

Understanding the Political World

A Comparative Introduction to Political Science

Sixth Edition



James N. Danziger

Understanding the Political World

*A Comparative Introduction
to Political Science*

SIXTH EDITION



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TO HEINZ EULAU, A SPLENDID MENTOR,
AND, AS ALWAYS, TO LESLEY, NICK, AND VANESSA

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PREFACE

In these early years of the twenty-first century, there are especially good reasons why we should attempt to enhance our understanding of the political world. For Americans, the shocking attacks on September 11, 2001 brought into sharp relief what many others around the world were already experiencing: That the post-cold war period, despite expectations that it would usher in a benign “new world order,” is neither orderly nor benign. Moreover, while increased globalization has resulted in new levels of prosperity and interdependence, it has also heightened antagonisms and exacerbated conflicts within and between countries.

At this time, there are a variety of “more than ever” situations that intersect with politics in many ways. There are more electoral democracies than at any time in history. The power of transnational/multinational actors, whether the European Union or a large corporation, is at its highest point ever. The political world has never been characterized by as many countries or as many ethnic groups attempting to establish new states that correspond to their identity group. Potent technologies, ranging from those manipulating information to those capable of mass destruction, are more prevalent and pervasive than ever. The political economies of individual countries have never been as interdependent. At no time have larger numbers of people lived in such material abundance and/or have so many suffered from relative deprivation in the distribution of resources.

These circumstances are indicative of a period that is extraordinary and that poses fascinating challenges to those of us who attempt to use information and the concepts of political science in order to understand better the real world of politics.

Objectives

Addressing such challenges is at the heart of this book. The central objective is, as the book’s title indicates, to help the reader better understand the political world. It attempts to link the central analytic concepts of political science that have emerged over decades of research to the realities of the political world in the early twenty-first century. Using contemporary and some historical evidence, the emphasis is on empirical research that illuminates the processes and structures of politics. The level of analysis ranges from the individual’s political beliefs and actions through the politics of groups and states to the dynamics of the international system.

This book asks the reader to assess whether it is possible and useful to develop generalizations about political phenomena. It combines attention to systematic

descriptive analysis—the *what* questions—with efforts to explain underlying patterns—the *why* and *how* questions. And readers are continually reminded that they must consider the important normative questions that are embedded in most issues about politics. Many topics are also presented in a manner that encourages the reader to think as a political scientist, structuring questions and assessing evidence in order to make inferences.

Features

This sixth edition has retained most key features of the earlier editions:

- A strong, comparative framework
- Coverage of micropolitics, macropolitics, and international relations
- A focus on political economy, including a complete chapter on this important topic
- Thorough analyses of key political processes
- An engaging, readable style
- Presentation of current data to facilitate analysis and comparisons on many topics
- The instructive use of political cartoons and photographs throughout the book

In addition, the book features sixty-two boxed discussions that offer rich, memorable examples of key concepts and issues, such as the different paths of political activism taken by Gandhi and Osama bin Laden, the rational choice perspective on why a person should not vote, the nature of globalization's effects on the political world, Russia's struggles to establish democratic politics and a market economy, the political impacts of television, the effects of colonialism and neocolonialism on Congo, the different policies for dealing with population growth in developing countries, the extensive social control exercised by the state in Singapore, and the American imposition of a constitution on Japan.

New to This Edition

Given the extraordinary rate of change in the political world, there are updated examples throughout this edition. In addition, there are significant changes:

- Given the stunning attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, there is expanded consideration of international terrorism and the “war on terrorism,” as well as a character study of Osama bin Laden, leader of Al-Qaeda.
- The dynamics associated with globalization and its impacts on politics, economics, and the international system are considered explicitly within various relevant topics.
- There is an expanded examination of the conditions that seem most conducive to the effective pursuit of the dual goals of economic development and deepening democracy.
- The strategy of “microcredit” as a facilitator of development, focusing especially on women in the Global South and with emphasis on the Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, is explored.
- The recent economic, political, and social changes in the post-communist developed countries, both positive and negative, are analyzed.
- There is consideration of the serious problems emerging in many transitional and developing countries as they attempt to implement neoliberal economic reforms at the same time that they extend democratic political processes.
- Many discussions have been tightened to increase clarity and shorten the chapters.

- A list of “Key Concepts” has been added at the end of each chapter.
- “On the Web”—a list of URLs of particularly useful Internet sites—is included at the end of most chapters.

Organization

The sixth edition retains the conceptual framework of the fifth edition, focusing on micropolitics and macropolitics.

- Chapter 1 and the Appendix introduce students to the logic of political science and the methods of political analysis.
- Chapters 2 through 4 examine political behavior at the individual and group levels, describing and explaining the causes of individual political beliefs and actions.
- Chapters 5 through 8 emphasize the structural and institutional elements of political systems, offering analytic frameworks for characterizing the different ways in which people organize themselves politically.
- Chapters 9 through 11 analyze interesting and important political processes, such as decision making and the exercise of power, political and economic development, and political violence.
- Chapter 12 examines the patterns of cooperation, competition, and conflict among countries and other actors in the international environment.
- Chapters 13 through 15 explain in detail how certain groups of countries try to achieve their broad goals of prosperity, stability, and security within the complex international environment. Specific analysis is provided for the developed countries, the developing countries, and two sets of transitional countries—the post-communist developed countries and the newly industrializing countries.
- Chapter 16 concludes with a prospective assessment of the major political challenges in the early twenty-first century.

