

The Politics of Trees

2011 Kentucky Tree Board Seminar

John Giedraitis
State Urban Forestry Coordinator
Texas Forest Service

TEXAS
FOREST SERVICE
The Texas A&M University System



Today's Talk

- What is politics?
- Why do politics matter?
- Where is national politics headed?
- How can I be politically effective locally?

What is Politics?

Politics is the process by which groups of people make decisions.



Or Don't...

Left and Right

- Most political analysts and politicians divide politics into **left wing** and **right wing** politics, often also using the idea of **center** politics as a middle path of policy between the right and left.

Left/Right

The left wing is often linked with redistribution of wealth and resources towards the poorer or less successful sections of society and with secularism.

The right wing is often linked to moral and social conservatism, law and order, and religion.

The left wing is linked to the idea of social *equality*.

The right wing is more often linked to the idea of social *equity*.

The Left believes in attempting to eradicate social inequality.

The Right regards most social inequality as the result of natural differences that cannot be changed, and sees attempts to enforce social equality as utopian or authoritarian.

Authoritarian-Libertarian

Authoritarianism

Authoritarian political systems are those where individual rights and goals are subjugated to group goals, expectations and conformities.

The most extreme authoritarians are **totalitarians** who support state control over all aspects of society.

While **left** and **right** refer to different methods of developing an economically stable and just society –

authoritarianism and **libertarianism** refer to the amount of individual freedom each person possesses in that society relative to the state.

Libertarianism

A libertarian political system is one in which individual rights and civil liberties are paramount.

Individual Rights

Authoritarian

- Socialism
- Communism
- Nazism
- Fascism
- Ba'thism
- Islamism
- Modern Liberalism (Progressivism)

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Totalitarianism

- Mussolini... “for the Fascist everything is within the state and there exists nothing human or spiritual ... outside the state.”
- **Totalitarianism** is state regulation of nearly every aspect of public and private behavior.

PRC Chinese Constitution

Article 9. Natural resources

All mineral resources, waters, forests, mountains, grasslands, unreclaimed land, beaches, and other natural resources are owned by the state...

Article 10. Ownership of land

Land in cities is owned by the state.

Location	Dates	Est. Deaths	Authoritarianism
Cambodia	1975–1979	2,035,000	Authoritarianism
China (KMT)	1928–1949	10,075,000	
China (PRC)	1949–1987	77,277,000	Democide
China (Mao Soviets)	1923–1949	3,465,000	
Colonialism	1900–Independence	50,000,000	
Congo Free State	1885–1908	10,000,000	
Germany	1933–1945	20,946,000	
Japan	1936–1945	5,964,000	
Pakistan	1958–1987	1,503,000	
Poland	1945–1948	1,585,000	
Mexico	1900–1920	1,417,000	
North Korea	1948–1987	1,563,000	
Russia	1900–1917	1,066,000	
Turkey	1909–1918	1,883,000	
Vietnam	1945–1987	1,670,000	
Yugoslavia (Tito)	1944–1987	1,072,000	
U.S.S.R.	1917–1987	61,911,000	

Democide is any murder by government—by officials acting under the authority of government. (Excludes battle deaths)

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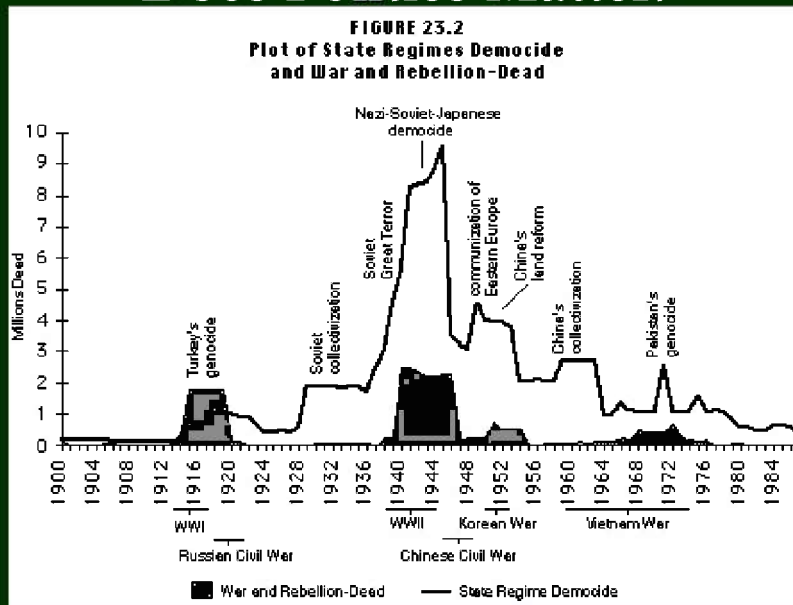
Authoritarianism

