunity and the absence of economic exploitation? (Freedom House, 2008, freedomhouse.org)

See http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_INDEX_2007_v3.pdf for a similar, alternative scale used by The Economist Intelligence Unit. See http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/p4manualv2006.pdf for information on the Polity IV Data Set maintained by the Center for Systemic Peace.

Attitudes and Beliefs of Citizens

In addition to the various checklists (self-surveys and expert surveys), people's beliefs are also measured to determine the saturation level of democratic values. The World Values Survey is conducted in different regions across the world and is used to supplement Freedom House and Polity IV data. By asking the following three questions of citizens, and comparing the percentages of those answering "yes," experts believe they can dig deeper into the extent to which democratic culture has developed or may develop in the future:

- Do you agree with the following statement, "Democracy may have its problems, but it's better than any other form of government?"

- Do you endorse the idea of a "Strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections?"

- Do you agree that "Greater respect for authority would be a good thing?"

These attitudinal measures are helpful in examining the claim that some cultures or regions are naturally more conducive to the growth and consolidation of democracy. Countries with low Freedom House scores, but with high percentages of respondents answering the above questions positively (i.e. answers indicating democratic proclivities or preferences) are seen to be potentially fertile, if challenging candidates for future democratization. Conversely, countries who may enjoy higher Freedom House scores, but whose citizens respond negatively to the above questions are considered to be at risk for de-democratization. Many experts also look at voter registration and turnout statistics to gauge how invested people feel in the political system. Low rates may reveal government interference with voting and/or voter apathy, both of which are highly negative indicators for the health of a democracy.

Measuring Democratization and De-Democratization

The challenge in evaluating a country's level of democratization lies in the unpacking of the concepts on a list such as Freedom House's. For example, what exactly constitutes a free and fair election? Who is qualified to run for office? Who is qualified to vote? Are multiple parties permitted? Are the offices truly competitive? Who decides electoral procedures? Who monitors them? How frequent are the elections? How are people notified and educated about the procedures and the platforms of the candidates? Are there any restrictions on how candidates can convey their message in person or through television, radio, internet, and literature; or how people can gather to discuss the candidates' positions in print or in person? How are campaign funds raised? Were the voting registration procedures burdensome? How are registration lists maintained? Are the polling places and voting hours convenient to all sectors of the population? Are the ballots truly secret? Are the voting machines standardized? How are votes awarded – on a proportional or winner takes all basis? Who counts the votes? Do independent mechanisms exist to recount or validate results? Who reports the results and how? Who has the ultimate authority over contested results?

Getting into this level of detail is crucial, and any of the above questions give pause when considering electoral procedures of one of the highest quality democracies (the United States – Election of 2000) and one of the poorest quality democracies (Zimbabwe – Election of 2008). Any of the other measures on the Freedom House checklist may be parsed similarly.

Waves of Democratization

Extraordinary vigilance and effort is required to move countries forward along the spectrum toward higher quality democracy and to prevent backward motion. Because democratic governments do not exist in a static universe, the challenge is ensuring the relevance of democratic institutions and practices in an ever-changing environment. Samuel Huntington has written about democracy in terms of "waves" throughout history. (See timeline). He identifies five trends as responsible for the highly successful most recent Third Wave of Democratization (1974-1999) in which democracy spread throughout Southern Europe, Latin America, Asia, and the former Soviet Union:

- **Legitimacy Problems:** Authoritarian regimes throughout the world were performing poorly as evidenced by the loss of order, economic woes, and/or military defeat.

- **Global Economic Growth:** The expansion of free market economies and the knitting together of these

economies through globalization created an expanded middle class with a stake in governance and the education, time, and incentive to improve it.

- **Changes in the Authoritarian Nature of Religion:** Both the Catholic and Protestant churches became less hierarchical and autocratic in nature, and became advocates of political reform rather than bulwarks of the status quo.

- **Actions of Individuals and Organizations:** The United States, the European Union, and the United Nations actively promoted democracy through incentives and assistance. Individual leaders such as Russia's Mikhail Gorbachev and South Africa's Frederik Willem De Klerk and Nelson Mandela were powerful voices for reform.

- **Snowballing or Demonstration Effects:** Momentum was generated. As one country after another successfully and peacefully democratized, they set examples for others. In addition, the affluence of established democracies in the US and Western Europe provided models for linking prosperity and democratic governance, while simultaneously the economic misfortune of totalitarian states provided a powerful disincentive toward autocratic governance.

It is interesting to note that all of the factors thought to contribute to the most expansive spread of democracy worldwide in history could easily be turned on their heads to create similarly powerful negative movement toward de-democratization.

- Democratic governments with performance issues are just as vulnerable as autocratic governments with performance issues – the popular discontent which is generated can just as easily be harnessed by a would-be autocrat promising better times ahead.

- Global economic growth, should it dramatically slow or reverse would shrink the middle class who is often seen as the bulwark of democracy at the same time it would increase popular discontent and class conflict.

- Religious fundamentalism of any kind, such as radical Islam has harsh anti-democratic features and can be used to justify repressive regimes.

- Anti-Americanism, combined with the failure of the UN to promote democracy and humanitarian ends, and/or the failure of the EU to consolidate its governing structures and influence would harm the

cause of democracy promotion. As would the rise of illiberal leaders in strategic countries.

- And, finally, were totalitarian countries to begin to economically outperform democracies, the demonstration effects would be powerful. Equally powerful would be for the quality of democracy itself to falter in countries previously seen as democratic models.

State of Democracy in the World 2008

Many argue that the above scenario is happening in 2008: as the global economy falters and nations are increasingly plagued by ethnic conflict; as religious fundamentalism takes on a decidedly anti-democratic face; as US democracy promotion efforts in Iraq fail and the world comes to see American international democracy promotion as a synonym for illegitimate regime change; as the UN stumbles in Darfur and the EU fails to ratify a constitution; as China's economic success provides a powerful alternative model linking prosperity to authoritarianism; and as the United States and Western European democracies find themselves forced to roll back civil liberties in order to counter domestic and foreign terrorist threats.

Most experts believe the world in 2008 has entered a democratic recession, and that we are seeing retrenchment and even reverse movement along the democratic spectrum worldwide. Fewer countries are making the transition to democracy; established democracies are experiencing difficulty consolidating and deepening their democratic principles in the wake of globalization and the war on terror; and the once-celebrated endeavor of promoting democracy and providing democracy assistance to authoritarian or transitioning countries is under fire for denying sovereignty and being neo-imperialist.

A democratic recession is worrisome because democratic processes and outcomes are seen to advance human rights and thus are considered morally superior to authoritarian governments. When both electoral and liberal elements are present, many believe democracies are proven to be high functioning, stable, prosperous, and peaceful. For example, research by Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has shown that famines do not occur in democratically governed countries because the high levels of transparency and press freedom produce warning signs that are publicized and heeded.

Other research over the last century has shown that democracies generally do not go to war with each other. And finally, economic development has been shown to correlate with democracy, and the UN has posited that the best chance for universal human development may lie with democratic governance where democratic values and culture are "embedded" in all parts of society.

Some argue that the current democratic recession has been exaggerated by the very measures that have been used to classify democracies. Marina Ottaway joins Fareed Zakaria and others in criticizing the measurement scales for failing to distinguish between "cosmetic" reforms and real democratizing reforms on the ground. Ottaway argues that a fundamental "paradigm shift" about how power is to be distributed and wielded must take place before a country can realistically be called a democracy, no matter how well they do on the checklists. It is generally conceded that many of the countries that we thought were democracies and are now slipping backward, were possibly never democracies in the first place, hence the terms "pseudo-democracy" or "illiberal democracy." Perhaps these countries were misclassified during the euphoria of the Third Wave or perhaps they failed to consolidate and deepen their democratic commitments. It is acknowledged that the science of studying democracy for the purposes of improving governance and promoting democratic systems worldwide is woefully inadequate in measuring the critical, fine details that make a significant difference and distinguish professed democratic commitments from realities on the ground. It is also widely acknowledged that leaders with autocratic tendencies have become savvy at constructing democratic facades as democracy has become a universal ideal. Democratic quality will be the watchword for the 21st century, not quantity. In Michael Mandelbaum's words, it is democracy's "good name" or brand that should be the focus going forward, and many believe experts worldwide should develop new measures to capture the factors that extend, deepen, and protect the franchise.

What Factors Influence the Development of Democracy?

Extrapolating from the history of individual countries and best practice literature and research, key factors emerge that seem to affect the construction and durability of meaningful democratic government, in both electoral and liberal terms. As Democracy expert Michael Mandelbaum has observed, nations must have both the **intention** to create democracy and the **capacity** to do so. This is often described using a plant metaphor and the factors that go into the creation of "hothouse" conditions for the flourishing of different varieties of democracy.

The factors affecting a country's prospects for democratic maturation may be internal or external. It is important to note that many of the variables discussed below act as proverbial double-edged swords – alone they can each promote, retard, or obstruct democratization, depending on how, when, and where they play out. Moreover, each factor affects another in a complicated algorithm that often defies replication. This underscores the difficulty of assembling a formula that will ensure movement toward true democracy. One thing nearly all experts agree on is the case-sensitive nature of democratization – the process will be unique in every country, and it is not a foregone conclusion that democracy will be achieved everywhere.

Internal Factors

- The Economy
- The Structure, Strength, and Transparency of Government Institutions
- The Electorate
- Civil Society
- The Press
- Demography
- Geography

External Factors

- Democracy Promotion by Other Nations
- Democracy Promotion by Regional and International Organizations
- Global Markets and International Finance Mechanisms
- The Influence of Non-Democratic Nations

Sequencing: Does it make a difference whether the electoral or the liberal components of democracy come first?

Democracy: Internal Factors

Economy
Government Structure, Strength, and Transparency
Leadership
The Electorate
Civil Society
The Press
Demography
Geography

The Economy

One of the most discussed debates within the democracy field is the relationship between free market capitalism (and the resulting economic growth) and the development of democratic governance.   Empirical and anecdotal research reveals a strong correlation between the two. Although there is some chicken or the egg type controversy (which comes first, democracy or free market growth?) evidence does, nevertheless, link the two, in theory and in practice. **Put simply, the motivators that cause people to pursue democracy and develop their capacity for self-governance are seen as the same motivators that drive people to pursue capitalism and develop their capacity to succeed in a free market.** However, while linked, democracy and capitalism are also fundamentally in conflict with each other. True free market capitalism inevitably results in unequal distributions of wealth. These inequalities are inherently undemocratic and tend to produce tensions that are destabilizing to democratic regimes. Dissecting what democracy expert Robert Dahl has called this "**antagonistic symbiosis**" is critical to understanding how a country's economy contributes to its prospects for democracy.

How Free Market Capitalism Promotes Democracy

The father of what has become known as the "modernization theory" of democratization is Seymour Martin Lipset. One is hard pressed to find an analysis of democracy that does not refer to his important work in the 1950s, which established a connection between capitalistic prosperity and democratic governance. In his view, economic success brought on by a transition to industrial, free market capitalism goes on to breed democracy. It not only breeds democratic governance, but appears critical in sustaining and consolidating democracy as well. Subsequent research conducted by Adam Przeworski and Fernando Lemongi supports this theory. Reviewing history, Przeworski and Lemongi constructed a scale thought to predict the life expectancy of a democratic government based on per capita GDP (measured in 1985 US dollars). In their analysis, the democracies of countries with $1500 per capita GDP will last 8 years. Those with a per capita GDP of $1500 to $3000 can expect their democracies to last 18 years. And, once countries get to a $6000 per capita level, there is a good chance of regime permanence.

Fareed Zakaria has supported this correlation with newer research, citing that of the 32 democratic regimes with a per capita GDP of $9000 or above (measured in 2000 purchasing power levels), not one has failed. In fact, they have existed for a combined 736 years. By contrast, of the 69 poorer democracies, 39 have failed (a failure rate of over 50%). Moreover, it is often noted that of the 25 countries with high Human Development Index (HDI) scores, only one is not a democracy – Singapore. Singapore is also the only non-oil exporting country that is not a democracy among nations with the highest GDPs in the world. (As is discussed later, oil-export wealth presents a different paradigm with respect to markets and democracy; countries

that depend on oil exports do not necessarily conform to traditional econometric models).

What explains this correlation between economic growth and democracy? Many experts have expounded on Lipset's theory, and from their work we can construct a narrative. When countries transition from feudal or state-controlled economies, wealth is generated in the hands of individuals in the private sector, broadly outside the control of the state. This includes all different kinds of wealth and not only land ownership as in pre-modern times. As the democratization of wealth leads to pressures for democratization of governance, the expanded distribution of wealth acts as what Lipset calls "a powerful solvent of authoritarian regimes.". Economist Philip Levy has summarized this dynamic in terms of the "dual use" function served by capitalistic values and processes.

As private property comes to exist in many different forms and diverse global markets develop, a vibrant middle class is created with access to education and exposure to a world of ideas gained through global trade and travel. Ownership of private property and engagement in the marketplace creates a skill set similar to the one required for participation in democratic government. This skill set includes the ability to bargain and compromise, and leads to the development of what many have called "trust networks." Without these, economic transactions between overseas participants stretching over long periods of time could not exist. To understand this, consider what goes into an economic transaction in a free market. Buyer and seller are motivated by different interests and must compromise on setting a price. Once agreements are made, mechanisms must be created to ensure the viability of contracts; each party must have reason to believe that payments will be made and orders delivered as agreed. Accountability, trust, and transparency become valuable commodities in and of themselves. A premium is placed on innovation, responsiveness, efficiency, and communication. In Lipset's view, the marketplace teaches individuals to embrace "longer time perspectives" and "more complex and gradualist views of politics," the same values that underpin democratic governance. For this reason, Michael Mandelbaum has aptly called capitalism "freedom school," where individuals learn the habits, develop the values and skills, and build the institutions that promote democracy.

Beyond values, habits, and skills, many of the tools used to produce economic growth based on free markets and open trade are the same tools used by democratic reformers. Bruno Bueno de Mesquita has described the importance of "coordination goods" in democratization efforts. These are tools that facilitate the development of political rights (freedom of speech, organization, and association) as well as human rights. These tools allow like-minded reformers to communicate with each other and with the outside world to publicize government abuses and excesses and to build critical mass for protest movements. Everything from cell phones, e-mail, and websites make this more possible; and these tools were originally developed to conduct business transactions. As societies become more open commercially, it is consequently more difficult for oppressive regimes to ration these "coordination goods" that often come to serve a powerful dual purpose.

Beyond the capacity-building function of the market, there is an important motivation factor behind the capitalism-democracy link. As economic growth occurs and prosperity spreads, more individuals come to have a stake in the system that governs them. This increased stake leads individuals to value the rule of law, and incentivizes them to participate in government. At the same time, their wealth creates the leisure time necessary for them to do so. Several experts have made parallels here to Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs framework related to human emotional development. In his classic psychosocial model, individuals can only move onto pursuing more complex relationship needs after they have satisfied their basic survival needs for food, shelter, and safety. Similarly, once communities achieve a measure of economic prosperity that provides for their basic human survival needs, they are both able and motivated to move on to more complex concerns such as the pursuit of political and civil liberties and the building of institutions that promote these.

Optimism is also a fundamental component of free market capitalism, because the system theoretically makes it possible for you to 'pull yourself up by your own bootstraps' rather than have your fate determined at birth. Optimism also serves as an important antidote to political cynicism, and affects people's motivation to participate in government as well as markets. It implies a faith in process and progress that is essential to democracy.

Furthermore, in the view of some, free market capitalism ultimately makes the authoritarian or totalitarian state obsolete. If the "invisible hand" of the market controls supply and demand, and, by extension, all economic (and many social and political) interactions between individuals, the state loses some of its legitimacy. As efficiency becomes valued in a market economy, bloated government-driven industries often cannot compete (bloated because autocratic governments often depend on patronage for their legitimacy, and government jobs are a supreme spoil of patronage). As government-driven industries suffer in the leveled playing field, there are fewer resources available to support patronage. The autocratic government's legitimacy is diminished, while citizens simultaneously become motivated and capable of self-governance. Overall, this theory can be summed up in the following way: Momentum generated by the expansion of economic rights extends to a demand for political and civil rights. Capitalism produces prosperity, capitalism comes to be associated with democracy, democracy comes to be associated with prosperity; the cycle becomes self-perpetuating, and democratically governed countries come to serve as powerful models for other countries seeking economic growth.

How Free Market Capitalism Undermines Democracy

There is an important caveat to the above theories. While it is largely undisputed that free markets are highly efficient engines of economic growth, it is also true that this growth is often unequally distributed in society. In its purest form, free market capitalism is built on principles of Social Darwinism, meaning that those who are best able to compete do the best. Those who cannot compete, in terms of access to capital or jobs, innovation or efficiency, lose. The invisible hand of the market alone offers no social safety net. These outcomes are known as market failures – poverty, vast inequalities of wealth, and class tensions, to name a few.

These market failures are, in and of themselves, considered to be undemocratic. In other words, free market capitalism creates the conditions (values, skills, attitudes, and habits) conducive to the development of electoral democracy; yet it may actually interfere with the development of broader

democratic outcomes, or liberal democracy. In a free market, significant portions of society fail to equally enjoy the opportunities and benefits of economic growth. The resulting class tensions can be highly destabilizing for any regime, particularly one that derives its authority from the people.

It is important to note that the advanced industrial capitalist economies of the world (in Western Europe and the United States) do not in fact, technically practice pure free market capitalism. These countries, incidentally, are democracies and models of the correlation between capitalism and democracy. Over the centuries of Western modernization, market failures surfaced and were addressed, particularly after the Great Depression, in the form of the New Deal and similar European mechanisms, such as the 1934 British Unemployment Act. As leaders became aware of the de-democratizing effects of free market economies, Western governments, to varying extents, began to intervene in market processes. The goal was to redistribute the spoils of capitalism using social safety nets, which could soften the fallout from raw competition. Today, through tax revenue and other measures, most successful democratic governments attempt to provide a minimum standard of living (education, as well as health care, housing, and food assistance) for all people, regardless of their ability to compete in the marketplace.

It is necessary to make the critical but often overlooked distinction between free market capitalism and the revised form of social welfare capitalism that is practiced in modern advanced economies; such a distinction suggests that the advanced capitalist democracies such as the US survived and prospered not necessarily because of free market capitalism, but rather in spite of it. Capitalism helps set countries on the path to democracy, but the consolidation and deepening of democracy depends on the dismantlement of some elements of capitalism. This is necessary in order to mitigate the vast anti-democratic inequalities of wealth that are generated through open competition.

In this regard, however, a democratic government can only do so much to mitigate the inequalities produced by the market. Privilege often begets privilege. Certain groups, by virtue of their success, are able to perpetuate their advantage by transferring wealth, education, and employment opportunities to their children. Others gain advantage

through corruption that often involves representatives of the government itself. The playing field can never be completely leveled by redistributive and affirmative action measures. Economic inequality is therefore an inevitable hallmark of capitalist free markets, even in the absence of corruption and in the presence of social welfare mechanisms.

Jeff Madrick has described a "self-perpetuating cycle" that applies when economic inequality exists in societies with basic institutions of democratic governance. Those that feel left behind by market forces perceive government negatively because they don't personally enjoy the prosperity that capitalism and, by extension, democracy seemed to promise. Lower classes in particular are often apathetic and cynical as a result, and in many instances effectively give up on the democratic enterprise. This is evidenced in low voter turnout at polls among this group, and reduced pressure on the system to look out for their interests. This in turn creates even more opportunity for wealthy individuals and corporations to wield disproportionate influence in government, thus exacerbating the perceived inequalities. As the cycle repeats, average citizens lose faith in the system, and in this way, unwittingly help to exclude themselves from it. Many would argue that this is a feature of capitalism that haunts even advanced democracies, interfering with their intrinsic democratic nature and the health of their institutions. Former US Secretary of Labor and economist Robert Reich raised concerns about this phenomenon in American society in a 2007 article entitled, "How Capitalism is Killing Democracy." In this article, he posited that market globalization is "allowing corporations and elites buoyed by runaway economic success to undermine the government's capacity to respond to citizen's concerns" in an "arms race for political influence."

But, what happens if the disaffected don't drop out of the process? What if their resentment turns angry or violent, generating what Ken Jowitt has called "movements of rage" against those whom capitalism has favored? In this case, the stability of the entire system – capitalist and democratic – is put at risk. The disaffected can become vulnerable to the influence of the powerful, who exploit their rage to gain control of economic assets and the political process. In extreme cases, civil war destroys the society. When the spoils of capitalism are directed toward a particular ethnic group, as often occurs, significant tension and

conflict can lead to violence. This has even led to genocide, a phenomenon poignantly described by Amy Chua in her theory about economies favoring "market dominant minorities" (See Demography). In this view, capitalism has the potential to create democratic intentions and the power to destroy them.

In other cases, it has been noted that capitalism has actually served to strengthen authoritarian governments, not weaken them. Many would argue that capitalist reforms in Communist China have created prosperity that has helped to sustain the legitimacy of the authoritarian government. As conservative commentator Robert Kagan has written, this happens in two ways. First, economic growth co-opts the middle classes who are generally the agents of democratic political reform. They are kept content by their prosperity, while those who suffer from capitalist inequalities of wealth are too isolated and too consumed with subsistence living to protest the autocratic tendencies of the government. Second, economic growth makes the government richer through taxation and investment, giving it more resources to direct toward repressive measures that limit democratization in social and civil realms. More money can be spent on monitoring internet use and suppressing free speech and association, severely compromising democratic reform movements. As an example, human rights activist Huang Qi, who advocates through his website www.64tianwang.com (the 64 references the June 6 date of the Tiananmen Square protests), was recently arrested by Chinese authorities and charged with illegally possessing state secrets. Both the People's Republic of China and Vladimir Putin's Russia are able to reap the economic benefits of market capitalism while forestalling the democratizing political effects. Through systems known as "selective repression" or "managed coercion," these authoritarian governments allow just enough social and political space for capitalist innovation, but not enough to generate reform or the pursuit of true political or civil liberty by its citizens.

