

Reading Questions for Chapter Five

1. What was the Founders' attitude towards public opinion? Give examples of how we see that attitude reflected in how they wrote the Constitution.
2. Identify three problems in assessing public opinion.
3. The book gives four factors that affect political attitudes. Identify those four factors and summarize the conclusions about how those factors affect people's political attitudes. Memorize this list.
4. The book gives three factors that divide people's political beliefs. Identify those three factors and summarize the conclusions about the correlation between these factors and people's political opinions. Memorize this.
5. What were the meanings of the words "liberal" and "conservative" in the 19th century and how did these meanings change in the 20th century?
6. Summarize the four ideological labels the authors describe on pp. 116-22. Feel free to use a chart or bullet points for your summary.
7. What are the two reasons the book gives why activists or the political elite tend to have more ideological consistency than those who aren't active? What effect does this ideological consistency have on the difference ideologically between politicians and voters?
8. What does the term "new class" mean? What political ideology do those in the "new class" ascribe to? Why?
9. How do elites influence public opinion? What are the limits to their ability to shape public opinion?