Democide

Total estimated death toll from government murder in the 20th Century = **262 million**

6x the number killed in wars

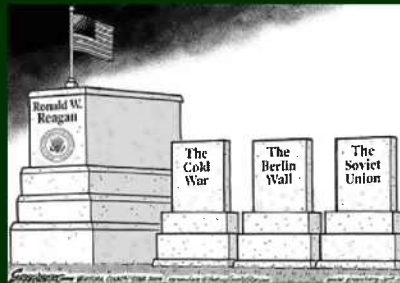
Does Politics Matter?



R.J. Rummel

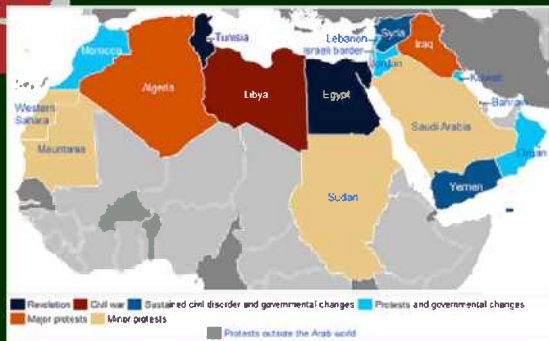


ALEXANDR SOLZHENITSYN
The Gulag Archipelago



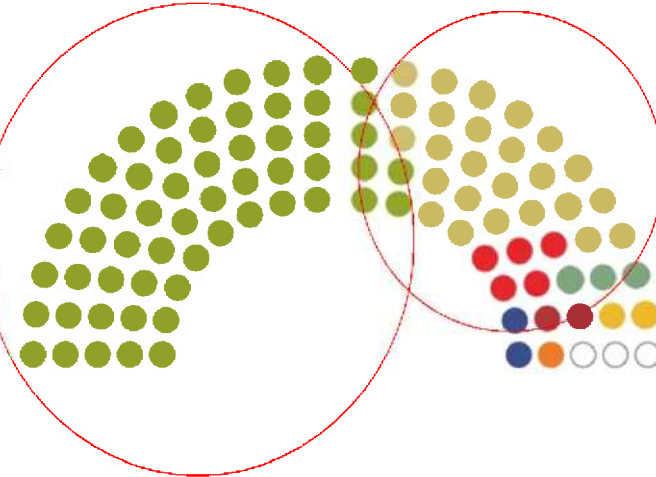
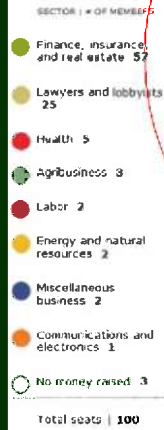


libya
 algeria
 bahrain
 egypt*
 tunisia*
 support the people's
 revolution

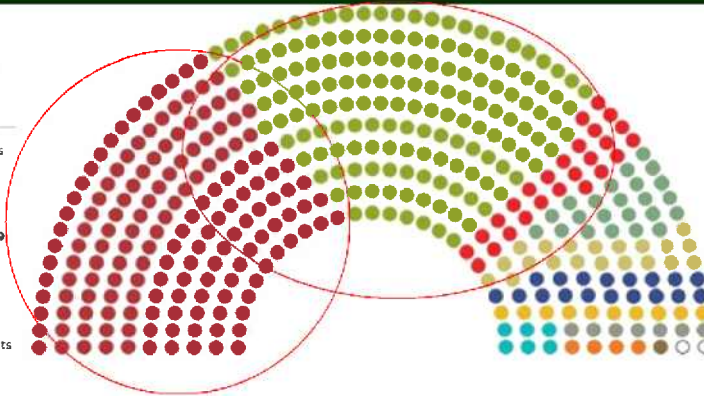


What if members of Congress were seated not by party but according to the industries which gave them the most money over their entire careers?