Ironically, there are other experts who see China's trajectory as perhaps one that in the future could still demonstrate the positive relationship between capitalistic growth and the development of at least electoral democracy. As is rarely acknowledged, China, despite its double-digit growth over the last three decades, still has a relatively low GDP per

capita (roughly $5300/year, though reports vary), and is just below the threshold where one would expect to see regime permanence. If China's authoritarian system breaks down as capitalist prosperity expands, as some expect it to, it would give powerful credence to the theory that free markets are, to a point, democratizing.

Wrenches in the Equation: India and The Petrostates

Given the complicated correlations between capitalism and democracy, how does one explain India's stature as the world's largest and arguably most consolidated democracy without experiencing what can be called impressive capitalist economic growth? See both Fareed Zakaria and Larry Diamond's work for analyses of India as a fascinating outlier. A nation of 1 billion people, India has constructed a democracy that flows more from its colonial history under British tutelage in democratic principles, than its economy, which has at times contained powerful socialist features. The durability and quality of this democracy has also survived significant ethnic and caste tensions and temporary emergency authoritarian rule imposed by Indira Gandhi in the 1970s. India will remain a highly instructive case study for examining the relationship between economy and system of governance.

Another subset of countries is an exception to the capitalism-democracy link. These are countries whose market economies are based on the export of mineral wealth such as oil. See Geography section.

Government Institutions: Structure, Strength, and Transparency

Assuming a country makes the transition from authoritarian rule to electoral democracy, how can it be ensured that the country will use democratic processes to create truly democratic outcomes? As many have noted, having a constitution doesn't necessarily mean that a country is practicing constitutionalism. Government institutions must be created and structured to further the rule of law while protecting the rights of its citizens and promoting democratic values. What factors influence the likelihood that a government will consolidate and deepen democracy? How can we ensure that the people will enjoy not only meaningful popular sovereignty, but liberal democracy as well? Research tells us that the structure, strength, and transparency of government institutions are essential.

Structure of Government

Vertical Organization

To navigate the complexities of modern life, democratic governments generally operate in two or more realms – local and national. Most have local/village, state/province, and national levels. How these different entities share power vertically has implications for the quality of democracy that results.   Having labored under an authoritarian government, many young democracies reflexively choose to limit the power of the central government and to strengthen institutions at the local levels, believing them to be more directly responsive to the needs and desires of the people. This is known as a federalist system, where power is decentralized to some degree, and can be seen in government in the United States and in the world's largest democracy, India.

Federalism is seen by experts to confer important strength and resiliency in democracies and to facilitate their consolidation and deepening. First, with a vast network of local and regional government institutions, the power of the central government is effectively checked, building in a critical safeguard against usurpation of authority by an elite group often removed from the daily concerns of the people. Second, as Fareed Zakaria has written, federalism provides through its numerous government offices throughout the country "thousands of points of political entry." This means that more citizens come to have a stake in the survival and quality of the government – more people are called to participate and thus to commit themselves to its success. Local leaders are (theoretically) responsive to the average citizen who, if he feels his voice is being heard, is more likely to feel a stake in the system.

Federalism is seen as a system particularly well-suited to countries with great ethnic and racial diversity. It is seen as more protective of the interests of minorities and capable of defusing ethnic conflict by developing leaders in all groups at the local levels, who can then advocate for their constituencies generally in the government system. Ethnic groups (often experiencing discrimination) who are given a stake in the system as a whole are less likely to pursue only their own narrow interests, thus limiting conflict and separatist tendencies. Similarly, local offices provide a point of entry for women who may have more difficulty

gaining representation in a central government, especially in more traditional societies. As previously-excluded groups gain leadership skills and support at the local level, the path is paved for their ultimate inclusion in other levels of government.

Horizontal Organization

In addition to having central, state, and local levels of government, democracies also have horizontal arrangements, or branches, at the central/national level. Each branch generally has a specific function, is elected or chosen in a distinct way, and acts as a check to the power of the other branches. Typically these branches include an executive, legislative, and judicial body. The way power is distributed among these branches is important, as is the way in which their respective representatives are chosen.

In addition to choosing a decentralized federalist system, many countries making the transition from authoritarian rule naturally seek to check the power of the executive branch of the central government. The most obvious example here is the American government – the power of the President as head of the Executive Branch is checked by both the Congress (House and Senate) and the Judiciary (District courts as well as the Supreme Court). Such a separation of powers is seen as conducive to democratic outcomes and serves as a safeguard against the consolidation of authority by any one branch. It is critical that these branches be independent of each other so that checks and balances are real and meaningful.

The Judiciary branch is generally responsible not only for enforcing the rule of law, but also for ensuring the continued relevance of the constitution as times and contingencies change over the lifespan of the country. The framers of a constitution cannot possibly anticipate the ways in which a general legal framework will be tested by future generations. If the law of the land is to be dynamic, judges with expertise as well as impartiality must be responsible for interpreting the language of the law and applying it to conditions on the ground. The testing of laws is a fundamental avenue of participation in a democracy – rights and freedoms must be regularly contested for them to have meaning.

Many struggling democracies are endangered by the exertion of power by the Executive over the court system. This has been a central concern in the case of Pakistan

and President Pervez Musharraf's ongoing battle with judges who threatened to de-legitimize his election (he subsequently fired them). Many experts also believe it is a primary obstacle to democratization in China as well, where the legal system exists only within the purview of the Communist Party. The relative power of the judiciary in an advanced democracy, the United States, is also a subject of concern to many – from those who see judges as overstepping their bounds by practicing partisan "judicial activism" to those who see them as the witting or unwitting puppets of their appointers. The Judiciary is often the least democratically chosen body of government with its judges appointed, not elected; a fine balance must be struck in empowering this branch to enforce the rule of law, but ensure that its inherently undemocratic nature is, in turn, checked by the power of other branches.

When countries make the transition from authoritarian to democratic rule, it is sometimes in the wake of a brutal autocratic regime that visited harm on its citizens. It may be determined that war crimes or crimes against humanity were perpetrated by former leaders; the challenge becomes determining how to exact justice without compromising the integrity of the new state. Dictators do not generally oppress alone; they frequently have military and civilian henchmen who make up a wealthy or powerful sector of society, and who remain after their leader is deposed. Reconciliation is incompatible with meting out objectively appropriate penalties, yet the stability of a new government often depends on attracting the support of these groups. How justice is applied thus becomes critical to the health of the new regime; the responsibility for this falls generally to the courts. Some cases may be ceded to international war crimes tribunals or the International Criminal Court. But, inevitably, numerous lower-level perpetrators will come through the jurisdiction of local or national courts. The wisdom, impartiality, and long-term vision of the Judiciary become extraordinarily important; we bore witness to this in post-conflict South Africa, Rwanda, and the Balkans.

The Legislative Branch is usually seen as the most inherently democratic body, and its representatives theoretically serve as the instrument of the people at the national level. Most advanced democracies further subdivide the Legislative Branch into two bodies that differ in how their members are chosen and the functions they serve in the

national government. One body is generally seen as more reflective of the will of the people, such as the US House of Representatives where representation is proportional to the population of each state – the bigger the state, the more members they elect. Election is also generally by district and seen to be more responsive to the concerns of local citizens and leaders. A different body serves to check the power of the people and to address concerns inherent in democracies about the "tyranny of the majority." This body, characterized by the US Senate, is generally seen as more elite – every state receives the same number of representatives without regard to their population; elections are statewide and less frequent. In the U.S. for instance, US Senators were not initially elected by popular vote, but were chosen by elite electors until 1913.

The division of powers between different branches of government affects the democratic nature of that government; the ideal democratic balance between popular bodies and more professional, elite bodies is usually in flux. The United States is an interesting case study in this respect. Many believe that the US has drifted into questionable territory concerning the Constitutional separation of powers between the three branches of the federal government under the Bush Administration. In this view, the influence of the Executive Branch has been incrementally and extra-legally increased over the past eight years, particularly with respect to the war in Iraq. Some have even called for a re-evaluation of the War Powers Act to check future Executive-driven military aggression in the Global War on Terror. There is also widespread concern about the broadening of Presidential discretion in the electronic surveillance of American citizens in counterterrorism programs. A special court exists to obtain warrants for secret investigations, created in The 1978 Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). After the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the White House assumed executive privilege to bypass the FISA court and, with the complicity of private telecommunications providers, initiated a wide-reaching eavesdropping campaign that many felt endangered the civil liberties of Americans at home and abroad. In this case, neither the Legislative nor Judicial Branches of government effectively checked this program, which was worrying to many. The White House ultimately agreed to return jurisdiction over surveillance activity to the FISA court, but then authored legislation that would vastly

increase the power of the special court and create future loopholes. In July 2008, the White House achieved passage of a revised FISA law by Congress that not only legalized their actions, but provided retroactive immunity to the telecommunications firms who had been involved in the warrantless searches. Many have commented that passage of this bill, coupled with largely uncontested Congressional approval for rolling increases in the Iraq War budget, symbolizes the entrenchment of new Executive power. Some have remarked that the actions of the Bush Administration in the Global War on Terror represent the boldest assertion of Presidentialism since the Watergate scandal of the 1970s.

Strength of the Government

Beyond the elaborate structures of government institutions, a key consideration for democracies is the strength of these institutions to prevail over private or non-state actors, from corporations to warlords. A country can have the most elegantly designed system of governing bodies, but if the government does not or cannot perform and function in its intended manner, that system is for naught. The government must truly be empowered and capable of doing what it has been charged with doing, from keeping the lights on to growing the economy to managing ethnic, regional and international conflicts. This may seem obvious, but loss of legitimacy through poor performance is the reason many democracies fail.

A prime example is post-Soviet Russia. The newly democratic government of Russia had an enormously difficult time maintaining its performance mandate: the economy failed to grow, ethnic conflicts in places like Chechnya flared, capitalist oligarchs consolidated power over newly privatized industries, people were forced to go outside the system to black markets and local power brokers to get their needs met. It did not take long for an authoritarian nostalgia to set in as the people lost faith in democracy and turned reflexively to a strong leader --Vladimir Putin-- to restore order and legitimacy to government and society. Putin has done so, but many argue that the tactics he has used to restore order have simultaneously eroded Russia's democracy. This is a powerful testament to the fragility of any system of government's longevity in the face of ineffective governance. If a democracy fails to perform, even the most elaborate

and well intentioned system will not protect it. This authoritarian backlash is exacerbated by the tendency of the middle classes (entrepreneurs, professionals, business leaders – the very people needed for healthy democracy) to flee the country as disorder grows, taking with them their capital and penchant for attracting foreign investment.

Yet again, the question of balance is key. The government cannot be weak, nor can it be too strong, if a healthy democracy is to develop. A strong, repressive state breeds radical opposition, which is a highly de-stabilizing force. A government must provide space for dissent, and seek to enhance citizens' capacities for problem-solving and community-building. Similarly, it cannot simply keep the lid on powerful ethnic or class tensions; it must provide the breathing room for these conflicts to be aired and constructively resolved, lest they gain strength.

The imposition of Emergency Rule (or effective suspension of democracy) by the leader of a democratic country is the most extreme show of government strength, and is often imposed when these repressed ethnic or class tensions gain critical mass. Even a brief suspension of a democracy's founding principles is extraordinarily difficult to rebound from; a taste for autocracy can quickly develop among leaders used to ruling with excessive force. Pakistan's ersatz democracy still suffers from the use of Emergency Rule by Musharraf. In contrast, India's more resilient democratic system recovered after Indira Gandhi's suspension of democracy in the 1970's. Leaders with a propensity to consolidate extraordinary strength in the national government generally enjoy one important benefit: control of the military. Alberto Fujimori, who led Peru from 1990-2000 and is currently being tried for human rights abuses, led a 'self-coup' in 1992, with the support of the military. After his election in 1990, congress remained in the control of the opposing party, limiting Fujimori's control. Citing the terrorist threat posed by the Maoist guerrilla organization Shining Path, Fujimori shut down Congress, suspended the constitution, and purged the judiciary. Fujimori went on to twice alter the Constitution, enabling him to run for second and third terms. Civilian control of the military in a system that widely disperses decision-making between generals, the Executive, and the Legislature is an important check on the use of armed force.

Undue consolidation of power often occurs within the Legislature as well as within the Executive branch, and the effect here is also de-democratizing. This happens in systems where incumbency confers enormous advantage on officeholders. Leaders become entrenched, and are able to manipulate the press, campaign finance laws, or the patronage they have conferred on other leaders to stay in office, despite elections held to unseat them. As the American Enterprise Institute's expert Gerard Alexander has said, "elected officials must be able to win and willing to lose." Elections that repeatedly keep incumbents in office are generally lacking on the "free and fair" scale in a variety of ways.

In the United States, many have observed that incumbency is perpetuated by years of 'gerrymandering' in electoral districts for the House of Representatives. Gerrymandering is known as a form of **redistricting** in which electoral district or **constituency** boundaries are manipulated for electoral advantage. It can be used to help or hinder particular **constituents**, such as members of a political, racial, linguistic, religious or class group. Local district borders have been drawn in counter-intuitive ways to consolidate certain types of constituencies (Republican or Democrat) in certain districts. Thus, the seats held never really become competitive; their electoral outcomes are generally foregone conclusions. For instance, in four out of five elections in the U.S. between 1996-2006, 98% of incumbents seeking re-election returned to office. This creates enormous barriers of entry into the democratic process, limits participation, and erodes public faith in the egalitarian nature of the democracy. Long-serving legislators are also seen as more susceptible to corruption by special interests, as are long-serving Executives. Term limits are an instrument used by many democracies to address the problem of incumbency, but are less successful in removing particular parties from control than in removing individuals from office.

Transparency and Accountability of Government

A government may be able to establish institutions that are democratic in nature as well as achieve a tenable balance of power, optimal measure of strength, and sufficient quality of performance. Yet, this is still not enough to ensure its

viability or its ability to consolidate or deepen its democracy. A regime's ultimate health lies in its transparency, and hence its accountability to the people from whom it derives its mandate to govern. Corruption is, at its core and in the outcomes it produces, highly de-democratizing. Michael Mandelbaum has succinctly defined corruption as the "confluence of wealth and power."

Corruption may take many forms: election and campaign finance irregularities; preferential treatment in hiring, procurement, and government contracts; pardons; earmarks for pet projects; regulatory loopholes; and other forms of influence peddling at any level of government. Both **the reality and the appearance of corruption** undermine the public's faith in the system. Not only does corruption hinder democratic growth, it can imperil the very survival of the system by discouraging foreign investment necessary for economic expansion, and inviting the rancor of disaffected citizens who have historically overthrown viciously predatory governments. Yet, the temptation for corruption is always there, more so every year in places like the United States where election campaigns have come to require significant private fundraising. The 2008 American Presidential election is projected to ultimately cost nearly 5 billion dollars, much of it raised from individuals, corporations, and interest groups.

Many feel that both the prevention and limitation of corruption hinges on the public's access to information about electoral and governing processes. Laura Newman of the Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia has said of the need for transparency, "knowledge is power and transparency is the remedy to the darkness under which corruption and abuse thrives." Some steps in this direction include requirements of candidates to publicize all donors and dollars raised, Sunshine Laws and other public disclosure mandates applying to the legislative process. Over 70 countries have implemented some form of Sunshine Laws (typically known as freedom of information legislation outside the US). These laws generally provide the public with access to information or records held by government bodies. For example, Colombia's *Law 57 of 1985* mandates the publishing of acts and official documents and *Law 190 of 1955* mandates that public offices list in a visible area all the contracts and purchases made by month. Another Carter

Center expert, Dr. Alisadair Robert, has said that access to information serves four purposes:

1) Deters conflicts of interest in bidding for lucrative government contracts for the provision of goods and services.

2) Opens up decision-making by creating a record of the processes in which different interests are considered.

3) Creates demand for good, sound empirical evidence behind political decisions.

4) Unmasks the stupidity, incompetence, and conflicts of interest that undermine the system and gives the public the opportunity to take punitive action at the ballot box.

The position of transparency advocates across the spectrum is that access to information should be the "default", and that the burden should be on the government to prove the need for secrecy. If information must be restricted for national security purposes by intelligence agencies, expert Bruce Berkowitz in his article "Democracies and Their Spies" posits that safeguards must be built into the system. These include connecting public officials to the decisions they make using classified information, ensuring that a diverse range of people are employed in intelligence agencies, and guaranteeing that regular turnover takes place in those agencies.

Ideally, the public must not only have access to information, but they must also have the ability (or democratic space) to do something with it. Basic rights of association, organization, and free press, if rigorously observed, serve as a built-in anti-corruption mechanism. Democracy expert Larry Diamond notes that it is not enough for anti-corruption and freedom of information or Sunshine laws to be on the books, it falls on civil society to see that they are enforced through independent anti-corruption and electoral commissions, government oversight agencies, whistle-blower protection, free and investigative press, and watchdog groups.

The stakes here are enormous. Corruption not only endangers equality of opportunity, it can be deadly when it extends to consumer product safety, pollution, and natural disasters. Recent damage from the earthquake in Sichuan Province, China was regarded as so extreme because of

corrupt dealings between local government officials and companies contracted to build the schools. These schools were demolished because of shoddy construction and failure to adhere to basic safety standards, which may have been prevented with stronger anti-corruption safeguards. Researcher and Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen has empirically proven that famines, a fairly common occurrance in developing countries, do not take place in a "country with a democratic form of government and relatively free press." In a transparent government, warning signals are communicated from local to national officials and preventive and/or ameliorative actions are taken because officials are held accountable. In contrast, much of China's extensive corruption takes place at the local level where important danger signs are masked rather than relayed through transparent channels to key decision-makers.

Finally, corruption becomes self-enforcing once it has taken root in an ostensibly democratic system. Cronyism(partiality to long-standing friends, especially by appointing them to positions of authority, regardless of their qualifications) and kleptocracy (extending the personal wealth and political power of government officials and the ruling class at the expense of the population) develop in the inner circle of leaders who benefit from the corruption. This further entrenches them in the system that favors them. As has been noted by multiple experts in the wake of Zimbabwe's "stolen election" in the summer of 2008, the megalomania of Robert Mugabe was not the sole source of what most have labeled blatant vote rigging. The corruption that has run rampant in Zimbabwe over the decades has created a large and powerful group of politicians and generals who benefit at the expense of the public. Most believe that Mugabe couldn't step down even if he wanted to because of pressures from the elites to maintain the lifestyles a confluence of wealth and power have made possible. The corruption ultimately runs so deep and special interests are so entrenched that regime change is extraordinarily difficult by democratic or peaceful means.

Leadership: The People Behind the Institutions

Just as well-crafted constitutions do not necessarily produce constitutionalism without high quality government institutions; well-crafted institutions do not by themselves create high quality leadership. The health of a democracy depends on the character of the leaders who inhabit the democratically elected offices. It is worthwhile to state the obvious: human nature tends to make the average leader disinclined toward doing good for the sake of doing good alone. There will always exist the temptation to consolidate power for personal gain; and leaders who do so attract willing followers who may extend corruption throughout even well-designed systems.

Would-be autocrats posing as democratic leaders do not even necessarily need to upend the system to consolidate their power. History is rife with examples of constitutional coups where leaders of democratic countries have been able to subvert the process. This has happened through legislating extensions of their term limits, new electoral guidelines, and even overturning the results of elections. Usually this maneuvering is accompanied by an incremental roll-back of individual freedoms that might otherwise check the consolidation of power, such as freedom of speech, association, press, or the vote. The imposition of Emergency Rule or the temporary suspension of democracy is the most extreme measure. Many of these tactics have been attempted recently most notoriously by Hugo Chavez of Venezuela, Pervez Musharaff of Pakistan, Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe, and Vladimir Putin of Russia (in a move that ensured his power as Prime Minister once his presidential term was up).

Similar tactics have been attempted by numerous elected leaders all over the world since the advent of democracy.

What are the most important qualities in a leader that will ensure he acts as an agent of true democratic outcomes for society? What makes a leader both competent and fair? It would seem that perhaps the most critical factor is a leader's time horizon, or the ability to make decisions that will lead to both the short-term, and more importantly, the long-term health of the nation. The lure of the short-term is often irresistible, since term limits often prevent leaders from garnering acclaim for decisions with positive long term effects. There is perhaps no quicker way to the hearts of the electorate than promising immediate gains. Government spoils are there for the taking – jobs, money, and favorable treatment are easy to mete out. Appeals to extreme nationalism are another quick fix. There is nothing like xenophobia, or the perception of an outside threat, to unite a population behind their leader. Ethnic favoritism is another short-term tactic designed to quickly shore up constituent support, so that internal conflict will distract from a central government's failings. But as is evident in Zimbabwe, where all of these tactics have been used by Robert Mugabe, the long-term consequences are fundamentally deleterious to the growth and quality of democracy.

In a democratic society, it is the job of the people to advocate for their short-term interests. It is the aggregate of these interests that comprises "the will of the people." It is the responsibility of visionary leaders to accommodate

these interests, to the extent that they will not compromise the interests of the nation as a whole or those of its future generations. This is the crux of the difference between leaders like Nelson Mandela and Robert Mugabe. Retribution – economic, social, and physical – would have been a quick fix for enhancing the popularity of South Africa's first post-apartheid leader. But Mandela is credited for taking the long-view of the nation's welfare in his reconciliation measures. Mugabe, in contrast, is regarded as a serial courtier of short-term gains.

