



Political Participation

Then and Now



Voting



THEN

- Only white, male landowners over age 21 could vote
- Originally voted by voice or standing up in favor of a candidate or decision
- Eventually voted by paper ballot

NOW

- Voting is open to all citizens over the age of 18
- Voting is done at polling locations
- Paper ballots are submitted to an electronic machine for counting
- Mail-in voting is available now

Juries



THEN

- First jury in the American colonies was in Plymouth, MA
- Only free men could serve on a jury and up to two times per year
- Townspeople selected who would serve on a jury for a hearing
- There was a fine if you did not serve once selected

NOW

- Citizens 18 or older with a driver's license or registered to vote is eligible to be selected
- Jurors are chosen randomly
- Once selected for duty, jurors are interviewed by judges and lawyers to make sure they will judge the case fairly
- In Florida, you could be fined for failure to attend jury duty

Military Service



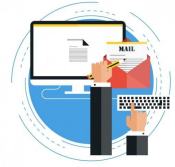
THEN

- Militias were formed by colonies but were not highly trained and often worked part-time
- Individual towns or colonies set rules for who could join their militia
- Minutemen were chosen from militias to receive specialized training to form a more proper army

NOW

- At age 17, citizens and noncitizens may enlist in the U.S. military
- The U.S. military now has physical, medical, and educational testing that must be passed to enlist
- Men aged 18-25 must register for the Selective Service program, which is used in the event of a national draft

Sharing and Communicating



THEN

- Letters were written to officials
- Pamphlets and newspapers shared importance information with colonists
- Word-of-mouth, or speaking to others, was the most common way information got around

NOW

- Officials are often contacted by phone or email
- Important news is shared instantly through the internet and/or television news

Sources

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