The Senate: Lawyers, Drugs, and Money



The House: Big Labor vs. Big Money



1980's -S&L Crisis
Bailout of \$150 Billion
1,000 banks closed
3,000 bankers convicted

2000's Banking Crisis?



Do Politics Matter?

"The more **power** a regime has, the more likely people will be killed. This is a major reason for promoting freedom.

Concentrated political power is the most dangerous thing on earth."

Democracy is the form of government least likely to kill its citizens and democracies do not (or virtually never) wage war against each other.

What Are My Personal Politics?

- What do I live for?
- What would I die for?
- What would I kill for?

What is politics?

- Defined
- Left/Right
- Authoritarian/Libertarian
- Why Politics Matter
 - Concentrated Power leads to democide
 - Freedom = Life
- Three Personal Political Questions

National Politics

Where are we now,
and where are we headed?

The Golden Rule of Politics



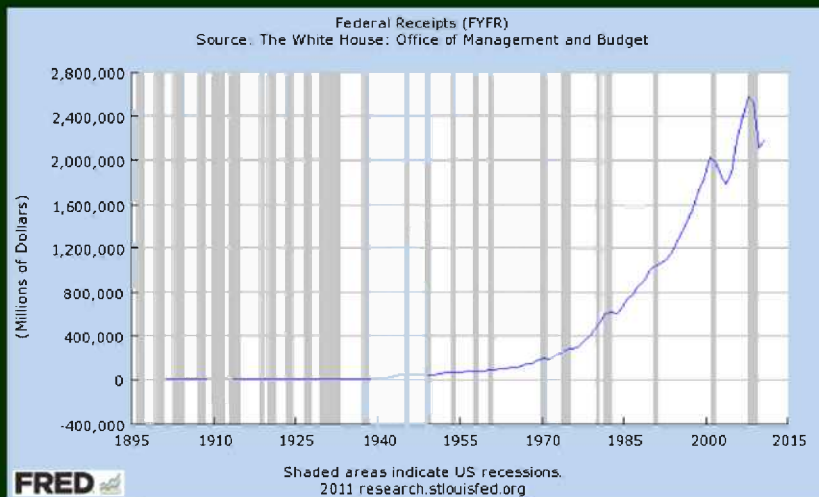
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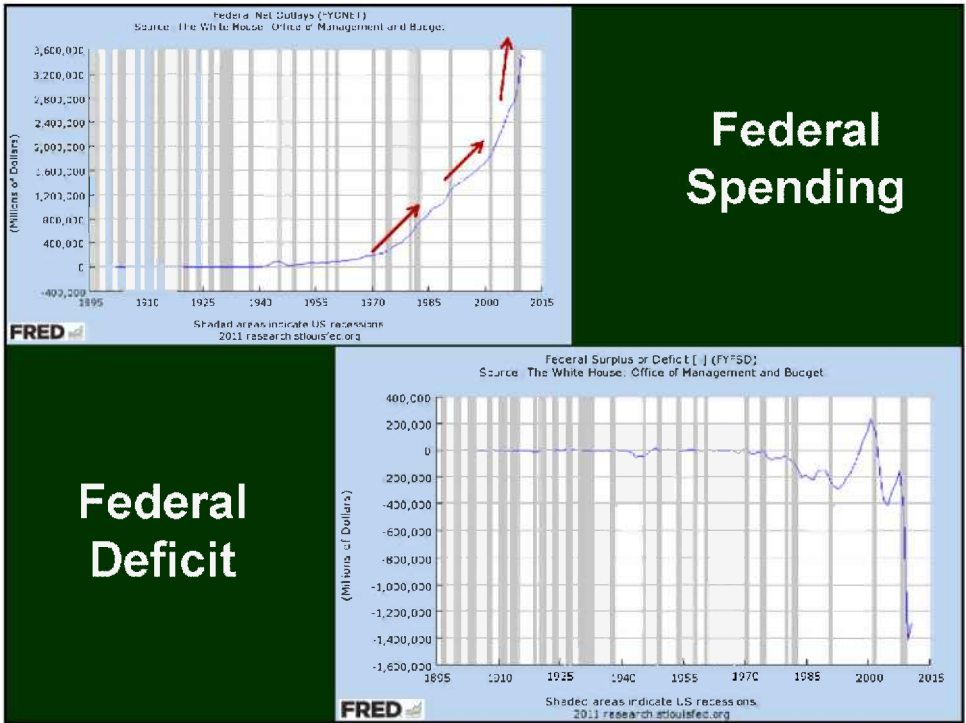