No matter how visionary a leader may be in their ability to balance short and long-term perspectives, they must also be able to adapt to ever-changing definitions of the long-term interests of the country. This requires a balance between responsiveness and detachment, connection to the electorate and, at the same time, insulation from powerful pressures. Fundamentally, the leader of a democracy must inspire enough confidence among its citizens, and ensure their basic welfare to the extent that they will be motivated to participate constructively in the governing process. Such a leader must be enlightened enough to recognize and accept that if s/he is doing his or her job right, people will be motivated to take a stake in the system, and that this will necessarily limit his or her power. In short, the job requirements are not to be underestimated. It is far more difficult to be an effective and truly democratic leader than an autocratic one.

Unfortunately, it has been noted that in the United States, people with the requisite talents and proclivities for leadership are often discouraged from throwing their hats in to the ring. Personal wealth and/or fundraising connections often trump ability in terms of qualifications. Once in office, all elected officials are subject to the temptations of patronage; it is not unusual for them to confer jobs on friends, acquaintances, and donors. However, when this is done with obvious disregard for the suitability of candidates for an appointed position, both the welfare of constituents and the reputation of the administration are damaged. Examples from the Bush Administration include the troubled tenure of FEMA (the Federal Emergency Management Administration) Director Michael Brown in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, the similarly controversial term of Iraqi Provisional Administrator Paul Bremer, and the failed Supreme Court appointment of Harriet Meiers. In

South Africa, Thabo Mbeki appointed Manto Tshabalala-Msimang to the position of Minister of Health despite her promotion of good nutrition rather than antiretroviral drugs in response to the AIDS epidemic. Many accuse Mbeki of practicing favoritism in regard to this questionable appointment.

Again, it is not only the reality of unseemly influence that matters; it is also the perception. Regardless of whether it had any bearing on the outcome, the 2000 Bush v. Gore Presidential election is tainted by the knowledge that Florida's governor was George Bush's brother; the Florida Secretary of State was a Bush campaign official; Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's sons worked for Florida Governor Jeb Bush's lawyers; and Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas' wife was also a Bush campaign official.

The Electorate

In a system based on popular sovereignty, it may be said that the people get the leaders they deserve. It may also be said that the quality of democracy resulting from the exercise of popular sovereignty is a direct reflection of the quality of those who exercised it. In assessing what makes for an optimal electorate, it is helpful to go back to Mandelbaum's framework of democratic intentions and democratic capacity; these are requirements not only of the government itself, but of those who choose it.

The electorate must harbor realistic expectations of what the government can and cannot influence and achieve. They must be sufficiently well-educated in the issues and understand how their vote reflects their preferences. Without this, they are vulnerable to manipulation by candidates who would falsely garner their support. Demands on the electorate can vary greatly. Some argue that voters are overburdened by the responsibilities engendered by the referendum processes used by the State of California and by some European countries in ratifying complex EU treaties.

Voters in a democracy must first value democratic ideals. Populations who have been subjected to generations of authoritarian rule often do not develop a commitment to these ideals, as they have had no experience with them. These electorates then become more likely to experience authoritarian backsliding; they may have a low threshold of tolerance for the messiness of democracy. This type of commitment must be cultivated over time; and the people must be willing to be both inconvenienced by the process

and disappointed in the outcomes without losing faith in the system. Finally, the people must have the space and the time to consider and debate the issues in the forum of civil society without interference from the government. Any effort to intimidate or restrict voters from assembling to hear candidates speak at rallies or impeding candidates' access to the press compromise "free and fair" electoral standards. This is also true of restrictions on the existence of multiple political parties from which both candidates and voters draw support for their participation in government. These factors coalesce and ultimately, create incentives for the electorate to function outside, rather than inside, the system.

Suffrage, or the composition of the electorate (those who are eligible to vote or are said to be enfranchised) is a major consideration for democracies, because of the intention and capacity issues discussed above. It is important to note that, in older, advanced Western democracies, suffrage was extended incrementally over time, often centuries: beginning with landowning males, then extending to former slaves, and finally to women. It also bears mentioning also that de jure (legal) enfranchisement has not always translated into de facto (real) suffrage. Between the law and the ballot box lie numerous potential barriers in both voter registration procedures and election-day conditions.

For example, certain groups such as post-Reconstruction African-Americans were legally given the vote by amendments to the US Constitution in the 1860s. Yet, their access to the ballot box was restricted by a variety

of measures well-known throughout democracies in the world, consisting of arcane registration procedures, special disqualifications, poll taxes, discriminatory testing, intimidation, and other barriers until subsequent legislation outlawed these logistical hurdles nearly a century later. Similar impediments to the full realization of suffrage in the United States and globally still exist today.

Even in the absence of policies specifically designed to limit suffrage, poverty can be damaging to democratic participation. In Bangladesh, voter turnout as a percentage of those of voting age was 64.6% in 1996, up from 48.5% in 1988, and these numbers have been steadily increasing. Many experts point to low literacy rates (43.1% in 2003) and high levels of poverty (45% below the poverty line in 2004) as an explanation for low turnouts. Muhammad Yunus, a renowned leader of the microcredit movement, attributes recent increases in voter turnout to the success of microlending programs, which have been successful at reducing poverty rates, especially in women. He notes, "One thing leads to another. With money and empowerment, people start seeing themselves as people who can make decisions."

Other barriers to voting can come from something as simple as requiring a government-issued photo identification card (the equivalent of a poll tax to some voters) to inadequate numbers of voting machines, long lines, inconvenient precinct hours, failure to adequately protect the secret nature of the ballot (and thus indirectly intimidating the voter), to blatant vote rigging. The Nation magazine has estimated that nearly one-third of eligible voters in the United States (64 million people) are not registered to vote. Of those who are registered, typically less than 50% go on to exercise the franchise on Election Day. This compares with ranges of 70-90% in comparable Western European democracies. Voter apathy is often just as significant an impediment as any electoral system irregularities. Some are hopeful that positive change is in the works in the United States as the 2008 Primary Elections saw the participation of 3.5 million new voters; and the General Election is projected to also bring record turnout for the United States. Even Sierra Leone, a nation that has only held three local elections in over four decades, experienced extremely low voter turnout (estimated to be lower than 55%) during recent elections; many attribute this to voter fatigue

after two electoral events in 2007 and a general sense of disappointment with the performance of those elected.

Beyond the casting of ballots, how the will of the electorate is interpreted through the counting of votes and the awarding of offices is critical. Again, from the US Election of 2000 to the Zimbabwe Election of 2008, it is important to consider who tallies the votes and under what conditions the results are released. In both countries, voting machines were not standardized among different regions and precincts, a simple fact that has complex implications for the credibility of official results. Even eight years and a contested election later, the conversion in some American polls to electronic voting machines without paper trails make meaningful audits impossible. Moreover, many experts have long raised concerns over the premature release of precinct results while polling stations elsewhere in the country are still open. Hearing that your candidate is either winning or losing by considerable (yet often woefully incompletely tallied) margins often acts as a disincentive to voters who have not yet cast their votes. The effort can appear gratuitous. In this way, it can conceivably be said that votes in New Hampshire count disproportionately more than votes cast in California if those East Coast votes succeed in preventing West Coast voters from going to the polls late on Election Day.

And, finally, how offices are awarded based on votes matters. Proportional systems generally encourage the existence of multiple parties and are often seen as more reflective of the voters' will and more protective of minority interests. In contrast, a winner take all, or first past the post (FPP) system, generally discourages the participation of multiple parties. This type of system exists in the United States where two established parties, Democrats and Republicans, dominate the political process. Similarly, the use of the Electoral College in the United States Presidential Elections has become a flashpoint of debate over the way the will of the electorate is interpreted. The contested Election of 2000 where the popular vote differed from the electoral count marked the fourth time in US history that this discrepancy has occurred. Many advocate significant overhaul of the system to better represent the actual votes that are cast. Some believe this would require a Constitutional Amendment (not an easy achievement); others believe it could be accomplished by reform at the State level.

Only suffrage that is both broad and deep (sacrosanct) in law and on the ground is considered truly democratic. This is true at least in electoral democracies or what Robert Dahl has called polyarchies. It is interesting to note that the United States' system, plagued as it is by special interests, election idiosyncracies, and lack of standardized electoral procedures, would not likely hold up well to the international election monitoring often conducted in newer democracies by American officials. Democratic outcomes or a deepening of democracy are not ensured by universal suffrage, and, as has been discussed, popular sovereignty does not, by itself, guarantee liberty.

Civil Society

Civil society is generally comprised of an umbrella of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and associations – social, religious, issue-oriented, charitable, political – that individuals can join voluntarily to further their interests, make connections with others, and improve their communities. Civil society exists alongside all forms of government, although in authoritarian societies, there are usually restrictions placed on the activities of non-governmental organizations.

In a democracy, civil society plays yet another critical role: to facilitate the exercise of political freedoms and the participation of individuals in the democratic process. Civil society becomes a vehicle for exercising citizenship by binding individuals to each other and mobilizing them to effectively advocate for their common interests. It is often through civil associations that people are taught to care, to become educated in social issues, and to make decisions regarding their own welfare within the political process. Numerous experts have noted that this is where "social capital" is built to sustain democracy and important values such as cooperation, compromise, and trust are incubated. Societies in which civil groups are given the freedom and space to organize and in which healthy debate and opposition to government policies is tolerated and encouraged are said to pass what Natan Sharansky has deemed the "town square test." If a person can go into the town square, express his views, and not be punished, civil society will flourish and democracy will be allowed to deepen.

To serve the above functions, civil society must be free to operate with access to "coordination goods" (tools that facilitate the development of political and human rights) and be truly independent of government influence and corporate interests. The 2002 United Nations Human Development Report gave special consideration to the health of democracies worldwide, and warned of the development of "uncivil" society. This describes special interest groups and/or "government operated non-governmental associations" (GONGOs) that masquerade as vehicles for democracy, but, in fact pursue anti-democratic agendas below the surface. The danger of "uncivil" society is that it breeds forces unfriendly to effective participation in the political process – popular disillusionment, mistrust, divisiveness, and voter apathy.

Political parties are an important part of civil society in a democracy. Parties organize and support political participation of individuals – both voters and candidates. For the voter, they simplify the process. Voters do not necessarily need to be educated on every candidate's views on all issues. Often membership in a political party with a clear platform becomes a short-cut. When in doubt, the voter can default to voting for the ticket of his or her party, and, if the parties function as they are designed to, be reasonably certain that the vote represents his or her interests. For the candidate, parties provide key infrastructure, fundraising, publicity, and professionalism. In fact, in modern democracies, it is nearly impossible to run without the support of a well-established party

mechanism. Parties also support candidates once they are elected and assume office in a myriad of ways.   Because their influence is so pervasive in all stages of the democratic process, it is extraordinarily important that like other civil society organizations, parties be free of government restrictions and have the capacity to manage the power of corrupting special interests.

Like democracy in general, civil society is only as good as those who participate in it. Technology facilitates on-line community organizing around issues; but experts are divided as to whether this will prove to be as effective a form of protest as rallies of earlier days. The absence of large protest movements around the unpopular Iraq war in America is striking to some. Especially when compared to the masses who took to the streets recently in South Korea to protest the importation of American beef.

The Press

The independence, freedom, and quality of the press – print, tv, radio, and internet – are essential to the health and long-term prospects of a democracy. The media not only educates voters and supports civil society, but ideally forces transparency and accountability of government institutions and leaders. Investigative journalism is one of democracies' greatest safeguards against government excesses, abuses, and corruption. It is the watchdog of the electoral and liberal spheres of democracy. A free press is thus both a condition of true democracy and a sustaining force within it, and must be free from government control and special interests.

Today, we have witnessed the exponential proliferation of modern media – 24-hour cable, internet sites, and blogs have expanded alongside traditional print, network, and radio outlets. Whether this improves a nation's democratic capacity is a question of great debate. While more people now have more access to more choices in their consumption of news, it has produced worrying trends as well. One frequently cited concern is the absorption of independent outlets into corporate conglomerates. This has resulted in the consolidation of ownership – many channels, newspapers, magazines, and radio stations are now owned by one entity, which constricts the true diversity of the media. In some cases, multiple media outlets may be owned by a corporation with powerful special interests. Many feel that this can interfere with the impartiality of news reporting. A network owned by a parent company that also owns a pharmaceutical firm, for example, may be influenced to report stories about particular drugs with a particular

spin. Such bias, real or perceived, does not serve the public interest and ultimately works to erode public confidence.

Market segmentation is another problem of modern media. With the variety of options, many of them specifically skewing toward a particular political viewpoint (think Keith Olbermann versus Bill O'Reilly), citizens have the ability to completely tailor their news consumption in ways that reinforce their own beliefs. Cross-pollination of ideas, healthy dialogue and debate are the casualties as voters can avoid exposure to both sides of important issues. The result is a decrease in the knowledgebase and capacity for self-governance in complex times. Key democratic values such as compromise, bargaining, and tolerance of dissent are severely compromised.

While most people living in a democracy firmly believe that government influence over the press is abhorrent, it can be difficult to recognize such influence when it is present. When it is revealed that certain correspondents or commentators are paid by government administration officials to promote government policies in the media, people generally see this as inappropriate propaganda. However, such bias is not always so blatant. In 2008, *The New York Times* broke a scandal in the United States revealing that "independent" military analysts on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan on numerous cable television stations were paid government military contractors and consultants. Since citizens (and voters) rely on experts to help form their own viewpoints on important complex issues, the motives of experts in the media are of concern.

Debates also rage regarding issues of campaign advertising, the distribution of "equal" time to all candidates in news coverage, and the blurring of the line between news and entertainment.

The press, when functioning with impartiality and adherence to strict standards of excellence in journalism, supports civil society in promoting democracy. But it has been widely observed that in healthy democracies, it also works the other way. Media watchdog groups now exist to monitor the press and its level of true freedom from government and special interests.

Demography

The demographic patterns of a society -- such as the size, structure and distribution of populations, and spatial and temporal changes in them in response to birth, death, migration and aging-- have powerful ramifications for its ability to function as a healthy democracy. In general, communities with significant ethnic diversity or disproportionate concentrations in the age of its citizens have a more difficult time building the institutions, values, and practices essential for meaningful democracy. This is not to say that such countries have no chance at democratization; rather that they must recognize these hurdles and creatively construct especially resilient democracies.

Ethnicity

Ethnicity is generally not a politically or socially neutral designation. In most countries, ethnicity is linked to inequality. Certain ethnic groups generally have been favored throughout history (especially in countries with colonial pasts), by societal norms, by market forces, or by laws. Tensions created by such non-egalitarian realities are often deeply entrenched, and interfere with community organizing toward democratic outcomes. In young democracies, the authoritarian past has often left a particularly divisive legacy such as the principle of "divide and conquer" that has often been used to inflame ethnic tensions via discrimination and favoritism so that a united opposition is unable to form.

Historian and Yale law professor Amy Chua has constructed a theory describing how such polarizing legacies come to haunt and subvert the democratic regimes that replace discriminatory authoritarian rule. Inevitably, in her view, certain ethnic groups accrue significant advantages in society that result in greater access to capital, education, and skills. These groups are often ethnic minorities in a community: Whites in South Africa, Chinese in Southeast Asian countries, Indians in West Africa, Jews in Russia. With the advent of free market capitalism as part of modernization, these ethnic groups are presented with a phenomenal head start as the economy transitions. They are able to purchase previously state owned industries, connect with their ethnic diasporas in other countries to facilitate foreign investment and trade connections, and use their particular skills to take advantage of opportunities created by capitalism. They become what Chua has called "market-dominant minorities."

Along the way, vast inequalities of wealth (a result of free market capitalism in any society) come to overlay racial and ethnic distinctions. Economic and class tensions exacerbate ethnic tensions as the majority comes to resent the success of the minority.   As we have seen, free market capitalism and democratization often go hand in hand. Thus, when an economically dominant minority group is present, and popular sovereignty is introduced alongside capitalism, the result is often violent combustion. The economically-disadvantaged ethnic majority (blacks in South and West Africa, indigenous populations in places

like the Philippines) naturally comes into political power by virtue of their sheer numbers. Resentment can turn to revenge; politicians are able to easily manipulate the anger of the poor majority against the wealthy minority. Economic inequality, exacerbated by capitalism, becomes a mutually hostile force against electoral democracy, and the effect is instability, violence, and, in extreme cases, genocide.

Chua and others see the case of Rwanda as a perfect example of the potentially destructive effects of ethnic diversity on capitalist democracies. The Tutsi were the ethnic minority, making up 12% of the population of Rwanda. During the colonial era, they were the dubious beneficiaries of a legacy of ethnic favoritism, due to a variety of factors, including German colonizers' belief that the Tutsis constituted a superior and 'more European' race. The Tutsis thus comprised a market-dominant minority in what became a Hutu-dominant electoral democracy upon independence. Many believe the die was cast for the genocide of Tutsis by Hutus in the 1990s when, in the 1950s, capitalism and popular sovereignty combined. Hutus massacred nearly 800,000 of their Tutsi countrymen before the exiled Tutsi National Patriotic Front army succeeded in stopping the killings after three months in 1994. Today, the Tutsi-led Rwandan government of Paul Kagame strives to create a unified society where ethnic distinctions are discouraged. Rwanda is now again a democracy; but a carefully managed, and some believe, shallow one. Kagame has outlawed the existence of multiple political parties, believing that they would again coalesce along dangerous ethnic lines. Elections have been held; Rwandans have voted for Kagame; but their options are restricted. Because of the deep ethnic fault lines that remain after the genocide, Rwanda's leaders calibrate their electoral democracy carefully with important implications for the quality of democratic outcomes. Some experts believe that given ethnic realities, Kagame has no choice but to follow such a de-democratitzing course, and they point to the recent ethnic violence that followed Kenyan elections to support this view.

Immigration poses another ethnicity-related challenge for democracies. The influx of large numbers of legal and illegal immigrants and/or refugees and asylum-seekers can be destabilizing. Ethnic tensions are often aggravated by competition for jobs and resources. The backlash that often ensues can take distinctly anti-democratic forms as

governments attempt to restrict access to education and health care. Although such restrictions are often aimed at ethnic populations that do not enjoy formal citizenship, such discrimination (legal and/or reasonable as it may seem to be) takes a toll on democratic culture and values in general.

Israel is another interesting case study illustrating the challenge demography can pose for democracies. The country of Israel is officially a Jewish nation, but it includes territories with large areas of Muslim, Arab Palestinian populations. Because of a difference in birth rates and the declining immigration of Jewish populations, demographically Israel will soon have an Arab Palestinian majority within its disputed borders. This population is currently excluded from participation in the Israeli government. As Thomas Friedman presciently has written, Israel will soon be faced with a choice – the country can either be Jewish or it can be a true democracy, but not both at the same time. If it were to deepen its democracy by expanding suffrage to include voting by Palestinian Arab populations, Jews would become a minority voice in government. The only way to preserve its Jewish nature is to continue to restrict the franchise, which is considered to be anti-democratic in nature and outcome.

Democracy expert Robert Dahl has written that "weak cultural conflicts" are an essential component of healthy democracies. Ethnic diversity, in his view, must be carefully managed through "assimilation, consensus, or separation." As illustrated above, ethnic strife is not only itself anti-democratic, it is often one of the primary excuses given by would-be autocratic leaders to begin to retract freedoms for the sake of stability. As for the ethnic groups themselves, such conflict can interfere with their developing a stake in the democratic system.

Age

Ethnicity is not the only demographic factor that challenges democratization. Demographic "bulges" in age groups can be similarly de-stabilizing and polarizing. In countries with aging populations (Western Europe, Russia, China, Japan, and the US to some extent), the political concerns of a large segment of the population necessarily differ with that of smaller groups of younger citizens. This becomes especially important when considering issues related to retirement

benefits and health care when the working age population has vastly different priorities than aging voters.

In other countries, the challenging demographic "bulge" is in youth populations – this is a phenomenon seen across the Middle East and Africa. Large concentrations of youth, especially young men, are seen as de-stabilizing, particularly in countries where there is not adequate employment opportunity for them. The youth populations of places like Saudi Arabia, an undemocratic country, have the potential to be a democratizing force given their general disaffection with the autocratic societies in which they live. But this potential is not often positively harnessed for reform. These youth generally lack the education for democracy and meaningful jobs to increase their stake in society. Often, these large youth populations fall prey to radical and/or reactionary influences such as militant Islam, and may participate in destructive and/or anti-democratic behaviors such as terrorism to express their disaffection.

Youth bulges are de-democratizing in another interesting way, as demographer Richard Cincotta recently pointed out in an article for Foreign Policy. Large numbers of disaffected and easily radicalized youth are naturally a source of fear for other segments of the population, and this fear makes them more likely to accept authoritarian measures to preserve order. Citizens in these societies may accept erosion of civil liberties if such policies appear to protect them from the young and jobless. Thus, some countries are said to be, literally, "too young for comfort." A country's prospects for democracy are said in this view to be affected by the proportion of 15-29 year olds in the population – only when this percentage drops to 36-42% are the prospects considered good. At 39%, the chances for democratization are said to be 50-50 at best.

Geographic Challenges to Democracy

Geography can work against democratization in several ways. First, geographic disadvantages such as lack of access to commercial ports, sufficient water sources, and arable land gravely impact human development in general. People living in desert conditions, isolated landlocked regions, and other harsh environments often struggle just to survive. Education and participation in a democratic government are often considered luxuries in the face of these basic survival needs.

