

We learned about four theories regarding who holds the real power in government. Answer the following free response type questions:

1. Which of the theories do you feel is the most accurate and why?
2. Give an example from the news supporting your argument in part "1".
3. Which theory do you feel is the most improbable and why?

1. While the other theories have their merit, I believe that Elite Theory is most correct. The rich, powerful, and educated are in charge under this Theory, and that is something you see everyone complaining about, which, while an issue, can often devolve into a puerile endeavour that does not recognize the meritorious arguments of the Elite Theory, being that money is power and that there will always be a concentration of money and resources, and therefore power. Whoever holds the most money or resources has always had the most power in human society, going back to how tribal societies recognized the best hunter or most successful gatherer. Money is always flowing in the background, just as food was exchanged for power in ancient times, and money and power will always pool together to result in an 'elite' group of sorts forming. You cannot stop it, but you can mitigate it, which I believe should be the goal.

2. <https://www.economist.com/finance-and-economics/2018/07/21/as-inequality-grows-so-does-the-political-influence-of-the-rich>

"The rich have many means to shape public opinion: financing nominally apolitical think-tanks, for instance, or buying media outlets. Although their power may sometimes be used to influence the result of a particular vote, it is often deployed more subtly, to shape public narratives about which problems deserve attention."

The elite, so long as there is inequality, will be able to use their money to shape public opinion and to influence government either directly or indirectly with new narratives, funded studies, and media reports. They can only be mitigated by decreasing inequality to an extent.

3. Marxist Theory is least probable in my opinion, because even though it makes a decent supposition that the class that dominates the economy will control the government, it is often seen that even in harsh times are the people unable to commit to change in many countries. Even if the workers dominated the economy and wanted governmental change, the keys to power, be they elites or bureaucrats, would not be forced to acquiesce outside of violent change. The class that dominates the economy can signal their opinion to those who are in power, the elites, yes, and that can give a necessary indicator to the elite to plan their next moves, but ultimately power is largely gated off from the majority of people. An interesting example is Zimbabwe and the recent overthrow of Mugabe. Yes, a dictator was overthrown, but the people are not controlling the government even though those workers dominate the economy. It wasn't the people who overthrew Mugabe but instead other elites and military officials, keys to power, who simply exchanged him for another member.