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Subject: Followup: What Is a Republic?

Posted by [elektratic](#) on Thu, 15 Jun 2006 20:10:30 GMT

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"The very word [republic] inspired confusion, such that John Adams, perhaps the country's most learned student of politics, complained that he 'never understood' what a republican government was and believed 'no man ever did or ever will.' Compounded from the latin res publica, 'republic' meant 'the public good, or the good of the whole,' as Thomas Paine explained, 'in contradistinction to the despotic form, which makes the good of the sovereign, or of one man, the only object of government.' Technically, then, even England's eighteenth-century constitution could have qualified as 'republican' -- had it worked in fact as it did in theory, restraining the power of King, nobles, and people, so that the public welfare triumphed over particular interests."But for Americans and Englishmen of the eighteenth century republicanism was also associated with the Commonwealth period of British history, when for a brief time England was ruled without King or lords; and indeed 'commonwealth' is the closest English equivalent to 'republic.' 'Republic,' then, had concrete institutional implications: it suggested a state in which all power flowed from the people, none from inherited title . . . The Americans' later conversion to republicanism represented, then, more than a reaffirmation of traditional conceptions of the corporate free state, in which all private interests must be sacrificed for the common good. It meant that the people alone would allocate power. It meant that the United States would have neither legally established nobility nor King."Pauline Maier, *From Resistance to Revolution: Colonial Radicals and the Development of American Opposition to Britain, 1765-1776*, pp. 287-288.

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Subject: Re: Followup: What Is a Republic?

Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 15 Jun 2006 20:52:51 GMT

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Nice work E. A Constitutional Republic I believe some call it. Instead of a single governing entity; we have in it's place the Constitution, which allocates power and responsibility according to the will of the people within the boundaries set in the document.

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Subject: Re: Followup: What Is a Republic?

Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Thu, 15 Jun 2006 21:37:59 GMT

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America is a federal republic and has a representative government. It's set apart from a monarchy where a single person dictates the law of the land but it is also set apart from a direct democracy where individuals are an active part of the governing process. We can feel a part of the process by voting, we can take a part in local and state affairs. But an individual's only real input in the federal government is made through representatives. That's the way it is structured.

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Subject: Re: Followup: What Is a Republic?  
Posted by [Manualblock](#) on Thu, 15 Jun 2006 23:06:44 GMT  
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True it is not a monarchy; it is also not a Oligarchy; a meritocracy; an Autochcracy; a dictatorship; a plutocracy or any other form of government imaginable. In America the citizens run their government by personal participation and electing their representatives. Thats why the Constitutional Republic exists. As E says and all Poltical Science classes say and everyone else who thinks clearly says. The people hold the power of the government.Our Government is made up of local/state and federal bodies. The people participate directly in the local body; directly in the state body through referendum and directly in the Federal body through election.In America our government does not act independantly of the people. I don't know what they do in Odessa.

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Subject: Our Federalist Republic  
Posted by [elektraticg](#) on Fri, 16 Jun 2006 01:44:18 GMT  
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In the ratification debates, the proponents of the Constitution enunciated a new vision. The key lay in transferring sovereignty to "the People": "Instead of locating sovereignty in either the national government or the state governments, the Federalists had located it in the people at large. By asserting that all sovereignty rested with the people, the Federalists were not simply saying, as theorists had for ages, that all governmental power was derived from the people. Instead they were saying that sovereignty, the final supreme indivisible lawmaking authority, remained always with the people and that government was only a temporary and limited agency of the people -- lent out to the various governmental officials, so to speak, on a short-term, always recallable loan. No longer could any parts of the state and federal governments, event the so-called popular houses of representatives, ever fully represent the people; instead all elected parts of the governments -- senators and governors and presidents -- were now regarded in one way or another as simply partial agents of the people."From the essay "The Relevance and Irrelevance of John Adams" in Gordon S. Wood, Revolutionary Characters: What Made the Founders Different (Penguin Press 2006) at pp. 191-92.

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Subject: Re: Our Federalist Republic  
Posted by [Wayne Parham](#) on Fri, 16 Jun 2006 13:47:33 GMT  
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The fact remains that individuals do not have direct influence. That was the point. I'm not sure why you and John are pushing back on this - It is just a statement of fact. Sure, we all want a say in how things are run. But the fact is, we don't. And in fact, several are actually excluded based on age or criminal record. Those that are allowed to participate can really only voice their opinions by vote or by lobbying. We have to convince our representatives to vote the way we

want them to, and there is no guarantee they will listen to their constituents. An individual's influence is limited, it is only a communication, it is not a direct vote.

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