Second, neighboring countries significantly impact the conditions for democracy. See External Players for a more thorough discussion, but in summary, democratic neighbors enhance the familiarity and appeal of the democracy franchise. Neighbors in crisis, where violence reigns and refugees frequently cross borders, can be highly destabilizing for a country attempting democratization. Neighbors' instability affect physical safety, economy, and ethnic balance. If a country is situated alongside another country that is home to ethnic groups similar to restive ones within their own borders, the effect can likewise be destabilizing. The case of the Kurds in Iraq illustrates this, as the presence of similar Kurdish population over the border in Turkey creates complicated webs of loyalty. Iraqi Kurds often feel more affinity with their brethren in Turkey than they do with their fellow Iraqi citizens, fueling a constant separatist impulse that acts as a divisive force in building democracy in Iraq. This dynamic is a common one among former colonies where maps were often drawn arbitrarily without regard for ethnicity, separating single

ethnic groups across several countries. It should be noted that two of the world's most celebrated democracies, the US and UK, enjoy highly favorable geographic conditions, including climate, coastlines, and relative scarcity of land neighbors.

Finally, natural resources greatly influence prospects for democratization. Mineral wealth, such as oil, when it is the cornerstone of the economy, is generally seen as inimical to democracy. Major oil-exporting nations such as Venezuela, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Iraq, and Sudan are mostly all still authoritarian societies. Even when democratic governance exists in name, it is severely compromised. Oil exports act as what economists call "external rents." Societies dependent upon such industries are said to have "honeypots" that are ripe for manipulation by government, and governments benefit immensely from the sale of state-owned oil products on global markets. As a result, there is no need to tax citizens. Just as the pro-democracy slogan of the American Revolution was "no taxation without representation," oil exporting countries effectively establish a system of "no representation without taxation." No incentive exists to involve citizens in government; and the regimes generally operate without accountability or transparency where these oil revenues are concerned. Wealth and power are consolidated in the ruling elite; corruption is often rampant; and little economic diversification takes place. Because little wealth accrues outside the state, no middle class is created, and civil society fails to develop. Predation by the state prevails

and vast inequalities of wealth are perpetuated. Despite oil revenues, observers note that a large portion of the population remains impoverished, oppressed, disillusioned, and disaffected. No checks exist to limit the power of the authoritarian government, and the government generally pursues policies that benefit the oil industry, not the population. People are often forcibly removed from oil-rich areas, made to labor for low wages in an industry often dominated by foreign workers, and/or experience the environmental degradation of their communities. It has been widely documented that people in these countries often go outside the system to meet their needs (often to equally anti-democratic sources such as terrorist groups). This prevents the formation of a collective sense of destiny and identity. All these trends are distinctly de-democratizing. In Mandelbaum's words, "the citizens of petro-states do not matriculate at the school for democracy" which broadly functioning capital markets provide.

For this reason, experts hold that economies dominated by mineral markets are the exception to the theory that prosperity is associated with democracy. Besides Singapore, the only wealthy nations that are not democracies are oil-rich states. This has important implications for the spread of democracy in a world where oil revenues are up over 50% in the last year. Generally, there is a negative correlation between oil prices and levels of democracy in oil-exporting countries – as oil prices rise, the prospects for democracy fall.

External Factors

Democracy Promotion By Sovereign Nations

A country's prospects for democratization are significantly affected by the actions of other nations who seek to spread democracy around the world. Democracy promotion is generally viewed to be motivated by a sense of enlightened self-interest. First, it is often framed as a moral duty. Democratic countries, the US foremost among them, are said to believe that developing liberal self-government is a moral prerogative of modern nations and that democratic systems best safeguard basic universal human rights. Second, since prosperity is thought to correlate with democracy, the promotion of democratic governance is seen as an anti-poverty or human development mechanism. Along these lines, democracies may be said to not only promote egalitarian values worldwide (which serve to burnish their own democratic credentials), but to also seek to cultivate friendly allies and open up lucrative global markets that ultimately benefit them as well. Finally, democracy promotion is seen by its proponents as a vital security issue.

Prior to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the security goals of democracy promotion were based primarily on the theory of "democratic peace." It has been posited that modern democracies do not tend to go to war with each other, an observation borne out by several different researchers. The period from the end of World War II to 2000, when democracy spread widely throughout the world, is said to be the longest period of peace in 500 years. Also known as the Pax Americana, most attribute this period of relative peace to the influence of the democratic

superpower. Japan and Germany, previously war-like nations, became advanced democracies and economic powers in their own right, while nations around the world transitioned away from authoritarianism. Some experts rebut this theory, citing instead other factors responsible for the relative absence of conflict, including the end of colonial rule, the end of the Cold War, and the expansion of global trade that made the fortunes of countries interdependent. This last alternative is also known variably as the "McDonald's Theory" (two countries possessing McDonald's restaurants are thought to be immune from war with each other) and what Thomas Friedman has called the "Supply Chain Theory of Conflict Prevention," which posits that two countries sharing a supply chain in the globalized economy are deterred from going to war against each other.

Former US diplomat John Brady Kiesling similarly rebuts the democratic peace theory, pointing out that most wars are civil wars and democracies "are perfectly capable of waging war on themselves." Other theorists such as Jack Snyder and Edward Mansfield have pointed out that democratization itself may create a significant threat of war, and that those states in transition are considerably more likely to experience or initiate conflict than are stable autocracies or fully liberal democracies. Nonetheless, most experts generally agree on a compromise position that can be summed up by Kiesling as follows: "leaders enjoying the legitimacy that comes from honest democratic elections and good governance have no need for the legitimacy that derives from successful military adventures."

After September 11, democracy promotion took on a new urgency and rationale. Many saw terrorism to be an outgrowth of autocratic regimes, and that the disaffected populations of authoritarian societies such as Saudi Arabia and Afghanistan were finding solace and justice in radical ideologies and violent acts. Bringing democracy to the world was framed by US President George W. Bush and others as a critical component of international security strategy. In fact, U.S. foreign policy in the Bush Adminstration has become known as the "Freedom Agenda".

Pressure applied by external actors for democracy promotion can be indirect or direct, hard or soft. Tactics are wide-ranging, and may be brought to bear at any stage of democratization: whether in hastening the decay of authoritarian rule, in transition to an electoral system, or in the consolidation and deepening of democracy. Democracy promotion is pursued in some cases to successful ends; yet in many others it produces unintended consequences and democratic backlash.

Indirect Democracy Promotion

Indirect democracy promotion rests on the power of example. When democratic governments are successful economically, people are naturally drawn to replicate their prosperity. Similarly, the civil and political liberties enjoyed by citizens in democratic societies have powerful demonstration effects. A country like the United States can be a highly effective democracy promoter just by its very existence as a democratic world power. But as easily as these effects are conferred, they can easily be diminished if the exemplar country begins to falter economically, or if its own democratic system is revealed to have significant contradictions. Many would say that perhaps the greatest harm to the cause of democracy promotion worldwide today lies in the increasingly flawed image of the United States in the eyes of the world. As the American economy stumbles, and the US commitment to democratic principles is tarnished by electoral hiccups and torture allegations, the power of the US example has been compromised. Many experts actually believe that the US could have the most impact on democratization around the world, not by pursuing any of the direct actions described below, but

rather by keeping its own house in order, and capitalizing on the potential indirect strength of its example as a democracy.

Direct Democracy Promotion

Direct, intentional democracy promotion consists of a set of actions taken to aid countries at all stages of democratization, beginning with either the reform or ousting of an authoritarian government, and progressing on to technical and financial assistance for countries in transition, and support for those seeking to strengthen and sustain their new democracies.

Reform or Removal of Authoritarian Regimes: The first step is often to try to reform the authoritarian regime in power. Soft measures such as incentives are frequently the first step taken to externally pressure an autocratic regime to loosen its control. In the absence of enlightened despots, these measures have been known to be only moderately effective, and worse, to produce unintended consequences. Often, authoritarian regimes will gladly take the incentives to reform – aid, loans, and favorable trade terms - and make only cosmetic changes. The economic benefits that accrue (the ones that were supposed to be democratizing) are then, in some cases, used to shore up the regime's mandate to govern and the status quo. In some cases, the money may even perversely be used to further repress internal reformers. As Bruce Bueno de Mesquita has noted, development in the name of democracy promotion can allow autocrats to "have it all – a contented constituency of power brokers and military leaders who benefit from economic growth, increased resources to deal with economic and political shocks, and a weak and dispirited opposition." Conditionality is seen as key by most experts; money is generally thought to be most effective in producing reform if it is extended with specific strings attached. Programs such as the Millennium Challenge Accounts linking aid and loans to good governance are seen as hopeful, if yet unproven, incentives to true democratic reform.

Often times positive incentives may be combined with more coercive or hard measures such as punitive sanctions, international shaming and/or punishment, or the threat of military action. History suggests that these types of efforts are most successful when an indigenous, broadly-supported reform movement already exists in a country.

In other words, external players are most effective when they support credible internal players. Nationalism and sovereignty concerns are never far below the surface. External democracy promotion without internal buy-in has been known to have the opposite effect: embattled autocratic leaders gain enhanced legitimacy and are able to consolidate power by manipulating their citizens' fears and suspicions of the motives of would be outside intervention. In this way, would-be outside reformers may end up strengthening the very regimes they seek to weaken.

In addition, measures such as sanctions are by their very nature isolating; their effectiveness is predicated on the regime suffering to such an extent that it is motivated to enact reforms in order to get back into the good graces and global markets of the international community. But, isolation itself can be de-democratizing. Ideally, democracy promoters want the citizens of autocratic societies to be exposed to democratic values worldwide and isolating a country has the opposite effect. When sanctions cause great economic hardship for the population, backlash often ensues against the external actors whose good intentions are often seen as irrelevant amidst the hardship.

When attempts by the international community to reform authoritarian leaders through incentives, punishment, or threats are ineffective, the next stage can be military action to effect regime change. Of this option, experts are generally skeptical, and feel the potential for backlash to be greater than the benefits realized. For example, referring to US-led military actions in Afghanistan and Iraq carried out under the banner of democracy promotion, many feel the cause of worldwide democracy has been harmed, not helped, as the situation in those countries has as of yet failed to stabilize following regime change. Some would say the effect has been two-fold. There has been further entrenchment in other authoritarian regimes, as the ensuing chaos in Iraq and Afghanistan has come to represent the perils of democratization. Secondly, the anti-Americanism generated by military failures in these countries has further eroded the power of the American democratic example. Several experts have gone on to note that the democracy promotion justification of the war in Iraq was applied only after the failure of the initial justifications, namely the presence of weapons of mass destruction and Saddam Hussein's cooperation with Al Qaeda terrorists. This fact was largely forgotten by the American public, but not by the rest of the world who often see the US actions as illegitimate and the democracy promotion banner as a sham.

Many analysts see the use of what they term military "meddling" as an ineffective tool of democracy promotion generally, even when carried out prudently. In a study for the Brookings Institution, William Easterly reviewed newly declassified data from the Cold War to conclude that both overt and covert "superpower interventions are followed by significant declines in democracy, and that the substantive effects are large." He found that the de-democratizing effects of any intervention by the US (a democracy) or USSR (an autocracy) were the same – a decrease of 33% in democracy scores. Easterly went on to apply these results to modern day interventions in the Global War on Terror, concluding that coercive intervention ultimately hinders the development of true democracy and democratic outcomes, no matter the goal or the democratic nature of the actor.

Ironically, war itself, even in the name of democracy, can be a stabilizer factor for an autocratic government, moving its citizens from Maslow's social and civil needs back to basic survival ones. Ironically, efforts to topple authoritarian regimes often inadvertently strengthen them. Efforts to help indigenous reformers with external democracy assistance may backfire, as the government takes repressive and/or retributive action against the reformers themselves who are seen as cooperating with its outside critics. In some cases, democratic transitions that might have developed organically and internally are forestalled by external efforts to hasten them. As John Brady Kiesling has noted, "when a population drives out its own dictatorship, enormous legitimacy accrues to the leaders of the successful movement. "Democratization from the outside deprives the local population of its liberation struggle," with important ramifications for the sustainability of the resulting government.

A more successful tactic would seem to be a quiet, low-key, behind-the-scenes effort to support local reformers, increasing their capacity to mount their own liberation struggle through non-violent or revolutionary means and take it to scale. A poignant illustration of these types of initiatives can be found in Peter Ackerman and Jack Duvall's description of "jungle schools' for democracy in Burma/Myanmar in the 1990s. The key seems to be in adopting

long-term horizons, in sticking with programs as they build cumulative and latent successes, even in the face of regime recalcitrance.

Transition, Consolidation, and Deepening of Democracy: Through organizations such as the UN, the National Endowment for Democracy and the USAID Program for Democracy and Governance Obligations, an entire industry exists to help democratic reformers in new and transitioning democracies worldwide with everything from voter education to the provision of voting machines to election monitoring, logistics, and security to the drafting of constitutions. Once democratic transitions are made, these types of organizations help in the development of accountability mechanisms, audits, and government oversight. The results of such programs are mixed in the eyes of experts. While some worry about what Larry Diamond has called the proliferation of "suitcase NGOs" that simply add to the bureaucratic burden of developing democracies, others have conducted research that shows positive statistical effects as captured by Freedom House and Polity IV measures. USAID research has shown that, between 1990 and 2003, its Democracy and Governance (D and G) programs - specifically, assistance in the areas of elections/political processes, the rule of law, and civil society - produced real results.

Based on this research, it was estimated that an additional 10 million in USAID (1995) dollars would produce by itself "about a five fold increase in the amount of democratic change that the average country would otherwise be expected to achieve in any given year based on Freedom House measures." However, when weighed against the actual average outlay of the D and G program for an individual country in 2003, which was only $3.66 million, their research appears to support the opinion that the program is vastly underfunded and thus underutilized.

Upon being interviewed by Congress at the end of his term as USAID Administrator, Andrew Natsios opined that the most meaningful democracy promotion efforts are "changes in values, in world views, in attitudes and the transfer of technologies and systems which you cannot see." Others have echoed this, bemoaning the short-term nature of democracy assistance and advocating consistency, reflection, patience, and realistic expectations. Many cite the need for better coordination between various democracy promotion

agencies and advocate for more creative soft measure such as cultural, scientific, and educational exchanges between citizens in autocracies and those in democracies.

Overall, the most effective forms of direct democracy promotion are seen to be those that are case-sensitive with careful attention to the unique conditions on the ground. The fact that these conditions are ever-changing, and impacted by a myriad of internal and external contingencies means that meaningful democracy promotion must also be dynamic and resilient, undertaken with long time horizons, and with a significant measure of humility. Even in the face of apparent failure – many have noted that unsuccessful democratic reform movements are, in fact, successful in what Diamond has called "tilling the soil of authoritarian stagnation." In other words, future reforms are often built on the foundation of earlier attempts.

With respect to countries that do make it through the transition and onto the consolidation and deepening phases, it appears that the biggest mistake external democracy promoters can make is failing to see the effort through to the end. This requires a significant amount of capacity-building at the local level, an often unsexy and unheralded endeavor. Author Fareed Zakaria has bemoaned the fact that "rule of law" doesn't make for a very exciting photograph in the newspaper. The current era of democratic recession is thought to be a function of the failure of new democracies to sustain themselves and to mature from electoral processes to liberal outcomes. This is often linked, in part, to a failure of the democracy promotion industry to strengthen democratic values and institutions on the ground.

In addition, hypocrisy – true or perceived – is immensely damaging to democracy promotion efforts. It is generally thought that those doing the promoting must keep their own democratic houses in order as well as mitigate, or at least be transparent about, ulterior motives and conflicts of interest. Realism in foreign policy is often in tension with idealism; the pragmatic concerns of democracy promotion certainly exist alongside, and sometimes trump, moral concerns. That the democracy promotion machine is often aimed at select countries and not at others is also not lost on the international community. Historically, some strategically valuable and cooperative autocratic regimes have been tolerated by democracy promoters, as are some less valuable hostile autocratic regimes. As Laura Secor has

written "we can try to fool ourselves, but we are not likely to deceive anyone else."

Expert Larry Diamond perhaps goes the furthest in acknowledging this often conveniently overlooked problem with democracy promotion efforts. Diamond believes democracy promoters would be more credible and more effective if they would only be candid about these conflicting interests, going as far as to openly seek "security waivers" to justify their support for friendly authoritarian regimes He advises, "keep relations with Musharraf and Mubarek if you must, but don't call them democrats."

Democracy Promotion by Regional and International Institutions

Many experts see democracy promotion as better suited to multilateral institutions, given the inherent suspicion and hostility that is often attached to one country's intervention in the affairs of another. In particular, it is widely noted that a wave of anti-Americanism has accompanied the current democratic recession, and that while other factors appear to be in play, these two phenomena are undoubtedly linked in important ways. Presently, the US is inexorably connected to two high profile cautionary tales in external democracy promotion – Iraq and Afghanistan. Many believe this compromises American credibility in democracy promotion in general and that existing multilateral bodies should take a leadership role, or new ones should be created.

Some believe it must fall to regional and international institutions to build a world order in which democracies fundamentally do better than non-democracies and the costs of ruling autocratically are raised. The European Union is often seen as the regional organization most developed in this regard. Because of the potential benefits contained in accession to the EU (lucrative free trade arrangements, status, lobbying for similar interests, among others), countries have incentives to membership, and go to great lengths to qualify their governments for inclusion in the European Union. Democracy, in its electoral and liberal forms, is a primary requirement of countries seeking membership, and the expansion of democracy throughout the former Soviet countries of Central and Eastern Europe is largely attributed to reforms made as part of EU accession

bids. In this case, democracy promotion by peer pressure on the continent has been hugely successful.

However, other regional organizations such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the Organization of American States (OAS – North and South America), the African Union (AU), and the Arab League have not been as successful in pressuring their members toward democratization. Largely because their membership bases are not fully democratic themselves – each contain a mix of democratic and authoritarian regimes, thus complicating the development of consensus among members as to standards of governance. No country is ever kicked out of any of these regional organizations for governance issues, despite heroic attempts to establish "triggerpoints" and anti-coup mechanisms. The same dynamic prevails at most international institutions as well – no one is tossed out of the UN for even the most egregious authoritarian abuses; and despots sit side by side with democrats from the Security Council on down.

These multilateral institutions are missing a critical opportunity in the eyes of many experts who advocate the introduction of "democracy clauses" into the charters of regional and international institutions so that the success of the EU may be replicated. They believe regional organizations should not only encourage democratization via membership qualifications regarding governance. Rather, these bodies should, with their power as global trading blocs, reward democratic reform and punish authoritarianism in countries even beyond their geographic

spheres of influence. Likewise at the UN, there is a movement to strengthen sub-bodies within the UN system such as the Democratic Caucus and Democracy Fund to strengthen the democratizing pressures that could be brought to bear on member nations.

Because of the inherent obstacles to effective democracy promotion contained in existing multilateral institutions, a new organization was created in 2000 under the leadership of the United States and Poland known as the Community of Democracies. Its mission for its members: "to reaffirm their commitment to consolidate their own democratic institutions and work with other countries regionally and globally to help them on their path of democratization." Now comprising over 100 countries (as well as numerous NGOs) that have signed the Warsaw Declaration, the Community of Democracies is nonetheless seen as a largely symbolic gesture.

First, it suffers from a vague description of how a country must express its "commitment to democracy" in endorsing the Declaration, and thus, in the words of one of its founders Madeleine Albright, is plagued by "broad membership that drags the group down to the lowest common denominator of action." Others such as Ted Piccone and Morton Halperin at the Brookings Institution have also criticized the organization, saying its overall record has been "sorely disappointing," and that it has failed at the most basic tasks such as speaking out against authoritarianism, celebrating democratic successes, and preventing violations of its own membership criteria. Like the UN and other well-meaning existing multilateral institutions, the Community is unable to overcome concerns with the rights that attach to sovereign nations to pursue their affairs without outside intervention. Furthermore, it is significantly hindered by the notable absence of major world democracies among its inner leading circle. Germany, Japan, and the UK are signatories to the Declaration but play no role as "conveners;" France has yet to even sign. Many see international participation as a pander to the United States without real substance.

The impotence of the Community of Democracies has recently spurred an initiative to create a new, improved version of the idea – a Concert or League of Democracies that would have more authority to act, built on a NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) model that includes

military power. The Concert or League concept is primarily advanced by the United States, and has been supported by members of the American political Left and Right. In fact, its creation is a linchpin of Senator John McCain's foreign policy platform for the 2008 Presidential Campaign. Unlike the Community of Democracies which aspired to work with the UN Democracy Caucus and Democracy Fund, the Concert or League is designed to function outside the UN system, and even to potentially replace it one day as the pre-eminent international institution. Its proposed agenda is extraordinarily broad – not only democracy promotion, but also general global problem solving from AIDS to global warming, as well as the extension of free trade.

A potential Concert or League under American leadership is worrying to many. As Thomas Carothers has written, it rests on numerous false assumptions: that democracies by their very nature necessarily share largely common interests, that the democratic world shares US ideals and views, and that the international community (democratic and otherwise) would brook US leadership of an exclusive club. Not to mention the fact that the US is hostile to some democracies around the world that have brought in leadership of which the US does not approve (Hamas in Palestine, Hezbollah in Lebanon). Moreover, Carothers believes that the US has been tone-deaf in its advocacy for such an organization, failing to acknowledge that many people around the world have come to "see democracy promotion as a dishonest, dangerous cover for the projection of US power and influence." The stated intention to create a future substitute for the UN plays badly in the wake of US tensions with the UN over the war in Iraq. In this view, a US-dominated Concert or League would likely be seen as a means to circumvent the existing international system which has at times checked US ambitions. Beyond concern based on US leadership, many experts simply believe that such an organization is untenable and would have a difficult time developing democratic ways of governing itself. There are few that think the world needs another cumbersome body that would likely be dominated by elites and aid bureaucrats.