Those Who Have The Gold Rule

Follow the Money: Our National Budget

Federal Tax Receipts



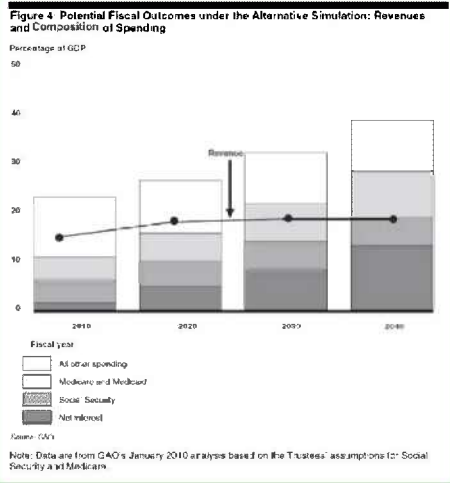


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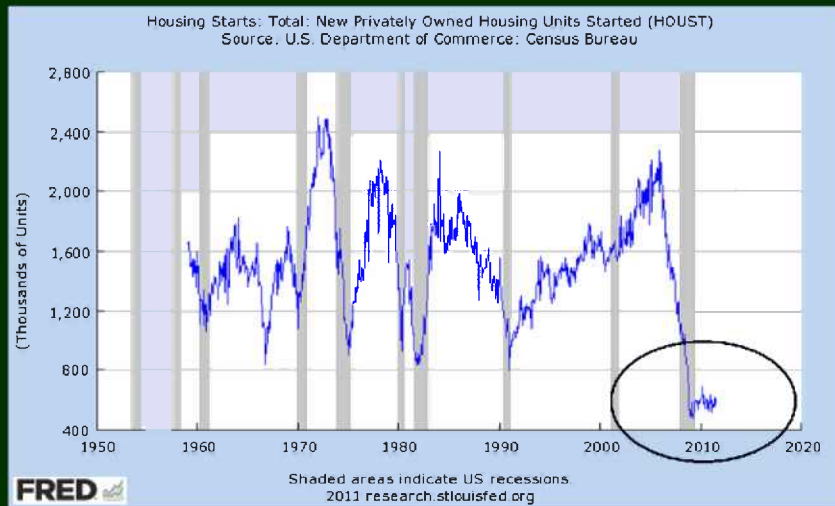
United States Government Accountability Office

The Federal Government's Long-Term Fiscal Outlook
January 2010 Update

...by 2020, \$.93 of every \$1.00 of federal revenue will be spent on entitlements and interest...