Audience

This book is written for any person who wants to enrich his or her basic understanding of the political world and to learn how political scientists attempt to describe and explain politics. Such a person might be in an introductory course in political science or comparative politics, but could also be in a “capstone” course that integrates one’s political science studies. Such a person might also be any individual who wants to think about the fascinating and confusing world of politics in a more informed and systematic way.

Supplements for Instructors

Instructor’s Manual with Test Bank to Accompany *Understanding the Political World, Sixth Edition*. Written by James N. Danziger himself, the *Instructor’s Manual with Test Bank* includes up-to-date chapter summaries, multiple-choice questions, essay questions, and discussion questions.

TestGen-EQ 2.0. The test bank questions are also available electronically through a computerized testing system, TestGen-EQ 2.0. This fully networkable test generating software is now available on a cross-platform CD-ROM. TestGen-EQ’s friendly graphical interface enables instructors to view, edit, and add questions,

transfer questions to tests, and print tests in a variety of fonts and forms. Search and sort features allow instructors to locate questions quickly and arrange them in a preferred order.

Supplements for Students

Microsoft® Encarta® Interactive World Atlas CD-ROM. Deeply discounted when ordered packaged with the text! This state-of-the-art CD-ROM provides over 1.2 million place names, 192 country home pages, 7,000 articles, a map gallery with twenty-one styles of interactive maps; a statistics center with current information about any country, measured by more than 350 statistical indicators; and much more!

Discounted Subscription to *Newsweek* Magazine. Students can receive twelve issues of *Newsweek* at an 80 percent savings off the regular subscription price! An outstanding way to engage students and get them involved in the most current events and issues in politics today. Contact your local Addison Wesley Longman rep for ordering information.

Acknowledgments

Many sources of ideas and information constitute the basis of *my* understanding about politics. Broadly, you should know that I was born and have primarily been educated in the United States. I have studied, lived, and/or spent significant periods in North America, Western and Eastern Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. The people I met and the events I experienced in these places have certainly influenced my perceptions about politics.

More direct contributions to this book have come from my colleagues in political science and from the many students and others in the political world with whom I have interacted. I have drawn deeply and often from the ideas of these groups.

By the publication of a sixth edition, the layers of contributions and ideas to the construction of this book are deep, rich, and rather indescribable. In every edition, there is a list of people who added positively to that edition, and I continue to be grateful to them all. Explicit guidance and advice regarding the writing of this particular edition have come from several valuable sources: the cadre at Longman Publishers, including the executive editor, Eric Stano, and the associate editor, Anita Castro; scholarly colleagues who have offered useful suggestions, including Russ Dalton and Marty Wattenberg; and students who have provided specific material for the book, especially Leah Donahue, Sharon McConnell, Amit Pandhi, and Nisha Singh. The reviewers, who offered very thoughtful and constructive commentaries for this edition, are: Alex L. Avila, Mesa Community College; Michael J. Gorges, University of Maryland, Baltimore County; Anthony Neal, Buffalo State College; and William A. Welsh, University of Arizona.

I am very grateful for the help provided by all these (and many unnamed) sources. Regarding the roads not taken and the missteps in this book, the responsibility is mine.

JAMES N. DANZIGER

TO THE READER

The aim of this book is revealed by its title: It is meant to help you understand the political world. It assumes that you are willing to think about politics. It does not assume that you have substantial knowledge about politics or political science. It does not assume you know the difference between politics and political science. I hope that when you complete the book (especially if it is complemented by instruction about politics from a teacher), you will feel that you have increased your knowledge about the contemporary political world.

The study of politics is full of fascinating questions. First are the questions about *what is*, such as: Who exercises political power and what values and purposes guide them? Why do people accept political authority? How do people organize themselves politically? What causes individuals and groups to take political action? A second set of questions concerns *what ought to be*: Who should exercise political power and what values should they pursue? Why should people accept political authority? How should political structures be organized? Why should individuals and groups act politically? People disagree sharply about answers to both these descriptive (what is) and normative (what ought to be) questions. In addition, the study of politics provokes a third set of questions regarding *what we can actually know* about the political world. Here also there are major disagreements about the appropriate methods for describing and understanding politics.

Although this book cannot resolve the underlying disputes, it offers you the basis for making sense out of politics at all three levels. As author, I make some basic assumptions: that you can think systematically about politics and make general statements about how politics works; that you will learn more about politics by considering the politics of many different places; that every observer of politics (certainly including you and me) has biases, only some of which can be understood; that you need a variety of sources of ideas and information before you can make informed and sensible decisions about the value disagreements pervading politics; and that this book is one such source that can be helpful to you. My efforts will be successful to the extent that *you* ultimately judge my assumptions to be correct (especially the last one ...).

It is inevitable that you will be frustrated with the treatment of politics at some (many?) points in this book. I would say: Reader, be merciful! The study of politics is incredibly complex. Gather bits of understanding where you can find them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James N. Danziger is a professor and former chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Irvine, where he also has served as campuswide Dean of Undergraduate Education. He is recipient of many honors and awards, including a Marshall Scholarship (to Great Britain) and a Foreign Area Fellowship. He received the first UC Irvine Distinguished Faculty Lectureship Award for Teaching in 1987 and the UC Irvine Distinguished Service Award in 1997. His research has received awards from the American Political Science Association and the American Society for Public Administration. He has published extensively, particularly on information technology and politics, and he is on the editorial board of *Local Government Studies*. He has been an active participant in local politics and especially enjoys playing sports, travel, music, and cinema.

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