Finally, several experts raise concerns about the notion of dividing the world up between democracies and non-democracies, if the ultimate goal is to expose the oppressed citizens of authoritarian regimes to the light of freedom. Marc Plattner has written that the nightmare scenario is a

two-tier world, where an entire contingent of the planet's nations (many of them in the developing world, but also including China and Russia) are excluded from a new world order led by a hierarchy of democracies and go on to form their own opposing bloc. The most immediate economic concern would be restricted access by advanced industrial democracies to raw materials and markets located in non-democratic countries. Beyond this, the moral and practical challenges abound – from illegal immigration to refugee flows to famine, terrorism, drug-trafficking, and environmental degradation as global cooperation on pressing issues potentially grinds to a halt and nations retreat into their respective spheres.

Global Markets and International Finance Institutions

Global markets and the actions of financial institutions like the World Bank, the World Trade Organization, and the International Monetary Fund have tremendous impact on a country's democratic prospects. These entities wield influence at all four stages of the development of democracy (the decay of authoritarian rule, transition, consolidation, and deepening and expansion) through the promotion of what many see as democracy's twin: growth through free market capitalism. International development aid and loans are generally given in an effort to raise the standard of living of the world's citizens, especially in countries where governments do not or cannot provide for their populations. However, because they are funded and controlled by the advanced industrial capitalist democracies of the world, these bodies dispense assistance certainly with the hope that growing prosperity will lead to like-minded societies, lucrative markets, and potential allies in the developing world.

However, the effects of these loans and aid on recipient countries are not always desirable or predictable. In some cases, aid acts as an "external rent" much like oil exports, shoring up authoritarian regimes with wealth that does not have to come from taxation (and representation) of citizens. Corruption often prevents funds from making it past the offshore accounts of autocrats and their cronies. In this way, international aid and loans may actually prevent the decay of authoritarian rule and undermine democracy efforts in recipient countries.

International development packages are often seen as de-democratizing in another important way: by promoting and accelerating all that is anti-democratic about raw free market capitalism. If economic inequality is a common by-product of the market, free capitalism, developed rapidly and without government measures to mitigate its Social Darwinist effects, often produces extreme inequality that can be especially undemocratic and destabilizing. To illustrate how anti-democratic the transition to capitalism under the auspices of international finance bodies can be, let's take the example of a country attempting to modernize, both economically and politically early in the 21st century (at least 150 years after this process first began for the West). Let's assume that in this country, an authoritarian regime presides over a badly-performing non-capitalist economy (characterized by heavy state influence and/or ownership of fledgling industries). Let's also assume that the goal of reformers within that country and of the international community, led by wealthy capitalist democracies, is for the country in question to become a democracy by transitioning to a free market economy.

First, this country would likely undergo what has been called "shock therapy" or "structural adjustment" to jumpstart the economic transition. "Structural adjustment," is a process that is associated with economist John Maynard Keynes and also known as "The Washington Consensus" or "Bretton Woods" remedy embraced by international lending institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. Like many concepts in economics, the

term has entered the realm of jargon, and it is useful to define it. William Finnegan provides this primer:

> Structural adjustment is a set of standardized, far reaching austerity and 'openness' measures, which typically include the removal of restrictions on foreign investments, the abolition of many public subsidies and labor rights, reduced state spending, deregulation, lower tariffs, tighter credit, the encouragement of export-oriented industries, lower marginal tax rates, currency devaluation, and the sale of major public enterprises.

In order to rapidly transition an economy with faltering socialist practices into a capitalist free market, the patient (i.e. the country's economy) must essentially be nearly killed in order be saved. The enticement for such reform is loans from international monetary agencies contingent upon these "reforms." The result in the short-term is almost always hardship – state sector jobs are eliminated, prices for basic goods rise as currency loses value, private industries that are created are opened up to often crippling foreign competition. Those with capital to purchase previously state-owned assets quickly rise to the top; others find their standard of living diminishes. The transfer of assets from the public to private realm can also be rife with corruption, as highly-placed government officials cut deals for their personal benefit and that of their cronies.

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) have been highly criticized for the often-devastating effects they have on the general well-being of populations. As more people are thrust into poverty due to economic reforms, governments are generally forced to discontinue most, or all subsidies and social programs. Health and education services are usually greatly affected. In Ghana, the adoption of an SAP in the 1980s created a 'cash and carry' health care system based on user fees that excluded the vast majority of the population, leading to heightened mortality rates. Similarly, user fees were introduced to the public education system, which had been developed by the country's first president Kwame Nkrumah upon independence. The system had been designed to reduce regional disparities (exacerbated under British colonization) between the poor, largely rural North and the more affluent, coastal South, and the introduction of school fees severely limited the advancement of this goal. Even after the initial period of reform, social services tend to suffer as a result of the high percentage of GDP that must

be used to service debts (though recent debt forgiveness initiatives have been helpful).

Even if the transition goes markedly better or occurs more gradually and/or more organically, the result for the country in question is likely to be a form of raw capitalism untempered by government social welfare measures. Although used widely in donor nations, these types of ameliorative measures are typically discouraged in the terms of international loan contracts. Even if they are permitted, such adjustments require an evolved functioning government to disburse effectively, a luxury generally not found in developing nations. Unfettered capitalism or "market fundamentalism" thus often produces oligarchy, rather than democracy, where elites run the capitalist economy, and the state for their own benefit, a highly undemocratic outcome.

The US went through this phase in the Gilded Age (late 19th century) when the "robber barons" of capitalism wielded undue influence and aggregated large wealth while others suffered. It took anti-monopoly legislation and the introduction of worker safety and social welfare mechanisms to correct for market failures. It took time and the influence of middle class participants in government to achieve. Countries that are expected to rapidly modernize through "shock therapy" required by loan guarantees generally have neither.

A central hypocrisy emerges, in the view of many experts: the type of capitalism that is "exported" by advanced industrial market democracies in the form of economic loans and assistance to transitioning countries is not the same type of capitalism that is practiced at home in those democracies. This is blamed for the failure of transitioning economies to reap the stated democratizing benefits of the free market system.

In this view, what the world can do for countries like our example above is to help them restrain the more damaging forces of capitalism to achieve a more egalitarian, and hence a more democratic, set of outcomes. These efforts include what Amy Chua calls "leveling the playing field" through improved public education and training for those who need better preparation for the competition of free market economies. But these measures can only do so much – as in any capitalist society, some groups, by virtue of birth, abilities, or connections, will inevitably be better suited

for this competition. For the others who cannot effectively compete, more radical redistributive and social safety net programs, as well as affirmative action programs to increase equality of opportunity, are often seen as essential. These range from "tax and transfer" social welfare programs to affirmative action policies in hiring and shareholding, to innovations such as micro-credit programs to lower barriers of entry into the marketplace. Such market-softening mechanisms have not generally been prioritized in traditional development packages.

As a result, international aid and loans often fail as promoters of democracy in the effects or in the debts that they produce. Often, even if a democracy does develop, the new government is crippled by servicing the debt taken on by the previous regime through IMF and World Bank loans. Moreover, new industries that spring from the loans are sometimes crippled by competition from advanced economies set by trade agreements accompanying the assistance. Finally, there is little representation among developing countries in the halls of power where these development packages are created in the first place. Thus, as numerous experts have pointed out, the most damaging effects to democratization in these cases may be psychological as well as economic. It is often noted that it is difficult for recipient countries to be enlightened, egalitarian, and democratic in their policies toward their own citizens when these values are not being mirrored to them back by international monetary institutions.

The Influence of Non-Democratic Countries

Just as democracy promotion may be indirect or direct, so may democracy obstruction. Successful democratic countries serve as an example or inspiration to others engaged in various levels of democratization; they also may intervene directly to advocate for another country's positive movement along this process. Similarly, successful non-democratic countries provide models or examples for those same countries in transition. They may also intervene in ways that create pressure for negative movement along the democratization spectrum.

Today, China, Russia, and Singapore are the primary models for capitalist growth within an authoritarian system. As they grow wealthier, their examples take on powerful demonstration effects, providing an alternative route to prosperity than that modeled by Western democracies such as Europe, the United States, and Canada as well as Western-influenced democracies such as Japan, Australia, and New Zealand.

In addition, many feel that China and Russia are increasingly directly involved in democracy obstruction. China's varying levels of support for undemocratic regimes in Sudan, Zimbabwe, North Korea, and Burma serves to forestall potential democratic reforms that might otherwise develop in these countries. Largely motivated by energy demand, China essentially finances these predatory regimes that, under the law of natural consequences, might suffer overthrow or extinction from what many see as the criminal neglect of their citizens. Likewise, as an energy supplier, Russia exerts tremendous influence over other autocracies along its natural gas and oil pipelines, shielding them from Western-inspired reformers. As Freedom House recently noted, Russia is also increasingly reaching out to struggling democracies with incentives to reverse earlier democratic reforms such as those undertaken in the "color revolutions" of Georgia and Ukraine.

Iran provides another example of democracy obstruction, albeit on a smaller scale. Classified by Freedom House as "Not Free," Iran has been accused of supporting the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah, the Palestinian groups Hamas and Islamic Jihad, and Iraqi Shiite militias. These actions, combined with President Ahmadinejad's vocal hostility to the United States provide a powerful counter-influence to democratization efforts in the region, especially in Iraq.

Western attempts to reform corrupt totalitarian states by sanctions, punitive actions, or even military intervention, stumble in the face of obstructionism in the UN Security Council and elsewhere. Similarly, Western attempts to extend aid to struggling democracies in Chinese and Russian spheres of influence are deterred by the increasingly powerful twin autocratic powers of Asia and Eurasia. To many in the West, the new energy that has been infused into the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a regional economic and security cooperative headed up by China and Russia is worrisome. Immense cultural, historical, economic, and political barriers prevent an easy alliance between the two giants; but they share a general distaste for Western, and particularly American, influence in the

region. Most importantly, both countries would be harmed by democratization among countries on their long borders. Many predict that the SCO may become an increasingly de-democratizing force, and could potentially become militarized, similar to NATO.   Classic democracy theorist Robert Dahl includes among his essentials for democracy "the absence of foreign anti-democratic models and interference", a condition that China and Russia increasingly threaten worldwide.

The Sequencing Debate

Consider the two key components of democracy: electoral (popular sovereignty) and liberal (protection of liberty), and reflect on what we know about the internal and external factors influencing the development of each. An interesting question emerges: does it make a difference which component is developed first? Whether or not there is a proper sequencing formula that impacts the consolidation and deepening of democracy is a central debate in the field.

Robert Dahl, a widely recognized and respected Democracy expert, has classically defined electoral democracy (popular sovereignty) as a system in which officials are elected by a process of free, fair, and frequent elections. For elections to be free and fair, they must include freedom of expression for candidates and voters, access to alternative sources of information, associational autonomy, and suffrage based on inclusive citizenship. The question is: do the mechanisms creating the conditions for electoral democracy necessarily support liberal democracy in the process? If all of the above demands for electoral democracy are met, is the resulting system naturally protective of rights and liberties as they are more widely defined? If you successfully establish electoral democracy first, does liberal democracy inevitably follow?

Or, does the establishment of institutions ensuring liberal democracy (rule of law and the protection of civil liberties) need to come first, before elections are held? Proponents of what has become known as sequencing, including Edward Mansfield, Jack Snyder, Fareed Zakaria, Amy Chua, Tom Bethell, and Peter Berkowitz, believe that the institutions must be constructed before the polls are opened; state-building or the development of constitutional liberalism must precede popular sovereignty. They point to the successful example of Anglo-American democracy where universal suffrage was only introduced after the foundations of government or the "political architecture" had been established. In this view, the danger is that the (inadequately trained and seasoned) electorate will make poor choices or will unwittingly empower leaders with the discretion to NOT advance society toward more liberal outcomes. Fareed Zakaria has famously used the term "illiberal democracies" to describe such a result, affirming "if a democracy does not preserve liberty and law, that it is a democracy is a small consolation." Snyder and Mansfield talk in terms of preventing "lasting birth defects of untimely democratic transitions." In this view, the people cannot be trusted to make wise decisions in the absence of clear laws and institutions, and, once in office, democratically elected leaders cannot be expected to voluntarily move the country toward democratic outcomes. Thus, Hamas, Hezbollah, Robert Mugabe, and Vladimir Putin are what you get when you prematurely hold elections in new democracies. Consult Amy Chua's theory in the Demography section of Internal Factors for the dangerous combination of popular sovereignty and free market capitalism in multi-ethnic societies where liberal protections are absent.

Experts such as Thomas Carothers, Sheri Berman, Michael McFaul, William Kristol, and Marc Plattner take the opposite tack. They believe that elections should always come first, and see the other side as engaged in what

Carothers says are "attempts to rationalize and defang democratic change by putting the potentially volatile, unpredictable actions of newly empowered masses and emergent leaders into a sturdy cage." Rather, this contingent of theorists tends to believe that elections by democratic means naturally produce larger democratic outcomes. Even if they are flawed, the elections are an important jumping off point, or rite of passage, for the population; to delay voting with wide suffrage is both immoral and usually impossible. In the worst case scenario, liberal democracy may in fact fail, but the risk was worth it and the failure sows the seeds for the next attempt at democratization. Marc Plattner believes that elections can even serve as a visceral cleansing and sorting process that technocratic state-building cannot. He writes that "democratic elections can solve civil conflicts especially where the combatants are exhausted… and may be willing to trust their fate to a free and fair election, especially if there are some guarantees for the losers."

This debate was introduced in the late 1990s and continues to be unsettled to this day; there are important implications for democracy promotion efforts herein. Democracy experts and theorists consistently lament the dearth of science behind high quality democracy. This explains the attempts to analyze the internal and external factors associated with democracy, and to formulate replicable scenarios that seem to support democratization. These attempts have taken on a new urgency as the world enters what most consider a democratic recession in the first decade of the 21st century.

The State of Democracy in the World, 2008

The news is not good. In the view of nearly all experts and measurement scales, the consensus is that democracy is in decline globally. Fewer countries are making the transition; many of those that have made it are backsliding; and powerful authoritarian countries are offering an attractive alternative to democracy. A key accelerant to these trends is the declining influence of the United States, both as an inspiring example of prosperous democracy and a promoter worldwide. Ironically, the reputation of democracy has been diminished while at the same time democracy has largely been accepted, at least in name, as a universal value. The brand has become diluted and somewhat discredited as autocrats around the world adopt the mantle of democrats, but fail to truly practice either electoral or liberal democracy.

Among the international democratic community, realism collides with idealism as security, commerce, and energy concerns often cause nations such as the United States to turn a blind eye to troubling de-democratization in strategic nations. What is most troubling is that, as Kenneth Roth of Human Rights Watch has noted, "despots" have "masqueraded as democrats" before; but rarely have they gotten away with it on such a scale and with such little resistance from the true democracies of the world. Roth writes in The 2008 Human Rights Watch Report, "To a significant degree, half-baked democracies succeed in passing themselves off as the real thing because they are beneficiaries of the diminished expectations from the more established democracies." Moreover, these "sham

democracies" are having significant influence on others around the world as they demonstrate that capitalism and democracy are not always the twin pillars of growth, and that autocratic regimes can become prosperous. And, finally, autocrats in the world today are extraordinarily brazen, not only calling themselves democrats, but also engaging in direct, intentional activities to undermine democracy promotion worldwide.

Near the end of the momentous Third Wave of democratization (1975-1999), many experts wrote that the world was witnessing the "end of history," or the final triumph of democracy in the world. Even as distressing signals emerged, beginning with Pakistan's reversal in 1999, many experts still believed the democratization trend would ultimately prevail after a few setbacks. Interestingly, at the same time Samuel Huntington coined the term and heralded the Third Wave in 1991, he predicted many of the dangers that lay ahead. He warned of a Third Reverse Wave brought on by failures in the effectiveness of new democracies to live up to their performance mandates, the shift of prominent countries to authoritarianism that would reverse the "snowballing effect," as well as the rise of religious fundamentalism, oligarchic authoritarianism, and populist dictatorships.

Most believe this is exactly what has transpired. Instead of a reverse wave, many have written that we are experiencing outright backlash against democracy. Fareed Zakaria echoes the views of many experts when he describes this as happening along two trajectories. The proliferation

of "elected autocrats" is one. Authoritarian leaders that have been, ostensibly, democratically elected, have then consolidate power in highly undemocratic ways. Kenneth Roth describes this as "master(ing) the art of democratic rhetoric that bears little relationship to their practice of governing." Second, and importantly, the populations within these countries often allow this to happen. Globalization, many believe, has been destabilizing for many people. As they work to adjust to the rapid transformation of their communities (in jobs, immigration, communication), they often seek comfort in a strong leader. When combined with fear of terrorism, economic concerns, the rise of religious fundamentalism, and a little reactive nationalism and xenophobia, it is not surprising that people would miss strong authoritarian leadership. Many are reflexively turning to autocratic leaders who promise stability and prey on people's fears in modern society. In the process, they wittingly and unwittingly relinquish many of their personal freedoms as they develop tolerance for the increasingly undemocratic behavior of their democratically elected leaders. This is not only applicable to developing or Post-Soviet countries; Americans are believed by many to have succumbed to many of the same instincts during the Bush Administration. Fear of terrorism and security concerns, in this view, has made Americans more tolerant with respect to counterterrorism programs that have incrementally undermined civil liberties in the United States. In sum, The World Movement for Democracy has reported that "despite, some notable successes, democracy has proven much more difficult to achieve than many assumed" as "high expectations go unmet."

We've noted that citizens of de-democratizing nations often embolden the unchecked reach and strength of their governments; other countries that could apply pressure to reverse these trends are notably silent. Once an ambitious international democracy promoter, the United States' citizens and politicians alike are losing their appetite for interventionist foreign policy. The protracted wars in Iraq and Afghanistan are all consuming. This happens while much of the rest of world loses its appetite for American intervention as well. The perceived hypocrisy of the Bush Freedom Agenda has become an enormous liability to democracy promotion worldwide. Those who share this view believe that the US' internal commitment to democratic values is weakening, while America's security,

commerce, and energy agendas seem to dictate decisions about confronting or appeasing autocrats.

To add insult to democracy promotion injury, powerful authoritarian capitalist countries are exerting increasing influence on others in their regions and beyond. As nearly all experts agree, this is a dynamic especially seen with regard to Russia's influence on former Soviet states and in Central Asia; China's influence in Asia and Africa; and to a lesser extent, Venezuela's influence in Latin America. Similarly, the near absence of democracy in the Middle East produces negative peer pressure patterns in that region as well.

Freedom House Measures

In their 2008 report, *Freedom in the World*, Freedom House found that reversals in the progress of democratization occurred in 20% of the world's countries in 2007. Although little movement was noted between categories (free, partly free, not free), there was significant negative movement or backsliding within the categories. Four times more countries experienced de-democratization than democratization, making 2007 the second consecutive year characterized by declines (the first time in 15 years that there have been two such consecutive years). Essentially, authoritarian regimes became more repressive, while those on the fence began to tip towards authoritarianism. "Freedom in retreat" or "stagnation" are the watch words. Or in Marc Plattner's words, "the struggle became more difficult," and the opponents of democracy "more energized and more brazen than any point in recent decades." That these trends often involved large strategic countries with global impact such as Russia, China, Pakistan, Venezuela, Kenya, and Nigeria is particularly worrisome. Some of these trends were even seen in countries that had been celebrated for their nonviolent democratization in the "color revolutions" of Eastern Europe. All told, Freedom House's Arch Puddington reports that "democratic pushback" and the "fine-tuning of mechanisms of repression and control" prevailed globally.

Freedom House Designation	Percent of Countries Worldwide (193)	Change from 2006
Free	47% or 90 countries 46% of global population	Unchanged
Partly Free	31% or 60 countries 18% of global population	Increased by two countries (Thailand and Togo)
Not Free	22% or 43 countries 36% of global population	Decreased by two countries (Thailand and Togo); Increased by one territory (The Palestinian Authority)

Note that Thailand and Togo were the only countries that moved between the categories, becoming slightly freer than they were in 2006. But their improvement pales when compared to the negative movement within the categories not captured by the numbers above, and often involving large, populous countries. Over one-third of the world's population lives in repressive authoritarian regimes (a full half of them in China).

If you consider the important trends behind this backsliding noted in the Freedom House report, the similarities to Huntington's list of concerns in 1991 is striking. Puddington identifies the major dynamics at work in the decline of democracy worldwide:

- The resurgence of pragmatic, market-oriented or energy-rich dictatorships and their effects on others in their regions and beyond;

- The decline in freedom of association afforded civil society, such as human rights advocates and government watchdog groups;

- Weak governance in fragile or pseudo democracies where citizens are not reaping the anticipated rewards of their electoral efforts because of corruption or the consolidation of power by elites;

- Islamic extremism producing terrorist events that

hurt the stability of fragile democracies (Iraq) and/or provide an excuse for the government to roll back freedoms in the name of counter-terrorism.

- Pushback in previously democratic countries where would-be autocrats are utilizing new tactics, often within constitutional systems, to strengthen their power and obstruct the opposition.

Freedom House also measures the number of electoral democracies in the world (qualifying countries only on the basis of popular sovereignty, not on democratic outcomes or liberal democracy). The number of electoral democracies in the world in 2007 was 121, a net decrease of two from the previous year (Mauritania became an electoral democracy; while Kenya, the Phillipines, and Bangladesh saw their electoral systems disqualified).