US Housing Starts

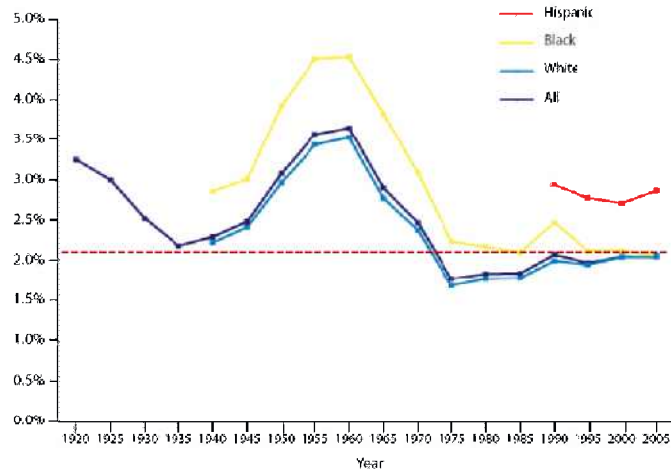


National Politics

Demographics Are Destiny

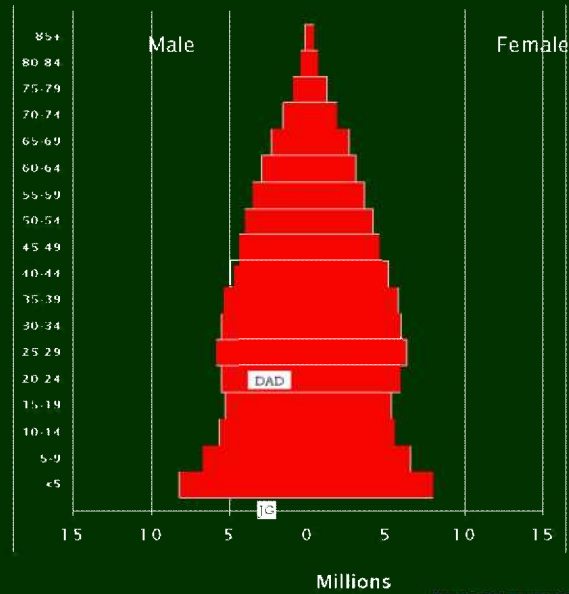
Total fertility rates for the US

Total Fertility Rate by Race and Ethnicity, 1920-2005



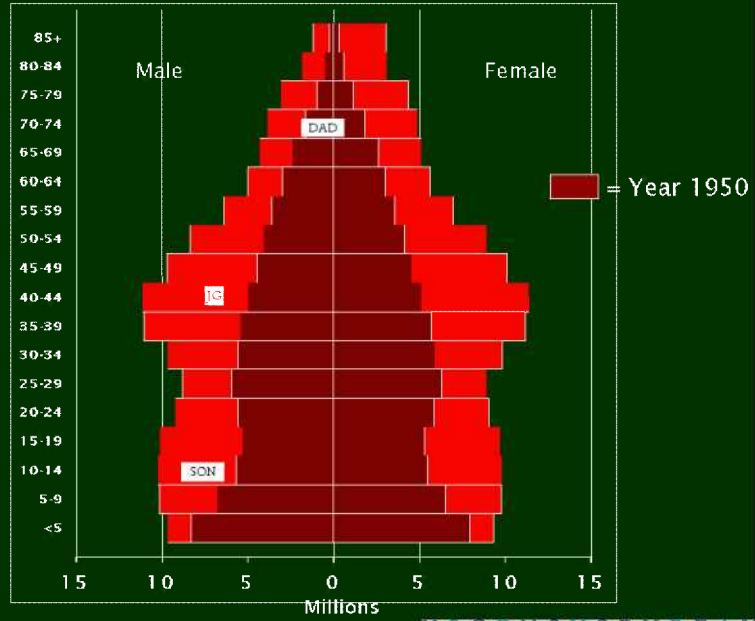
Source: Martin et al. (2007), for data from 1980 to 2005; National Center for Health Statistics (1996), for data from 1980 to 1975; Social Security Administration (1997), for data from 1920 to 1955.

