THEODORE J. LOWI ★ BENJAMIN GINSBERG ★ KENNETH A. SHEPSL

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

POWER AND PURPOSE

EIGHTH EDITION

American Government

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EDITION

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W • W • NORTON & COMPANY NEW YORK • LONDON

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Printed in the United States of America

The text of this book is composed in Berling Roman
with the display set in Bawdy.
Composition by TSI Graphics
Manufacturing by Quebecor World Versailles
Book designer: Sandra Watanabe
Production manager: Diane O'Connor
Editor: Stephen P. Dunn
Manuscript editor: Carol Flechner
Managing editor, college: Marian Johnson
Editorial assistant: Susan Cronin
Graphic artist: John McAusland

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Lowi, Theodore J.

American government: power and purpose / Theodore J. Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, and Kenneth A. Shepsle.—8th ed.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-393-92482-3

1. United States—Politics and government. I. Ginsberg, Benjamin. II. Shepsle, Kenneth
A. III. Title.

JK276.L69 2004b
320.473—dc22

2003070218

W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.,
500 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10110
www.wwnorton.com
W. W. Norton & Company Ltd.,
Castle House, 75/76 Wells Street, London W1T 3QT
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0

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EIGHTH EDITION

FOR OUR FAMILIES:

Angele, Anna, and Jason Lowi
Sandy, Cindy, and Alex Ginsberg
Rise, Nilsa, and Seth Shepsle

Preface

Someone once asked if it is difficult for scholars to "write down" to introductory students. No. It is difficult to "write up" to them. Introductory students, of whatever age or reading level, need more, require more, and expect more of a book. A good teaching book, like a good novel or play, is written on two levels. One is the level of the narrative, the story line, the characters in action. The second is the level of character development, of the argument of the book or play. We would not be the first to assert that theater is an aspect of politics, but our book may be unusual to the extent that we took that assertion as a guide. We have packed it full of narrative—with characters and with the facts about the complex situations in which they find themselves. We have at the same time been determined not to lose sight of the second level, yet we have tried to avoid making the second level so prominent as to define us as preachers rather than teachers.

Our collective one-hundred-plus years of teaching has taught us not to underestimate students. Their raw intelligence is not satisfied until a second level provides a logic linking the disparate parts of what we were asserting was a single system of government. And these linkages had to be made in ordinary language. We hope we brought this to the book.

We hope also that we brought over from our teaching experience a full measure of sympathy for all who teach the introductory course, most particularly those who are obliged to teach the course from departmental necessity rather than voluntarily as a desired part of their career. And we hope our book will help them appreciate the course as we do—as an opportunity to make sense of a whole political system, one's own, and one of the largest, most durable, and most consequential ever. Much can be learned about the system from a re-examination of the innumerable familiar facts under the still more challenging condition that the facts be somehow interesting, significant, and, above all, linked.

All Americans are to a great extent familiar with the politics and government of their own country. No fact is intrinsically difficult to grasp, and in such an open society, facts abound. In America, many facts are commonplace that are suppressed elsewhere. The ubiquity of political commonplaces is a problem, but it can be turned into a virtue. These very commonplaces give us a vocabulary that is widely shared, and such a vocabulary enables us to communicate effectively at the first level of the book, avoiding abstract concepts and professional language (jargon). Reaching beyond the commonplaces to the second level also identifies what is to us the single most important task of the teacher of political

science—to confront the million commonplaces and to choose from among them the small number of really significant concepts. Students give us proportion; we must in turn give the students priorities. Virtually everything we need to know about the institutions and processes of government and politics is readily at hand. But to choose a few commonplaces from the millions—there's the rub.

THE APPROACH OF THE BOOK

This book was written for faculty and students who are looking for a little more than just "nuts and bolts" and who are drawn to an analytical perspective. Although we don't specifically address political-science methodology, the book serves as an integration of the historical-institutional and rational-choice perspectives and as a set of tools (the "Five Principles of Politics") that students can use to think analytically about politics. The feedback we have received thus far from students and fellow professors gives us confidence that the most appealing feature of the book is the analytical framework based on the "five principles of politics." With this new eighth edition, we hope to broaden our appeal among political scientists and their students by incorporating new applications of the "five principles of politics in action" and new pedagogy that keeps students focused on the main points of each chapter. The book is based on the idea that the best way to teach students is to expose them to repeated applications of a small number of the core ideas of the discipline in a presentation devoid of the usual clutter. We hope that students will get from this book more than just a bunch of facts about American government; we hope that they will develop a way of thinking about and analyzing politics.