To see full lists by category and country/territory, including trend indicators by country, see http://www.freedomhouse. org/, click on the 'Analysis' tab, click on the 'Freedom in the World' link, choose 2008, click on the 'Tables and Charts' link and choose the table you would like to view. See also their Countries at a Crossroads and Nations in Transition reports.

The Economist Intelligence Unit

The Economist scale is also a thick measure of democracy, meaning they evaluate both electoral and liberal components of systems in countries and territories around the world. It claims to "delve deeper into the texture of democracy, looking at 60 indicators across five broad categories: free elections, civil liberties, functioning government, political participation, and political culture." The results of their most recent report (using late 2006 numbers rather than Freedom House's early 2007 numbers) are similarly discouraging. Using data available for 165 countries and 2 territories, researchers found only half to be democracies, a percentage comparable to Freedom House statistics. Moreover, as with Freedom House, it was trends and variables within categories that painted the grimmest picture. Of the countries deemed democratic, only 28% of those surveyed by The Economist were considered full democracies, while others were designated to be "flawed." (Some variation exists within the "free" and "partly free" categories on the Freedom House scale as well). Among these "full" democracies, most were the usual suspects

found in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development or OECD (US, Western Europe, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Japan), and only included one African country (Maritius), two Latin American (Costa Rica and Uruguay), and 2 Central European (Czech Republic and Slovakia). No other Asian countries besides Japan made the list; neither did any Middle Eastern countries. This places only 13% of the world's population in "full" democracies. *The Economist* classifies non-democracies as either hybrid or authoritarian, and found, as Freedom House did, that nearly 40% of the world's population lives in authoritarian regimes (again, with the heavy presence of China).

What is particularly interesting about *The Economist* scale is its further differentiation even among the full democracies (and the fact that France does not make this list). It is striking to note that both the UK and US (normally seen as bastions of democracy in the world) rank on the low end of the full democracies in terms of their aggregate scores across the five variables, largely due to issues related to political participation, governance, and civil liberties. *The Economist* also found that, in developing countries, size correlated negatively with democracy scores – the bigger the country, the more difficult it is to consolidate democracy. It is thus not surprising that both Freedom House and The Economist place India respectively in the realm of the lower margin of "free" or as a "flawed democracy."

See http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_TABLE_2007_v3.pdf for a complete list of democracy scores for countries and territories examined by *The Economist*.

Issue 3, August 2008

Regional Highlights of Democracy in the World 2008

The Former Soviet Union
Asia
The Middle East and North Africa
Sub-Saharan Africa
Latin America
Central and Eastern Europe
The United States

The Former Soviet Union

The countries and satellites of the former USSR accounted for a large portion of the euphoric 'Third Wave' of democratization at the end of the 20th century. Today, these countries provide an interesting case study in the effects of geography on democratization and de-democratization. The most important variables affecting the development of democracy appear to stem from these republics' relationship with Modern Russia. This regional influence is important because of how Russia's role in the world has evolved since.

Technically, after the fall of the Soviet Union, Russia became a democratic republic under Boris Yeltsin. Although the type of democracy practiced from the beginning and, even more so today, is not one that most Western democracies recognize as such. Most experts have increasingly categorized Russia as neither a true electoral or liberal democracy, despite the existence of elections. After years of backsliding, most observers and experts have recently ceased to label Russia democratic in any way. Former President (and current Prime Minister) Vladimir Putin has even coined a term for the Russian brand of government he helped to nurture post Cold War : "sovereign democracy." This means that Russia's sovereignty allows its autocratically-inclined leaders to define democracy however they see fit. The international community generally recognizes the Russian government under Putin as authoritarian, complete with a weak legislature, rigged elections and restrictions on civil liberties (especially with regard to press, speech, and association).

The former Soviet republics and satellites that are geographically closer to Western Europe have tended to respond to the democratic traditions ensconced in the European Union. Those that are geographically closer to Russia have for the most part gravitated toward the Russian sphere of influence, with the exception of the Baltic, and to a lesser extent, the Balkan nations. Or as Larry Diamond points out, fifteen of the sixteen nations West of the Cold War's Iron Curtain are now democracies. By contrast, of the 12 non-Baltic former states of the USSR, 9 are authoritarian and 3 are highly fragile democracies.

Russia exerts powerful geographic influence throughout Eastern Europe and Central Asia (the countries dubbed the "stans") through its control of natural gas and oil supplies, as well as pipelines that transport these commodities to countries in the region. Culturally, many have noted that Russia's regional neighbors are showing that they have only shallow saturation of democratic values, remain ambivalent about democracy and are more likely to embrace authoritarian nostalgia in crisis because of their deep autocratic roots. It appears then that as Russia goes, so goes the neighborhood.

Rampant corruption that began when public industries and properties were privatized in the hands of a small group of oligarchs during the transition from communism was a major impediment to democratization. Special interests continue to dominate the economy and the government as the country grows wealthier from lucrative energy resources within its borders. In fact, on the Transparency

International scale, which ranks countries according to their levels of corruption, the only country with similar wealth that scores lower than Russia is Equatorial New Guinea (also a petrostate).

Russia is not only an autocracy with little intention or capacity to become a democracy; it is also becoming increasingly active in ensuring its neighbors do not become democracies either. Appeals to anti-Americanism and to regional and cultural pride and nationalism are often accompanied by lucrative trade deals and security arrangements as Russia attempts to strengthen the allure of its authoritarian capitalist example and its reputation as an anti-Western power. Many are troubled by the prospect that the two authoritarian giants of the continent, Russia and China, might strengthen their ties as well. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), a regional body comprised of Russia, China, and others in the region has become particularly worrisome of late, as its purpose seems to be evolving beyond trade, toward security and the prevention of democracy promotion in the area.

Not everyone is so pessimistic about Russia. There are those who see its trajectory toward authoritarianism as untenable, given what we know about the correlation between capitalistic growth and democracy. Several experts look at Russia's well-educated population and levels of openness to the outside world, and believe Russia does not conform to traditional petrostate exclusions to the modernization theory of democracy. Several articles have appeared recently describing Russian youth as being more open to Western influences as these values accompany international commerce into the country. However, Russia's birth rates have leveled off and even declined in recent years. There simply may not be enough of these youth around to sustain reform.

Historian Joseph Nye was recently quoted in Newsweek on Russia's influence in the region, saying that Russia's "soft power" is on the wane as "bullying attitudes" are "destroying trust" and undermining Russian influence in other countries. This trend has yet to accelerate to a point where it is making much of a difference, however. Many of the most fragile democracies in the world are in Russia's neighborhood, and there are many experts who expect democracy in the region to only decline as oil wealth and

anti-Americanism reminiscent of the Cold War embolden Russia's autocrats and their cronies in other countries.

Asia

It is exceptionally hard to generalize about Asia as a region. Larry Diamond reminds us that the continent contains "the most populous democracy (India), the most populous dictatorship (China), the most successful non-democracy (Singapore), and three beacons of Western-style democracy (Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea). It also contains two of the "worst of the worst" in term of repressive, authoritarian regimes (North Korea and Burma/Myanmar); and two of the "best of the best" in Australia and New Zealand. This diversity has captured the attention of democracy experts from all over the spectrum, and a debate has long stirred over whether there is such a thing as "Asian values" that impact populations' desire for democracy.

Much of Central Asia falls in the category described above – as Russia's neighborhood. However, even Central Asian countries outside the Russian sphere of influence have not fared much better, such as Pakistan and Afghanistan. For instance, despite growing unpopularity, Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf continues his authoritarian rule following the dubious elections in 2008 that followed the assassination of opposition leader Benazir Bhutto. In Afghanistan and the tribal areas that separate it from Pakistan, disorder grows daily as Taliban militias and warlords threaten the American-supported government of Hamid Karzai. Bangladesh, never a true liberal democracy, has now been stripped of its electoral democracy moniker by Freedom House. Sri Lanka continues to be de-stabilized by civil conflict with Tamil separatists.

The heavyweight authoritarian power of this region is undoubtedly China. Despite fabulous economic growth, open commerce, and promises of reforms to accompany the 2008 Olympic Games, China remains a highly repressive society where power is tightly consolidated by the Communist Party. Within its broad borders, China exerts extraordinarily repressive control over places such as Tibet (See June 2008 edition of the World Savvy Monitor). China's influence on its many neighbors grows as trade increases in the Asia-Pacific region. Besides India, the only counterweights to autocratic China in the area are democratic Japan, Taiwan, and South Korea.

Singapore is a fellow authoritarian capitalist powerhouse that is helping China to diminish the natural connection drawn between free markets and democracy. In fact, Singapore's example is particularly troubling to many as it is the only non petro-state autocracy among the 25 wealthiest nations of the world. Moreover, most Southeast Asian nations score poorly on various democracy scales, even if they do hold elections. Many fear that the continued success of China and Singapore will be democracy's undoing as others attempt to follow their example of successful capitalist autocracy. Furthermore, Arch Puddington of Freedom House has written that there is real cause for concern in the region as a "combination of authoritarianism, ethnic and communal hatred, military involvement in political affairs, and radical Islam obstruct meaningful democratization." The democratic reversals experienced by the Philippines recently would seem to support this concern.

There are others who are not as pessimistic about Asia as a region, reminding us of the potential of India's democratic example to reverse the trends embodied by China and Singapore. Yasheng Huang wrote recently in Foreign Policy that, "if India with its noisy, chaotic, and lumbering political arrangements, can grow, then no other poor country must face a Faustian choice between growth and democracy." Huang also posits that China's narrative is not always accurately told and notes most of China's significant growth was initiated from 1980-1989, a time that was known as a period of somewhat liberal reform before the oppressiveness ushered in by Tiananmen Square. Most experts agree that the trajectories taken by China and India – both politically and economically - over the next decade will have enormous implications for democracy in the region and the world. Japan is another country to watch; it is the oldest democracy in East Asia and developed under the military protection of the United States. If Japan is able to address its significant demographic challenges (an aging population), there are other favorable conditions present for deepening democracy. These include a relative lack of ethnic diversity, favorable geography, mature Western-style institutions, lack of military influences in society, and vibrant civil liberties. If Japan were permitted to re-militarize, some believe it would become a powerful counterweight to China in the region.

The Middle East and Northern Africa

A large part of the pessimism about democracy in the world in 2008 derives from the strikingly abysmal state of the franchise in the Middle East, a region whose fate is of concern to everyone around the world, especially amidst concerns over record high oil prices and terrorism. Not one Middle Eastern country occupies the top rung of either Freedom House or The Economist's democracy scales. Only one, Israel, is on the lower margins of being "free" (and declining) according to Freedom House, and The Economist considers it a "flawed democracy." Not one of the 22 members of the Arab League is classified as a true democracy.

This state of affairs is especially troubling given the fact that some countries in the area experienced marginal democratic growth in the years immediately following the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. As Puddington has written, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Lebanon had seen some movement toward reform; but by 2007, this had been all but completely reversed. The Arab-Israeli conflict has always been de-stabilizing for the region, and as it has ebbed and flowed over the last 60 years, so has the chaos, violence, and repression by both sides. This is even more true recently in the wake of the accession of Hamas in Gaza and the recent war between Israel and Syria. The conflict in Iraq has had a similar effect. The fact that large powers in the region like Saudi Arabia and Iran have not democratized, and show no signs of doing so, adds to the grim prospects for democracy in the region.

As many experts have remarked, the challenges are immense even without destabilizing conflicts. Besides the troubled histories of Lebanon and Israel, there are no democratic traditions in the region. All of the cards stack up against democratization - from petropolitics to ethnic diversity to general anti-Western orientations. Beyond these seemingly intractable obstacles, democratization in the region is blocked by particularly entrenched autocratic leaders practicing extraordinary levels of totalitarianism.

The opposition, who might under different circumstances, be the drivers of reform are generally unable to do so. As Julia Choucair-Visozo has written, "the abundance of discontent across the Arab world does not always translate in to effective, organized opposition." Rather, without any avenues for expression or any real internal coherence, the opposition is often radicalized. Militant Islam therefore draws many recruits who might otherwise work within the system to reform it. Terrorist acts lend legitimacy and justification to autocrats who crack-down further on civil liberties, often with the help of outside Western powers. In other cases, radical groups gain power through the small windows of democratization that appear, as seen in electoral victories achieved by the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Hamas in the Palestinian Authority, and Hezbollah in Lebanon. This leads to a backlash against democracy as a whole among moderates in the region and democracy promotion advocates in the West.

Fareed Zakaria has written that it is often the West's opinion that "the Arab leaders of the Middle East are

autocratic, corrupt, and heavy-handed. But they are still more liberal, tolerant, and pluralistic than what would likely replace them." A perverse logic applies, as several experts have wondered whether an awful cycle needs to run its course to ensure that true democrats and moderates can come into power. It has been suggested that perhaps radical groups need to be allowed to unseat the current authoritarian regimes, try to govern and fail, so that a real democratization process can begin. Some see Iran as midway through this particular cycle following the deposition of the pro-Western monarchy in the 1950s. It has said that the militant Islam leaders who came to power following the revolution have failed to provide economic growth and social stability; and that the law of natural consequences will kick in as the population tires of anti-Western, radical rhetoric and comes to demand new leadership (presumably of the moderate, democratic kind). The flaw of this equation, which the world is painfully aware of, is that oil wealth can not only artificially sustain an autocracy, it can be used to purchase nuclear weapons that can genuinely sustain an autocracy. The possession of nuclear technology (obtained ironically, on illegal capitalist markets) will confer new power on Iran's autocrats, or it will ignite a conflagration that will make democracy look like an irrelevant luxury.

Some believe the house of cards that keeps Middle Eastern autocrats in power is ultimately untenable. Experts like Tamara Coffman Wittes of the Brookings Institution see opportunity as radical opposition groups become increasingly discredited, and caution the West to proceed carefully in their democracy promotion efforts. Moderate reformers do still exist in many Middle Eastern countries. Their success depends on autocratic governments opening up enough space, in terms of freedom of speech and association, for them to grow. These governments will not do so as long as they feel threatened by either radical groups or outside intervention. Ironically, although well-intentioned, experts feel that the West can do great harm by openly embracing and supporting these moderates, lest these reformers become tainted within their countries by anti-Western and anti-imperialist sentiment. In theory, repression should become more difficult as technology increasingly brings potential reformers together. Wittes and other Middle East experts such as Marina Ottaway believe that the West needs to focus on rebuilding credibility with Arab populations destroyed by the Iraq war, "de-link" democracy promotion and regime change, and be more consultative with moderate Arab NGOs and others on the ground. Failures to do so will only feed radical strength, encourage terrorism, and legitimize repression by autocratic regimes.

Interestingly, World Values Survey data and other polling reveals that the average populations of the Middle East are quite open to democracy and most aspire to it. The vast majority are neither terrorists nor cronies of corrupt autocratic governments. As Shibley Telhami of the Brookings Saban Center for Middle East Policy has noted, when Arab respondents are asked to name the countries that best guarantee freedom and democracy, they name Western democratic ones. They similarly indicate that, besides their own countries, they would most like to live or study in these Western countries. Telhami sums up the dilemma for the Middle East in this way:

> In the end, most Arabs, like others, want freedom and a system in which their voices count. But even more, they want security for their families, and they reject foreign occupation and anarchy. The very American policy that was said to be aimed at spreading democracy increased the conditions that terrify the public and reduced the attraction of democracy itself. If Iraq is an example of the democratic change one can expect, who, anywhere, would want it?

Sub-Saharan Africa

Freedom House noted that Africa made uneven, but overall disappointing progress in democratization in 2008. Although six countries saw improvements (Togo, Cote d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, Mozambique, and Mauritania – though Mauritania experienced a military coup on August 6, 2008), these were not significant enough, nor did they take place in countries big enough, to truly impact the larger state of democracy in Africa. This is not to diminish these gains; for the people in those countries this progress is meaningful, especially Rwanda and Sierra Leone where horrible conflicts characterized recent decades.

However, bigger African countries in key strategic regions declined in their democracy measures. This included countries that should theoretically have had nowhere to go but up: the Democratic Republic of Congo (where 5 million people have died over the last half century), Sudan (where a 20 year old civil war threatens to resume and ethnic conflict in Darfur rages), Somalia (a failed state in perpetual civil war for decades), as well as Chad, The Central African Republic (both related to the Sudanese conflict), Mali, and Niger. Only one African country is considered by The Economist to be a true democracy (Maritius).

Consider Zimbabwe, which teeters on the brink of economic collapse and mass starvation following elections this year that failed to unseat dictator Robert Mugabe. Zimbabwe was once considered one of the continent's best hopes for peace and prosperity after independence. It has captivated democracy experts in recent months, however, as unemployment levels soared to 85%, inflation nears 2.2

million percent, and over 3 million people have fled. The corruption of the Mugabe kleptocracy over the years has produced one of the most vivid examples of a predatory state in modern times. Mugabe's use of land reform in Zimbabwe to violently displace white and black farmers and workers alike has been widely reported. He was motivated by political expediency and cheered on by a large cabal of military and civilian cronies. Beginning with the 2000 election, Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party capitalized on the black majority's resentment of the post-colonial white "market-dominant minority." Obersvers note that he used this resentment among blacks to bolster his political power against the opposition, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Violent land seizures, intimidation, harassment, detainment, and even murder followed. Mugabe and his inner circle attempted to retain power amidst growing discontent, and these patterns repeated in subsequent elections, including the March 2008 general election and June 2008 run-off with opponent Morgan Tsvangirai. Watchdogs and experts have voiced growing concern not only regarding Mugabe's reign of terror, but for the continued lack of effective intervention by other Southern African countries. This case study does not seem to bode well for the prospects of significant democratization on the continent in the future.

Africanist Martin Meredith provides some context for this disturbing trend. He presents African democracy as an arc that peaked with Nelson Mandela's triumph and wisdom in South Africa in the 1990s, that has been in subsequent

decline ever since. Larry Diamond ventured further, saying, "Africa has been a desert in terms of democracy and the rule of law, and it remains one of the most corrupt and badly governed regions of the world." The obstacles have been deeply challenging. Colonial legacies and corrupt independence governments created vast inequalities of wealth, exacerbated by crushing debt from loans and aid that failed to produce prosperity or true democracy. This combined with continuing racial tensions, conflict, generally abysmal standards of living and mortality rates, lack of education, disease, and stagnant or declining economic growth. Many African nations lack transparent or effective government institutions, and continue to be plagued by corruption and unscrupulous leaders. Even South Africa, the anchor of the continent, struggles with these issues, in addition to managing the expectations of black and white citizens alike. Despite Mandela's warning in 1994 that "we must face the matter squarely that where there is something wrong in how we govern ourselves, it must be said that the fault is not in the stars but in ourselves that we are ill-governed." It is widely agreed that Africa generally today suffers from some of the most anti-democratic leadership in the world.

The state of democratic affairs in Africa is often cited by proponents of "sequencing" as a perfect case in point. A recent Council on Foreign Relations report has said of the current dynamic, "elections have come faster than the development of responsible and effective political parties, independent electoral systems, fully functioning legislatures, and independent judiciaries." Electoral democracies have often become "personalized," one-party states with few experienced legislators and autocratically minded leaders. In this view, the violence that has often accompanied elections in places like Kenya and Zimbabwe reinforces the notion that electoral democracy is dangerous in the absence of truly liberal democracy.

Numerous mechanisms exist to address these deficits, including the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD), the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), and the reinvented African Union (AU, formerly the Organization of African States or OAS). Most experts generally agree that none of these have produced particularly democratic outcomes, from conflict-abatement to any real assurance of liberal democracy. The result has

been an overwhelming lack of confidence among Africans and among international donors and lenders in the prospects for reform.

Progress has been slow despite new development packages conditioned on good governance, such as Millennium Challenge Accounts and other Western innovations in aid. Many attribute this to a relatively new international player on the continent: China. In China's quest for raw materials and energy sources to fuel its growing economy, China is now extending aid, loans, and investment to a myriad of African countries, often with no strings attached with respect to governance. The Chinese generally follow a policy of "no involvement" in the sovereign affairs of trading partners or aid recipients. As a result, many believe Chinese funding undermines the conditional aid approach of the West; and the result is diluted and weak pressure on highly undemocratic leaders to reform. Sudan and Congo (DRC) are both extremely poorly governed client states of China, and among the least free nations in the world.

Latin America

Latin America generally captures the 20 states of the Central/South American continent as well as the 13 countries of the Caribbean, many of whom are former colonies. Of these, only two – Costa Rica and Uruguay make The Economist's list of true democracies. Latin American countries are generally underrepresented among countries Freedom House has designated "most free." Many of these countries were beneficiaries and drivers of the Third Wave of democratization in the 1980s. Up to that point, authoritarianism had thrived in different ideological iterations. By the 1990s, nearly all were democracies in some form (with the notable exception of Cuba), yet many have, since then, experienced significant backsliding and have failed to consolidate democratic gains. In addition to development issues similar to that of Africa (poor education, lack of health care, and general poverty), Latin America has always suffered from extreme inequalities of wealth, corruption, and class conflict. Many countries in the region have legacies of military rule that have been hard to shake, along with histories of strong authoritarian leaders and Presidentialism. Further, the hierarchical, anti-democratic influence of the Catholic Church is a factor. Crime is also an enormous problem; drug cartels, gangs, and militias join various guerilla movements to destabilize democratic and autocratic regimes alike. Unlike many of their oppressed brethren across the world, Latin American respondents to the World Values Survey tend to demonstrate popular skepticism about democracy. Analyzing this and other data, Hoover Institution expert William Ratliff has surmised that Latin Americans often

see democracy as simply perpetuating historical client-patron systems and believe their countries to be "governed by certain powerful interests for their own benefit." He has posited that collective memory of the past, combined with lack of education, significantly undermines the average citizen's capacity for democracy.