Age Distribution of the U.S. Population, by Sex: 1950

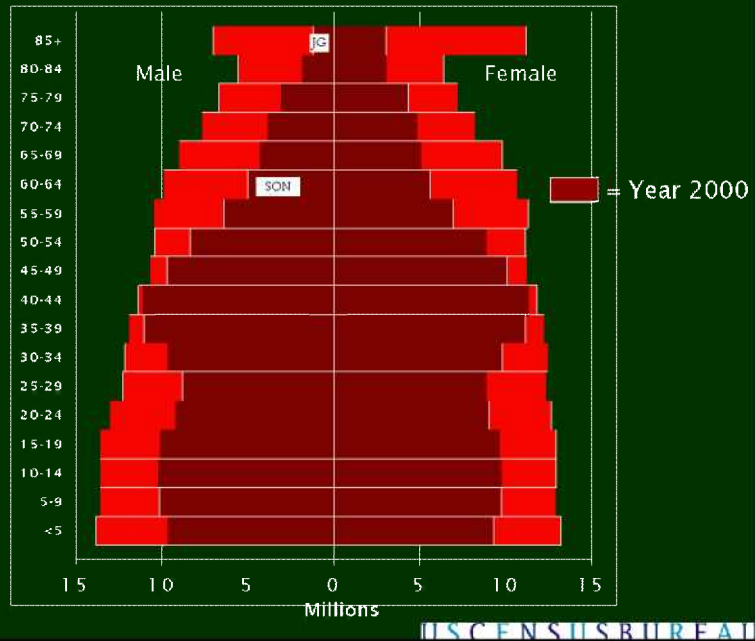


U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

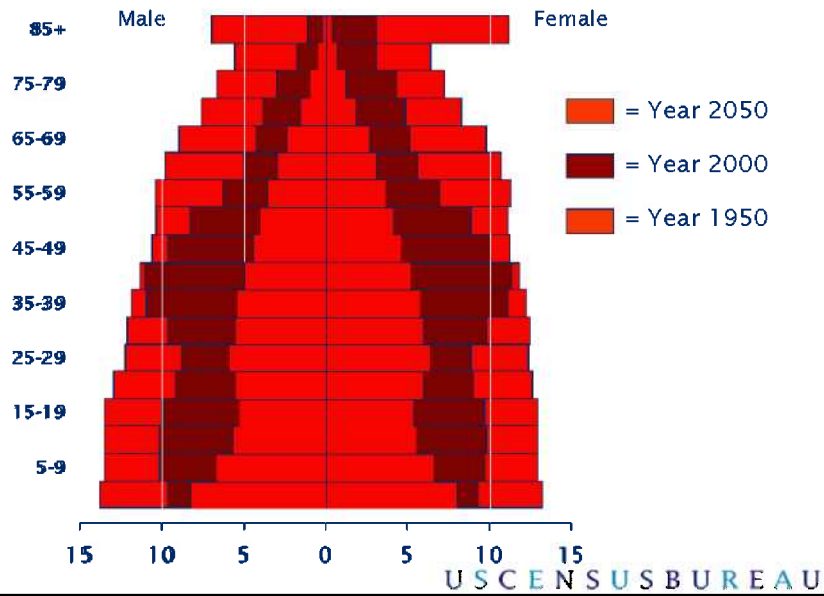
Age Distribution of the U.S. Population, by Sex: 2000



Age Distribution of the U.S. Population, by Sex: 2050



Age Distribution of the U.S. Population, by Sex: 1950 to 2050



US population aged 65 & over % total population

Grandfather Economic Report
<http://mwhodges.home.att.net/>

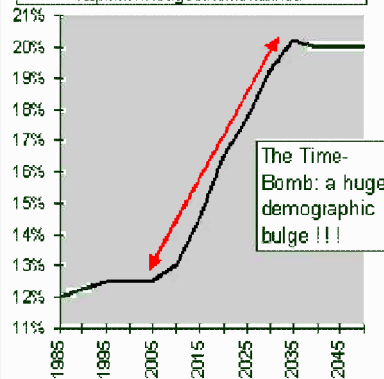
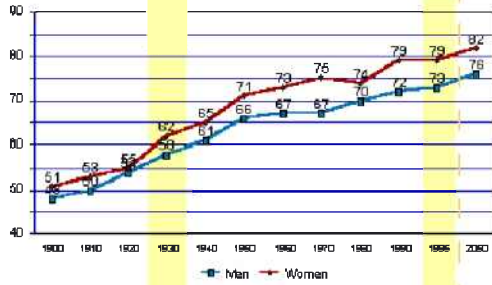


Chart: M. Hodges Source: Census Bureau

Life Expectancy at Birth



Source: 1998 Medicare Costbook and Aging into the 21st Century, USACHS Institute on Aging

Copyright 1999, EldersWeb (<http://www.eldersweb.com>)



Kathleen Casey-Kirschling



Our Nations Future

What's next?



Raise Taxes and Spend



Cut Taxes and Spend

Where is National Politics Headed?

- **The Golden Rule of Politics**
 - Voters Are Gold
- **Demographics Are Destiny**
 - The Baby Boom
 - The National Budget
 - The Future of America

**Closer to Home - Local Politics:
Where Does Urban Forestry Fit?**

What is Politics?

Politics is the process by which groups of people make decisions.

Funding for trees is in competition with funding for all other public issues

The Politics of Trees



RE-ELECTION LIBRARIES TRASH
Terrorism ENDANGERED SPECIES
RACIAL TENSIONS ZONING
TAXES HEALTH CARE
POT HOLES UNIONS
AGEING INFRASTRUCTURE Voter Apathy CRIME
Re-election ANTI-GOVERNMENT MOOD
CLEAN WATER ^{trees}

* FACT: 3/10ths of 1% of the average total U. S. municipal budget is allocated to tree management.

* Municipal Tree Management in the United States, 1994, International Society of Arboriculture

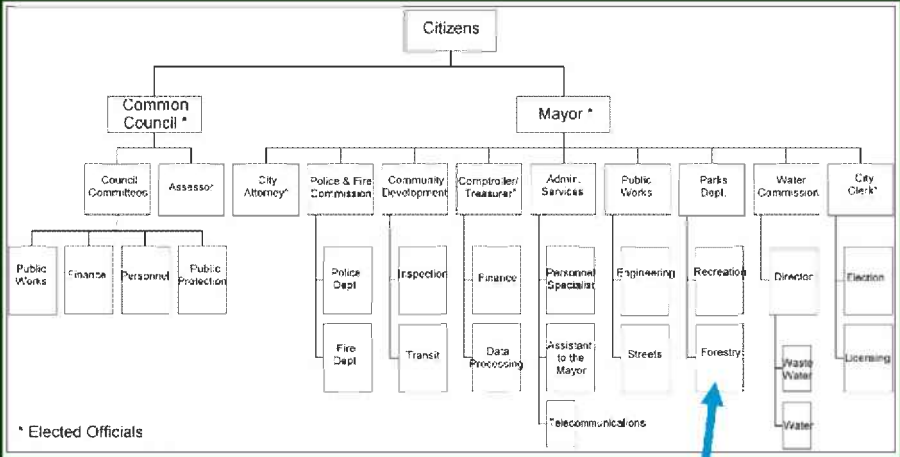
Local Politics
Success Rule #1

Bull's-Eye Leadership:

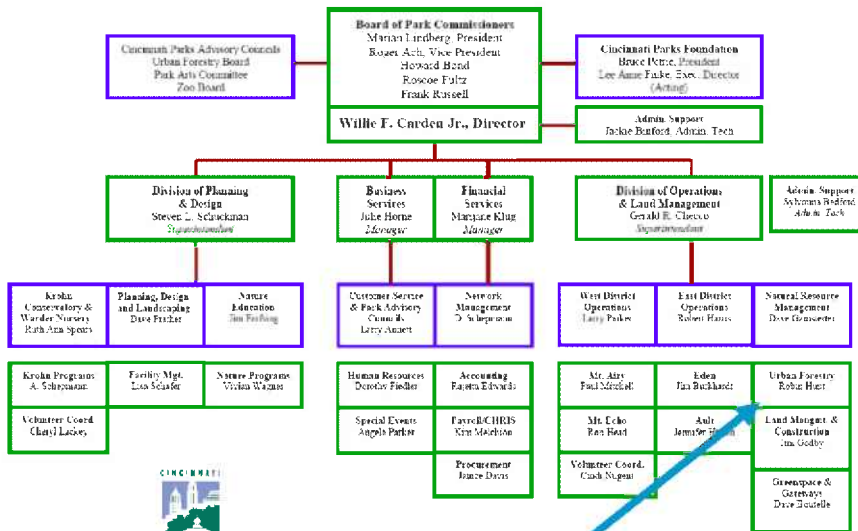
{ Know the System –
Work the System }



City of Stevens Point Wisconsin



Cincinnati Park Board



City of Minneapolis Organization Chart