The influence of one country stands out and is frequently considered when looking at the democratic prospects of the region: Venezuela. Venezuela's rancorously anti-Western, particularly anti-American, leader Hugo Chavez represents to many the penultimate populist authoritarian. After an unsuccessful coup attempt in 1992, Chavez, who has a military background, achieved his coup in the form of the dubious 1998 election. At that time, he consolidated nearly all government power in the executive office. Despite a brief ouster in 2002 (he was back in power within days), Chavez has openly manipulated the system to keep himself in office. Observers have noted that many vestiges of liberal democracy, including freedom of the press, speech, and association have concurrently been rolled back. Recently, however, a constitutional referendum to extend his term and increase his power failed, which is seen by many as a good sign. Although, Venezuela's growing oil exports are expected to lock-in classic petrostate benefits for his regime, insulating him substantially. It should be noted that other countries in the region do not enjoy similar mineral advantages; many hope his autocratic example is on the wane among other countries on the cusp of potential democratization.

During the Cold War, the US was covertly involved in multiple Latin American regime changes, often supporting autocratic leaders in exchange for their loyalty. In contemporary times, however, autocratic regimes in Latin America have largely escaped the attention, punishment, and/or intervention by the United States. The Organization of American States (OAS), of which America is a member, has largely failed to effectively promote democracy in the region. Although there have been measures introduced to establish thresholds for intervention upon coups or other anti-democratic developments, these have proven generally unproductive. Beyond apathy, there are some who believe proximity of the United States actually hinders democratization. They reference the American War on Drugs, designed to limit illegal exports of narcotics to the US, but ends up destabilizing regimes throughout the region.

Central and Western Europe

The official countries of the European Union, as well as members of the broader European Community (EC) include some of the oldest and most advanced democracies as well as some of the newest and fastest growing ones. This traces back to historical traditions as well as to democracy promotion and sustainability efforts by the United States following decimation of the continent in World War II. The US Marshall Fund is often seen as the highpoint of American diplomacy, aid, and democracy support, as far-sighted American officials recognized that the spread of democracy and capitalism contained the best hedge against Soviet Communism and totalitarianism in the region. Idealism and realism combined in this case to produce remarkable prosperity and peace on the continent, along with lucrative markets and strong democratic allies for the United States.

The European Union grew out of the success of like-minded nations in Western Europe as they began to recognize the benefits of economic and security cooperation. But it became a larger tool of democracy promotion as well, incorporating democratic governance requirements (electoral and liberal) into its treaties and accession requirements. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the EU became the pre-eminent power on the continent, integrating many former USSR states and satellites. "Returning to Europe" was a rallying cry behind Eastern and Central European countries' participation in the Third Wave of democratization in the 1990s; and more countries on Europe's furthest borders have undertaken reforms in the

name of EU accession up to the present day. It has been said that the EU itself is perhaps the greatest democracy promotion agent of modern times.

But, as always, there are de-democratizing fault lines running through the region. Turkey's accession bid is still pending, revealing a growing ambiguity among European nations as to their commitment to truly integrate each and every democracy. Although Turkey's internal strife over the place of Islam in an officially secular nation has dragged down its democracy ratings, it can be said that it is no more or less democratically flawed than some of the other countries from outside Western Europe seeking EU accession. However, Turkey's bid is causing significant angst among EU nations struggling to domestically integrate their immigrant Muslim populations while they pursue counter-terrorism policies among these same groups. The Global War on Terror and the conflict in Afghanistan, to which the largely European North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is a partner, is creating reciprocal backlash and ethnic tension between Muslims and traditional Judeo-Christian populations in Europe. This has been a powerful force that has the potential to be de-democratizing for the region.

Moreover, the EU has come under fire for not being democratically governed within its own supranational leadership structures and institutions. Democratic ratification of an EU Constitution among all members has been elusive and disheartening to many. Finally, many believe Europe is increasingly ambivalent about

its association with the United States with respect to democracy promotion in the wake of difficulties in Iraq and Afghanistan. The UK, especially, is suffering much of the same criticism the US is experiencing as a key ally in the US-led Coalition of the 'Willing' from the Baghdad invasion to the present day.

The United States

As we've discussed throughout this edition of The Monitor, the influence of US (as a model and as a democracy promoter globally) figures prominently into the prospects for democracy in the world. See the Democracy Promotion by Other Nations section for more detail. When American democracy is compromised domestically, the effects extend beyond those living within US borders. The US Constitution has provided a model for numerous subsequent democracies around the world; and most still point to the democratic superpower as the pre-eminent example of both electoral and liberal democracy. But there are those who believe this reputation is undeserved and in decline, largely because of the growing disconnect between the principles and institutions of American democracy and the practice of American democracy on the ground.

The electoral components of American democracy have come under particular fire following the contested Presidential election of 2000. Mark Hertzgaard has written of the event, "If it came as a shock for foreigners to see the world's proudest democracy fumbling its most basic political ritual, the shock was not entirely unpleasant." The trouble in Florida surfaced long standing issues including the elitism of the Electoral College system, the growing influence of special interests and cronyism, badly damaged and even discriminatory voter registration apparatus, lack of standardization of voting procedures, and inadequate auditing capabilities. To this day concerns exist that the American electoral system is neither free, nor fair. Representing the most extreme views, Sheldon Wolin has

written of Bush v. Gore, "that was when power brokers found that if, sufficiently determined, they could overcome the inhibitions of democratic constitutionalism," and leave the people "with no power over the very process that is supposed to be the prime example of their empowerment." From larger campaign finance, to gerrymandering, to the logistics challenging local voting precincts, the system is still seen as lacking on objective scales of electoral quality as the US approaches the 2008 election. Voter apathy and disillusionment continues to undermine the system at all levels.

In terms of liberal democracy, the US is seen as having similarly stumbled early in the 21st century, reversing many of the civil liberties gains of the past. This is generally observed on several fronts, from violations of the First and Fourth Amendments contained in counterterrorism programs to the general erosion of privacy that has accompanied the electronic age. The American government, particularly the Executive branch, has significantly increased its mandate to monitor the activities and interactions of American citizens and foreign nationals alike through the US PATRIOT Act and subsequent enhancements to programs covered under the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA). In addition, the process of extraordinary rendition, which allows for the suspension of due process and habeas corpus for terror suspects has in the view of many democracy experts chipped away many protections, as have the policies pursued at the American prison in Guantanamo Bay.

Beyond worries about government officials, the influence of corporate interests in the US has come under considerable scrutiny in the 21st century. The corporate influence on the electoral and legislative system through finance and lobbying is substantial. American corporations have aided government surveillance and eavesdropping programs with immunity, as in the case of AT&T, Verizon, and other major phone companies, and have greatly increased the amount of personal information they collect from American citizens for their own benefit. Moreover, both government and corporations are increasingly seen as interfering with one of the most critical safeguards of democratic society: the press. The government is classifying more information, while at the same time government officials and private government contractors are becoming more sophisticated about inserting self-serving information into news broadcasts. Likewise, the consolidation of media outlets and their association with corporate interests is believed to be diminishing the quality, impartiality, and diversity of the press.

Finally, America is under fire from many democracy experts for the undemocratic outcomes the system produces for significant proportions of the population. Equality, at least of opportunity, is associated with healthy democracy. Many feel that the US is falling behind on these measures. Freedom House makes special mention of the fact that the average CEO makes up to 475 times more than the average worker in the same company (in Japan it is 22 times; in the UK, it is 11 times). Certain income and ethnic/racial groups do not receive equal access to quality public education and health care, while also suffering from disproportionate incarceration rates. This is despite official equality under the law, and among many other factors, is due to institutional racism. America is by no means alone in this distinction – all democracies struggle with this in one form or another. But the US is often held up as a model of how to practice democracy and as a beacon of its benefits, so many believe it should be held to a higher standard.

This ultimately means that American citizens themselves, as stewards of their democracy, should aspire to higher standards as well. Many believe the voting public must re-engage and work to "take back" their institutions from special interests. This means, at the very least, voting by the eligible electorate, and holding elected leaders accountable

at the ballot box. Fareed Zakaria has written that, in the United States today, "we expect very little of those in positions of power, and they rarely disappoint us." Although "authoritarian nostalgia" is more commonly associated with post-Soviet republics, many experts such as Zakaria have noted that Americans today act as if they have no choices when it comes to leadership, opting out of participation, and dismissively deriding the country's more democratic institutions while reserving their reverence for the country's less democratic institutions, such as the Supreme Court and the Federal Reserve. Most agree this is no way to practice democracy.

On the international front, many believe the US is over-extended and hypocritical in its efforts to promote democracy in select places around the globe. See earlier sections for a full discussion of the realism and idealism of American foreign policy in an era characterized by mounting security, commerce, and energy concerns. Most note that all democracies act out of self-interest internationally; generally, though, not under the banner of a self-proclaimed Freedom Agenda. This, many feel, mandates that a higher standard be applied to US actions abroad.

Many journalists and policy experts have observed that perhaps the greatest harm to the cause of democracy worldwide today lies in the increasingly flawed image of the United States in the eyes of the world. Nearly all experts cite rising Anti-Americanism as an enormous problem, because it exacerbates all the negative trends in play already. As the American economy stumbles, and the US commitment to democratic principles is tarnished by electoral hiccups, civil rights abuses, and torture allegations, the power of the US example has been compromised. More countries are suspect of it; fewer democratic reformers in those countries want to associate themselves with it; more economically-successful alternative models exist to compete with it.

Many experts actually believe that the US could have the most impact on democratization around the world, not by pursuing any interventions in other countries but rather by keeping its own house in order, and capitalizing on the potential indirect strength of its example as a democracy.

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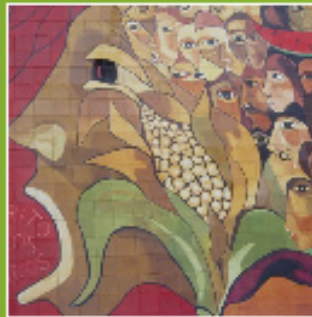
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WORLD SAVVY

MONITOR

Classroom Companion

Classroom Companion

This companion document to the Issue in Focus provides educators with guidance to incorporate the content into classroom teaching. This component is geared towards grade 6-12 teachers, with connections across subjects and disciplines.

Contents of this Classroom Companion include:

- Student Readings
- Discussion Questions
- Lesson Ideas/Curriculum
- Additional Resources
- National Standards

Student Readings:

Below are some links to articles and reports at various reading levels that would be appropriate to use with students to learn more about democracy and democracies around the world in 2008.

Advanced:

Freedom House, 2008 – "Freedom in Retreat: Is the Tide Turning?" http://www.freedomhouse.org/template. cfm?page=130&year=2008

The Decline of Democracy – Newsweek January 2007, Fareed Zakaria http://fareedzakaria.com/articles/ newsweek/012907.html

Intermediate:

The Economist, 2007 – Liberty and Justice for Some http://www.economist.com/markets/rankings/displaystory. cfm?story_id=8908438

Election Crisis Worsens in Zimbabwe – June 2008, Scholastic News http://news.scholastic.com/scholastic_ news_online/2008/06/election-crisis.html

Beginner:

As American as Apple Pie

(This article from PBS Online Newshour is from 2000, but has a good breakdown of aspects of democracy. It references global elections from 2000, but these can be easily supplemented with short articles about the US, Zimbabwe, Russia, Kenya, or other nations holding elections in 2008.)

http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/features/jan-june00/ overseaselections.html

Possible Discussion Questions:

1. What does democracy mean? What are some of the components of democracy?

2. How many democratic countries are there in the world today? Is there anydisagreement or controversy about these numbers? Why?

3. One of the most common aspects of the definition of democracy is "free and fair elections." What does this mean? Can you list an example of a country that has recently held free and fair elections? One that has not?

4. What general trend are experts seeing in countries around the world – a strengthening of democracy or a weakening of democracy? Why? Predict what you think will happen in the future – will current trends continue, or will there be a shift? Explain the rationale for your prediction.

5. One of the stated goals of the Bush administration in Iraq is to promote democracy. Do you think that the United States or other democratic countries should encourage democracy around the world? Do the U.S. and other countries have the right to forcefully remove authoritarian leaders they believe are harming their citizens, or should countries have the right to rule their people as they see fit?

Lesson Ideas/Curriculum

In this portion of the guide are selected suggestions for engaging activities and curriculum to teach students about this issue - across the disciplines. In addition, there are links to recommended curriculum units that are available to download or purchase from the web.

Social Studies/History:

- While there is some consensus by experts in the field about the basic characteristics of a democracy, there are many debates about some of the finer points of what makes a country truly democratic. Have students create a checklist of all the aspects they believe should be part of a democratic government - use the info from the "What is Democracy?" section of this issue if you need some background information for students. Then have them choose and research a country and use their checklist to decide whether the country is democratic or not. They could then compare their results with the results from the Freedom House or *The Economist* surveys. Or students could compare other countries with the United States, and discuss the differences among the democracies of each country.

- In a US government class, where the focus is obviously on the United States, use an adaptation of the above lesson, but instead have the students create their checklists and then evaluate how the US measures up against the students' own checklists. What democratic characteristics does the U.S. uphold, and in what characteristics does the US falter? Do

they agree or disagree with the evaluation of US democracy from Freedom House and *The Economist*?

- Read through the "Regional Highlights of the State of Democracy in the World" from this month's edition. Over the course of a month or semester, have students select a region of the world and track current events regarding politics and governments of that region. What democratic developments are occurring in that region: do these developments illustrate a backsliding of democracy, or are they moving toward strengthening democracy?

- Discuss with students the differences between liberal and electoral democracies, thin and thick democracies (see "What is Democracy?"). Which type of democracy do students believe is better for countries? With this in mind, what should be the foreign policy stance of the US in terms of promoting democracy? Should the US promote democracy in other countries? Have previous attempts been successful? If not, what can or should the US do (if anything) to improve democracy promotion?

- Geography and Democracy - - split students into groups and assign each group a different region to research. Have them research the countries in that region, and what kind of government each has. Have students create a large poster that includes a map of their region, and labels the types of governments, along with anything else you want them to include – perhaps the level of freedom in each country, economic statistics, etc. What do these regional maps show about democratization? Does geography

influence democracy? Do regional and cultural influences affect the type of government a country might have? Why or why not?

- Discuss the role of civil society in the democratic process, and examples of civil society around the world. Then have the students look at their own community – what civil society organizations exist in their own community? What do they do, and how do they contribute to the democratic process? Have each student choose one organization and profile it for the class.

English/Language Arts:

- Evaluate the role of the media in the democratic process. Many experts believe any successful democracy must have a functioning free press. Do students agree? Why or why not? How is the internet changing the role of the media in the democratic process? What happens when the government controls most of the media in a country, or when a few, large corporations own most of the media in a country?

- As an extension of the activity above, evaluate the role of the media in the 2008 presidential election. Is the media biased toward one candidate or another? Does the media provide enough, or the right kind of, information to help citizens make informed decisions about whom to vote for?

- Conduct a mock debate in the classroom for the 2008 presidential campaign. Have all students research the candidates and prepare a list of questions about important issues in America and the world today, to ask the candidates. Select one to serve as the moderator and others to take on the roles of McCain and Obama and research their positions on the issues.

- Have students create a blog about the 2008 presidential election to discuss their reactions to the campaign, their thoughts about the important issues in this campaign, and important global issues on which our next president should focus.

- Creative writing – either in conjunction with the literature being read in class or in connection to reading non-fiction texts about democracy in the world today, students can step into someone else's shoes through a creative writing project. Such projects could include writing diary or journal entries

from a character's or historical figure's point of view, a letter to a noted figure or character or world leader, or writing a mock interview with a historical or modern figure.

Science:

- While on the surface there seem to be few links between democratic ideals and science, the advance of science typically requires innovation and freedom to experiment and try new ideas, and democratic countries are often, but not always, more supportive of these conditions than autocratic regimes. Discuss some examples of each of these scenarios or have students read about science in the news today - - from the stories they read, can they see ways that governments have interfered with science or ways that governments have helped science expand?

- Have students research the life of Albert Einstein. Einstein was born into a Jewish family in Germany and, anticipating the rise of Nazism in Germany and ouster of Jews and academics and scientists after Hitler took power, moved to the United States in the early '30s. He worked to bring many other academics facing persecution to the US as well, and later became an outspoken advocate for peace (and against atomic weapons though he once endorsed them). Students can also research other scientists who have faced persecution at the hand of autocratic regimes.

- Look at a pressing issue such as the environment, and think about the ways that political processes affect the steps scientists and citizens can take to solve the problem. What approaches does an authoritarian country such as China take to reduce environmental destruction? What approaches does a democratic country such as the US take to reduce environmental destruction? Which works better?

Mathematics:

- Use information from the readings to review mathematical concepts. Go back to the "Did You Know?" page, and look up the statistics for the number of democratic countries over the years. Have students calculate the percentage of countries in those years that were democratic, as well as graphing the data.

- Students could also use the data from the Freedom

House surveys to create graphs. Have them choose five countries from the website, and create a bar graph indicating the level of freedoms in those countries.

· In conjunction with the US presidential elections in 2008, have students conduct polls among their classmates, and record and analyze the data. Students can create their own polling questions about issues important to them, such as the issues they feel are most important in this election, which candidate they would vote for, how a new US president should handle the ongoing war in Iraq, what educational policies they feel candidates should endorse to improve schools, and more.

Recommended Curriculum Units

The Democratic Process: Promises and Challenges
These essays and lessons are intended to provide teachers and advanced students with background information about the ongoing democratization process in Russia, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. This curriculum discusses the challenge of the transition from an autocratic Soviet-dominated society to a more open and democratic one. Includes maps plus essays on democracy, authoritarian politics, post-communism, corruption, independence, ethnic identity, and citizenship.

Available at http://www.globaled.org/DemProcess.pdf

Democracy and the "New" Democracies: Fragile, Difficult, and Subject to Change
This resource focuses on countries transitioning to democracy. It includes readings, definitions of democracy, and classroom activities to teach about emerging democracies around the world.

http://www.globaled.org/issues/177.pdf

Vote Democracy
This series of lesson plans is distributed by Independent Lens and PBS to accompany two of their recent documentaries, Please Vote for Me and Iron Ladies of Liberia. The first film follows the campaign of elementary school students in China running for class president, and the second film profiles Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the first female president of Liberia, and other women working to change Liberia today. The curriculum includes video clips from the two films, along with lessons that cover what democracy is, participating in a campaign, democracy around the world, and women and democracy.

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/classroom/votedemocracy.html

The World in Transition Series
This curriculum series, created and distributed by the Southern Center for International Studies, provides great resources for teaching about the political, economic, and cultural changes, among others, occurring around the world today. Each curriculum unit is broken up into regions, covering Latin America, Africa, Europe, Russia and the Other Former Soviet Republics, the Middle East, South Asia, and East Asia. Each curriculum unit includes background essays and maps, a DVD, and lesson plans.

http://www.southerncenter.org/transition_europe.html

The Choices Program
The Choices Program has several good curriculum units that cover various facets of democracy, generally and in specific regions and countries. Examples include: Responding to Terrorism: Challenges to Democracy, Charting Russia's Future; Conflict in Iraq: Searching for Solutions; and Contesting Cuba's Past and Future. In addition, in preparation for the 2008 presidential election in the United States, Choices is offering an Election 2008 bundle of 6 curriculum units that look at the US economy and government, as well as its role in the world today.

http://www.choices.edu/

Center for Civic Education

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational corporation dedicated to promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries. Lesson plans related to civic education for elementary, middle and high school students are provided on the website.

http://www.civiced.org/

Constitutional Rights Foundation

The Constitutional Rights Foundation provides technical assistance and training to teachers, coordinates civic participation projects in schools and communities, organizes student conferences and competitions and develops publications related to law and government and civic participation. The website also provides access to an extensive list of free online lesson plans, and a great quarterly newsletter called "The Bill of Rights in Action".

http://www.crf-usa.org/

Additional Resources

This list of resources is provided if you want to find some more specific and nuanced information about the themes presented in this issue of the World Savvy Monitor. These resources comprise additional books, films, web sites, and multimedia resources that can be used in the classroom. All resources are available from Amazon, unless other sources are noted.

BOOKS

The first few books are adult non-fiction but also appropriate for high school students.

Democracy's Good Name: The Rise and Risks of the World's Most Popular Forms of Government by Michael Mandelbaum
This book explores the rise of democracy, in the process, answering questions such as: How did democracy acquire its good name? Why did it spread so far so fast? Why do important countries remain undemocratic? What accounts for the fact that the introduction of one of democracy's defining features – free elections – has sometimes led to political repression and large-scale bloodshed? And why do efforts to export democracy so often fail and even make conditions worse?

Democracy: The God that Failed by Hans-Hermann Hoppe
For a perspective of democracy that offers a stark contrast to the largely held contemporary Western belief that democracy is an unassailable value, read this book. In a series of 13 essays, Hoppe argues that democracy is the primary cause of the decivilization sweeping the world since WWI, and that it must be delegitimized.

Islam and Democracy in the Middle East ed. Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, & Daniel Brumberg
This 2003 book draws on the expertise of twenty-five leading Western and Middle Eastern scholars to provide a comprehensive assessment of the origins and staying power of Middle East autocracies, as well as a sober account of the struggles of state reformers and opposition forces to promote civil liberties, competitive elections, and a pluralistic vision of Islam. Includes several case studies.

Changing Venezuela: The History and Policies of the Chavez Government by Gregory Wilpert
Since coming to power in 1998, the Chavez government has inspired fierce debate. Wilpert explores this debate, arguing that while the country has yet to overcome many of its historical pitfalls (such as its culture of patronage and clientelism, its corruption, and its support for personality cults), it has instituted one of the world's most progressive constitutions.

Dinner with Mugabe: The Untold Story of a Freedom Fighter Who Became a Tyrant by Heidi Holland
This in-depth portrait of Robert Mugabe charts Mugabe's gradual self-destruction and uncovers the complicity of some of the most respectable international players in the Zimbabwe tragedy. Holland's investigation begins as she dines with Mugabe the freedom fighter and ends in a

searching interview with Zimbabwe's president in December 2007, more than 30 years later.

Moyers on Democracy by Bill Moyers
This book is a collection of some of Moyers' most moving statements and speeches. The focus is the state of America, including the place religion in public life, the environment, media control, corruption in Washington, and the policies of the Bush administration.

The Dirty War by Charles H. Slaughter
This historical novel for young adults shows a government on the negative end of the democracy spectrum. Atre, 14, and his friend Chino are caught up in the rapidly changing political climate in Buenos Aires. It is 1976, and the generals have just taken over the Argentine government. The story charts Atre's increasing awareness and involvement in the political upheaval, his father's 'disappearance,' and his grandmother's joining with the 'Mothers of the Plaza' (Madres de Plaza'). Grades 8 and higher.

The Giver by Lois Lowry
This novel, for ages 10 and up, focuses on a utopian society where everyone is assigned very specific roles. The protagonist is being groomed to take over his new role in society, and through his struggles the author examines the idea that people might freely choose to give up their humanity in order to create a more stable society. While not directly about democracy per se, there are correlations to the role of civil society and personal freedoms in a country.

Vote! By Eileen Christelow
Using a campaign for mayor as an example, Christelow offers some background history on voting rights, explains the voting process, and answers questions about registration, volunteering, fund-raising, and recounting ballots. Appendixes include a timeline, a discussion of political parties, and Internet resources. Grades 2-5.

FILMS

Please Vote for Me
Eight-year-old children compete for the position of class monitor in the first school election of its kind held in China. Aided and abetted by parents and teachers, the young candidates reveal the nature of democracy in a rapidly changing country. To prove their worthiness, the candidates must perform in events like a debate, in which the candidates bring up the shortcomings of their opponents as well as their own personal qualifications and each candidate must deliver a speech, an opportunity to appeal directly to classmates and ask for their votes.

Available through Netflix and Amazon.com

Democracy in the Rough
This 2006 episode of the PBS Wide Angle series covers the Democratic Republic of Congo's first election in 45 years. In a country that has suffered one of the most brutal colonial histories, and has experienced decades of dictatorship and a civil war that has left more than four million dead, Wide Angle explores how this election is viewed by those running for office and by ordinary Congolese who will be voting.

Available for viewing at http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/democracy-in-the-rough/introduction/956/

Future for Lebanon
In this episode of the PBS Wide Angle series, viewers are introduced to the oldest democracy in the Middle East as voters go to the polls in a new era. From the beaches of Beirut to the radical rallies of Hezbollah, Wide Angle explores political change in one of the pivotal nations of the Arab region -- change from within, not imposed from the outside. Available for viewing at http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/future-for-lebanon/introduction/950/

Can Mr. Smith Get to Washington Anymore
This movie follows one 2004's most surprising races as a grassroots campaign threatens to shake up the political establishment. Jeff Smith was a 29 year old part-time political science teacher with no prior public office experience when he decided to run for former House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt's seat.

Available through Netflix, Amazon.com and http://www.mrsmithmovie.com

Iron Ladies of Liberia
This intimate documentary goes behind the scenes with Africa's first freely elected female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, president of Liberia. The film explores the challenges facing the new president and the extraordinary women surrounding her as they develop and implement

policy to rebuild their ravaged country and prevent a descent back into civil war. Available through http://www.ironladiesofliberia.org

My Country, My Country

Working alone in Iraq over eight months, American filmmaker Laura Poitras follows Iraqi physician Dr. Riyadh – father of six and Sunni political candidate – for an unforgettable journey into the heart of war-ravaged Iraq in the months leading up to the January 200 elections. Dr. Riyadh is both an outspoken critic of the United States occupation and a passionate advocate for democracy in Iraq. Academy Award Nominee-Best Documentary Feature.

Available through Netflix, Amazon.com, and http://www.mycountrymycountry.com

MULTIMEDIA AND WEB RESOURCES

The Vote Democracy Campaign

This companion website to the PBS Independent Lens films 'Please Vote for Me' and 'Iron Ladies of Liberia' is dedicated to encouraging everyone – particularly young Americans and new voters – to get involved in the democratic process. The site includes multiple avenues for increasing political involvement through voting, volunteering and leading. Related up-to-date news and campaign overviews are also provided.

http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/getinvolved/democracy/index.html

The Economist's 'Democracy Index'

This 2007 study from The Economist examines the state of democracy in 167 countries and attempts to quantify this with an 'Economist Intelligence Unit Index of Democracy' based on five general categories: free and fair election process; civil liberties; functioning of government; political participation; and political culture.

http://www.economist.com/markets/rankings/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8908438

The Democracy Project

This website from PBS Kids provides an interactive tour of the various facets of American democracy, including information on the history of voting rights in America.

http://pbskids.org/democracy/

Freedom House

Freedom House contains up-to-date news and analysis from around the world, with a focus on transparency in democracy. The website also includes an interactive map that illustrates relative freedom and freedom of the press around the world, with in depth country analyses.

http://www.freedomhouse.org/

United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF)

The primary purpose of the United Nations Democracy Fund is to support democratization throughout the world. The site includes news on the state of democracy from around the world.

http://www.un.org/democracyfund/index.htm

Center for Civic Education

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational corporation dedicated to promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries. The organization offers extensive professional development opportunities as well as online access to many publications, videos and podcasts.

http://www.civiced.org/

Democracy Now!

Democracy Now! is a national, daily, independent, award-winning news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez. The show covers perspectives rarely heard in the US corporate-sponsored media. By providing people with access to independent and diverse sources of news and information, Democracy Now! works to ensure that the public has the resources available to meaningfully participate in the democratic process. The website includes access, in English and in Spanish, to articles, as well as audio and video reports.

http://www.democracynow.org/

Standards

Activities described in this Classroom Companion correspond to the following national standards from McREL (Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning).

Social Studies

World History Standards:

Era 9: The 20th Century Since 1945: Promises and Paradoxes

- Understands major global trends since World War II

World History Topics:

Comparative analysis of culture and societies

Demographic, economic, and social trends in Europe

International diplomacy and relations

US History Standards:

Era 3: Revolution and the New Nation

- 8. Understands the institutions and practices of government created during the Revolution and how these elements were revised between 1787 and 1815 to create the foundation of the American political system based on the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Era 4: Expansion and Reform

- 11. Understands the extension, restriction, and reorganization of political democracy after 1800

US History Topics:

Development of state and national government post-American Revolution

Development, ideology, and structure of political systems

Comparative analysis of culture and societies

Political parties, campaigns, and elections

Roles of ordinary people in American democracy

Historical Understanding:

1. Understand and know how to analyze chronological relationships and patterns

2. Understands the historical perspective

Civics Standards:

What is Government and What Should it Do?

- Understands ideas about civic life, politics, and government

- Understands the essential characteristics of limited and unlimited governments

- Understands the sources, purposes, and functions of law, and the importance of the rule of law for the protection of individual rights and the common good

- Understands the concept of a constitution, the various purposes that constitutions serve, and the conditions that contribute to the establishment and maintenance of constitutional government

Civics Topics:

Distinguishing characteristics of social and political participation

Civil society and government

Civic life, politics, and government

Influence of American political ideas on other nations

International diplomacy and relations

International political developments in the United States and in other nations

Limited and unlimited government

Political and economic freedoms

Political organizations and groups

Political parties, campaigns, and elections

Purpose and function of rules and laws

Geography

14. Understands how human actions modify the physical environment

15. Understands how physical systems affect human systems

English/Language Arts

Writing:
1. Gathers and uses information for research purposes

Reading:
6. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of literary texts

7. Uses reading skills and strategies to understand and interpret a variety of informational texts

Media:
10. Understands the characteristics and components of the media

Science

Topics:
People in Science

Science, Technology, and Society

Mathematics

1. Uses a variety of strategies in the problem-solving process

3. Uses basic and advanced procedures while performing the processes of computation

6. Understands and applies basic and advanced concepts of statistics and data analysis

9. Understands the general nature and uses of mathematics

WORLD SAVVY

MONITOR

World Savvy Salon Guide

World Savvy Salon Guide

Why Host a World Savvy Salon?

In a world where media tends to focus more on celebrities than on pressing global issues, it is challenging to find reliable sources of quality international news coverage and opportunities to discuss the meaning and impact of global events and trends.

This is ironic, given that we are at a time in which our lives are inexorably connected to the lives of people around the world in ways previously unimaginable. Even so, American mainstream media coverage of international affairs has declined. The result is a public which lacks the capacity to meaningfully discuss world affairs around the dinner table and, by extension, around the negotiating table in halls of power as global problem solvers.

The World Savvy Salon is a forum for individuals to convene and discuss these pressing issues. Salons are Book Clubs for the 21st Century. World Savvy's Monitor provides you with the content, context and tools to organize a Salon in your school or community. By focusing on one global issue or region each month, the Monitor and Salons are designed for participants to:

- Inform themselves about critical world affairs

- Gather with a group of curious global citizens to discuss the issues, challenges and solutions on the world stage and in your own backyard.

- Host a dinner party with a purpose: to educate, to inspire, to promote global citizenship.

Salon participants bring diverse perspectives and backgrounds– from history, science, technology, psychology, law, finance, art, education, politics, community action, and parenting – to bear on each conversation. All sides of important global issues can be dissected; films and books are recommended; and future collaborations devised, from work and travel to philanthropy and activism. Salons can spark brainstorming and debate over how to talk to others and our children about the world.

Getting Started

Be part of a new movement: the book club, reinvented. Start a World Savvy Salon today using the World Savvy Monitor:

- Each member of your Salon subscribes online to the World Savvy Monitor. Individual subscriptions are $75/year. We encourage you to register your Salon with World Savvy so we can provide support and follow progress this year.

- Members receive and read the monthly edition (available monthly from August-November and January-May) and convene for a World Savvy Salon to discuss the latest Monitor issue.

- Use the World Savvy Monitor website for Salon Guides with discussion questions to spark conversation.

- Invite speakers with expertise in various areas relevant to Monitor topics to present to the group – these could be experts, photographers, activists, or just people who have traveled worldwide or are

particularly passionate or well-informed about world affairs.

- Engage in community education, advocacy, volunteerism, activism, and/or philanthropy around the issues raised.

- Find ways to bring your children into the discussion and engage their peers.

- Communicate with your schools and workplaces about how global citizenship can be nurtured and expressed in these settings.

Why the World Savvy Monitor and Salons?

Consider The Following Statistics:
From the 2006 National Geographic Society Geographic Literacy Study Among Americans, Age 18-24

- 6 in 10 could not find Iraq or Saudi Arabia on a map of the Middle East. 9 in 10 could not find Afghanistan. 75% could not find Iran or Israel.

- 75% did not know that Indonesia is a predominantly Muslim country; and half thought India is predominantly Muslim (suggesting maybe they are mixing up the two?)

- Over half could not put Sudan or Rwanda in Africa.

- Only half knew the Alps are in Europe; just over half knew the Amazon Rain Forest is in South America. 20% could not find the Pacific Ocean and 65% could not find Great Britain.

- They generally had no idea of how the US and China compare: 75% thought English is the most spoken native language in the world (when it is Mandarin); 71% named China, not the US, as the largest exporter of goods and services; and most thought China's population is only double that of the US (when it is actually quadruple).

- Only 25% thought it was important to know where countries in the news are located; only 60% thought knowledge of a foreign language was important.

http://www.nationalgeographic.com/roper2006/findings.html

From 2007, 2008 Pew Research People and the Press Among Americans, Age 18-65 (Note: these were multiple choice questions!)

- Only 69% could name the Vice President of the US (down from 74% in 1989).

- Only 36% could name the President of Russia.

- Only 32% could come up with Sunni as the rival Muslim sect of Shia.

- Only 50% could match Hugo Chavez with Venezuela.

- Only 46% knew it was Kosovo that recently declared independence from Serbia.

- Only 28% could estimate the number of US troops killed in Iraq by the fifth anniversary of the invasion in March 2008 when given the choices 2000, 3000, 4000, and 5000 (it is 4000).

http://people-press.org/reports/display.php3?ReportID=319

Democracy in the World Guide

1. Before reading this edition of the World Savvy Monitor, what was your definition of democracy? Has this definition changed? Why or why not? If it did change, what aspects were altered?

2. Do you believe that there is one ideal form of democracy? Why or why not?

3. Do you think that certain nations are best-suited to certain types of governance? Why or why not? In your opinion, are there instances in which democracy might not be the best form of government for a nation? If so, in what circumstances would a more authoritarian government be appropriate?

4. How should the international community respond to instances of non-democratic activity? For example, what action, if any, should be taken in cases of clear election fraud (as in Zimbabwe)? What factors should inform such a decision? What factors do you believe governments actually do take into account when making such decisions?

5. Review the Internal and External Players sections of this issue. Choose one internal and one external factor that you believe has the greatest impact on democracy outcomes. Explain why you believe these factors are so important and discuss any differences in opinion.

6. Refer to the 'Sequencing Debate' section of this issue. In your opinion, does the order in which electoral and liberal democracy develop affect democratic outcomes? Why or why not?

7. Do you agree with the idea that the world is currently experiencing a 'democratic recession?' Why or why not? What trends do you believe will develop in the future?

8. Do you believe that a capitalist market system naturally results in greater democracy? Why or why not?

9. As the host of the 2008 Summer Olympics, China is currently in the worldwide spotlight. What effect, if any, do you believe this increased attention will have on democracy in China? Why?

10. How 'free' do you believe your home country is? What do you believe should be changed (if anything) to strengthen democracy in your country?

11. Imagine that you are advising the leadership of a developing country with a low GDP per capita, low literacy rates, and largely rural populace. The country began integrating its economy into world markets in the early 1990s and for the past 15 years has been under the control of a military dictator. This dictator would now like to transition to a democratic government. Outline a plan that you would advice him/her to follow to achieve a successful transition.

12. Things to watch for in the coming year:

- The coup in Mauritania. Are the events still being covered in the Western media? What response are other nations taking? Especially in the case of the US, China and Russia, can you see evidence of democracy promotion or hindering?

- The conflict in Georgia. How are these events being portrayed by Western media and Russian media? Has the conflict created any changes in Georgia's political structure?

- Developments in Iraq. Follow the events in Iraq, paying particular attention to the development of democratic governance there. How do various events affect the stability of Iraq's democracy? For instance, review the effects of military setbacks and gains, changes in other nations' perception of the United States, and the activities of non-Democratic regimes such as China and Iran.

- The economic recession. Examine what effects, if any, trends in the worldwide economy have on the relative freedom of various countries. Do some nations' governments seem to be more vulnerable to economic downturns?

Additional Resources

Books

Democracy's Good Name: The Rise and Risks of the World's Most Popular Forms of Government by Michael Mandelbaum
This book explores the rise of democracy, in the process, answering questions such as: How did democracy acquire its good name? Why did it spread so far so fast? Why do important countries remain undemocratic? What accounts for the fact that the introduction of one of democracy's defining features – free elections – has sometimes led to political repression and large-scale bloodshed? And why do efforts to export democracy so often fail and even make conditions worse?

Democracy: The God that Failed by Hans-Hermann Hoppe
For a perspective of democracy that offers a stark contrast to the largely held contemporary Western belief that democracy is an unassailable value, read this book. In a series of 13 essays, Hoppe argues that democracy is the primary cause of the decivilization sweeping the world since WWI, and that it must be delegitimized.

Islam and Democracy in the Middle East ed. Larry Diamond, Marc F. Plattner, & Daniel Brumberg
This 2003 book draws on the expertise of twenty-five leading Western and Middle Eastern scholars to provide a comprehensive assessment of the origins and staying power of Middle East autocracies, as well as a sober account of the struggles of state reformers and opposition forces to promote civil liberties, competitive elections, and a pluralistic vision of Islam. Includes several case studies.

Changing Venezuela: The History and Policies of the Chavez Government by Gregory Wilpert
Since coming to power in 1998, the Chavez government has inspired fierce debate. Wilpert explores this debate, arguing that while the country has yet to overcome many of its historical pitfalls (such as its culture of patronage and clientelism, its corruption, and its support for personality cults), it has instituted one of the world's most progressive constitutions.

Dinner with Mugabe: The Untold Story of a Freedom Fighter Who Became a Tyrant by Heidi Holland
This in-depth portrait of Robert Mugabe charts Mugabe's gradual self-destruction and uncovers the complicity of some of the most respectable international players in the Zimbabwe tragedy. Holland's investigation begins as she dines with Mugabe the freedom fighter and ends in a searching interview with Zimbabwe's president in December 2007, more than 30 years later.

Moyers on Democracy by Bill Moyers
This book is a collection of some of Moyers' most moving statements and speeches. The focus is the state of America, including the place religion in public life, the environment, media control, corruption in Washington, and the policies of the Bush administration.

Films

Please Vote for Me

Eight-year-old children compete for the position of class monitor in the first school election of its kind held in China. Aided and abetted by parents and teachers, the young candidates reveal the nature of democracy in a rapidly changing country. To prove their worthiness, the candidates must perform in events like a debate, in which the candidates, bring up the shortcomings of their opponents as well as their own personal qualifications and each candidate must deliver a speech, an opportunity to appeal directly to classmates and ask for their votes. Available through Netflix and Amazon.com

Democracy in the Rough

This 2006 episode of the PBS Wide Angle series covers the Democratic Republic of Congo's first election in 45 years. In a country that has suffered one of the most brutal colonial histories, and has experienced decades of dictatorship and a civil war that has left more than four million dead, Wide Angle explores how this election is viewed by those running for office and by ordinary Congolese who will be voting. Available for viewing at http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/democracy-in-the-rough/introduction/956/

Future for Lebanon

In this episode of the PBS Wide Angle series, viewers are introduced to the oldest democracy in the Middle East as voters go to the polls in a new era. From the beaches of Beirut to the radical rallies of Hezbollah, Wide Angle explores political change in one of the pivotal nations of the Arab region -- change from within, not imposed from the outside. Available for viewing at http://www.pbs.org/wnet/wideangle/episodes/future-for-lebanon/introduction/950/

Can Mr. Smith Get to Washington Anymore

This movie follows one 2004's most surprising races as a grassroots campaign threatens to shake up the political establishment. Jeff Smith was a 29 year old part-time political science teacher with no prior public office experience when he decided to run for former House Majority Leader Dick Gephardt's seat. Available through Netflix, Amazon.com and http://www.mrsmithmovie.com

Iron Ladies of Liberia

This intimate documentary goes behind the scenes with Africa's first freely elected female head of state, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, president of Liberia. The film explores the challenges facing the new president and the extraordinary women surrounding her as they develop and implement policy to rebuild their ravaged country and prevent a descent back into civil war. Available through http://www.ironladiesofliberia.org

My Country, My Country

Working alone in Iraq over eight months, American filmmaker Laura Poitras follows Iraqi physician Dr. Riyadh – father of six and Sunni political candidate – for an unforgettable journey into the heart of war-ravaged Iraq in the months leading up to the January 200 elections. Dr. Riyadh is both an outspoken critic of the United States occupation and a passionate advocate for democracy in Iraq. Academy Award Nominee-Best Documentary Feature. Available through Netflix, Amazon.com, and http://www.mycountrymycountry.com

Multimedia and Web Resources

The Vote Democracy Campaign:

This companion website to the PBS Independent Lens films 'Please Vote for Me' and 'Iron Ladies of Liberia' is dedicated to encouraging everyone – particularly young Americans and new voters – to get involved in the democratic process. The site includes multiple avenues for increasing political involvement through voting, volunteering and leading. Related up-to-date news and campaign overviews are also provided. http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/getinvolved/democracy/index.html

Center for Civic Education

The Center for Civic Education is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational corporation dedicated to promoting an enlightened and responsible citizenry committed to democratic principles and actively engaged in the practice of democracy in the United States and other countries. The organization offers extensive professional development opportunities as well as online access to many publications, videos and podcasts. http://www.civiced.org/

The Economist's 'Democracy Index'

This 2007 study from The Economist examines the state of

democracy in 167 countries and attempts to quantify this with an 'Economist Intelligence Unit Index of Democracy' based on five general categories: free and fair election process; civil liberties; functioning of government; political participation; and political culture. http://www.economist.com/markets/rankings/displaystory.cfm?story_id=8908438

United Nations Democracy Fund (UNDEF)
The primary purpose of the United Nations Democracy Fund is to support democratization throughout the world. The site includes news on the state of democracy from around the world. http://www.un.org/democracyfund/index.htm

Freedom House
Freedom House contains up-to-date news and analysis from around the world, with a focus on transparency in democracy. The website also includes an interactive map that illustrates relative freedom and freedom of the press around the world, with in depth country analyses. http://www.freedomhouse.org/

Democracy Now!
Democracy Now! is a national, daily, independent, award-winning news program hosted by journalists Amy Goodman and Juan Gonzalez. The show covers perspectives rarely heard in the US corporate-sponsored media. By providing people with access to independent and diverse sources of news and information, Democracy Now! works to ensure that the public has the resources available to meaningfully participate in the democratic process. The website includes access, in English and in Spanish, to articles, as well as audio and video reports. http://www.democracynow.org/