The book's analytical approach is incorporated in the following ways:

Emphasis on five fundamental, underlying principles of politics provides students with the "tools" for analysis. Politics is messy, complex, and contentious. How do we make sense of what seems too large and impossible to explain? In explaining these questions throughout the chapter, we repeatedly draw on five fundamental principles of politics:

- All political behavior has a purpose.
- All politics is collective action.
- Institutions matter.
- Political outcomes are the products of individual preferences and institutional procedures.
- History matters.

The application of the five principles to each chapter's topic is first introduced in a **"Previewing the Principles" box** at the beginning of every chapter. Each time one of these principles is used in the analysis, a marginal icon will appear, reminding students of the core principle. These principles are also

summarized in a **"Principles of Politics in Review" box** toward the conclusion of every chapter. Our goal is to equip students with the tools to evaluate the political world that they observe around them.

Four new applications of the "Five Principles of Politics." Merely knowing a principle is different from understanding it. For students to analyze politics, they need a framework (the five principles) and models of how to use the framework. Students also need to be prompted to use the framework on their own. In this eighth edition, we've added four new applications that show students how to apply the framework and then actively use it on their own in in-class simulations and Web-based exercises.

1. **"Applying the Five Principles of Politics" boxed case studies** (one per chapter). These case studies go beyond the text and apply one or more of the five principles to a central, topical question such as "Why Can't Congress Get Anything Done?" or "Was It Rational to Vote for Ralph Nader?"
2. **"Politics in the News: Reading between the Lines"** (one per chapter). These two-page spreads show students how to use the five principles to better understand current politics reported in the news, such as Bush's latest tax cut or the 2004 presidential election. This feature includes an excerpt from a *New York Times* article, a bulleted summary of the article's central issues, and a bulleted "political analysis" showing how to use the five principles to analyze the story.
3. **"Playing Politics" game-theory-based simulations workbook** (authored by Tobin Grant, Southern Illinois University—Carbondale). Active involvement by students is an essential part of effective learning. These role-playing simulations will allow students to put themselves in the shoes of strategic political actors and how they respond to a wide scenario of political situations. The simulations are designed to take from 30 to 45 minutes in class and include an out-of-class written analysis by students. They are a perfect supplement to use in discussion sections.
4. **Web-site exercise based on "Applying the Five Principles of Politics" and "Politics in the News: Reading between the Lines."** Another component of "active learning," these exercises help students build their analytical skills, while demonstrating that the five principles of politics can be used to interpret current political events. By repeated practice of "analyzing politics," students internalize the five core principles and, as citizens, are able to draw on them for the rest of their lives. To preview these exercises, go to www.wwnorton.com/lowi8.

An "analytic narrative" ties the five principles together. As teachers and scholars, we believe that is is easiest to understand the system of American government by looking at political institutions (Principle 3). In every chapter, we look at an institution's source and its historical development (Principle 5). Along the way, we offer historical accounts of important events and analysis

of the individual decisions and choices by political actors (Principle 1). Throughout, we analyze political conflict and compromise (Principle 2) and the outcomes of these conflicts and compromises (Principle 4). History gives each chapter a narrative flow, making the book more engaging to read. The focus on individual decisions and choices and the conflicts between them explains not only political outcomes such as policy, but also how and why institutions develop and change. For example, in discussing the presidency, we evaluate how presidents have used the threat of a veto and "going public" as a means of building power vis-à-vis Congress. By the time students get to the end of this chapter, they will understand why some policies get adopted while others don't. But students will also have a richer sense of why today's institutions function as they do and how they interact with each other.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

The book is divided into three parts, reflecting the historical process by which Americans have used governmental power. Part 1, "Foundations," comprises the chapters concerned with the bases of political analysis and the writing of the rules of the "game." The founding of 1787–1789 put it all together, but that was actually a second effort after a first failure. The original contract, the Articles of Confederation, did not achieve an acceptable balance—too much freedom and not enough power. The second founding, the Constitution ratified in 1789, was itself an imperfect effort to establish the rules, and within two years new terms were added—the first ten amendments, called the Bill of Rights. And for the next century and a half following their ratification in 1791, the courts played umpire and translator in the struggle to interpret those terms. Chapter 1 introduces our five analytical principles of politics. Chapter 2 concentrates on the founding itself. Chapters 3 and 4 chronicle the long struggle to establish what was meant by the three great principles of limited government: federalism, separation of powers, and individual liberties and rights.

Part 2, "Institutions," includes the chapters sometimes referred to as the "nuts and bolts." But none of these particles of government means anything except in the larger context of the goals governments must meet and the limits, especially of procedure, that have been imposed upon them. Chapter 5 is an introduction to the fundamental problem of representative government as this has been institutionalized in Congress. Congress, with all its problems, is the most creative legislative body in the world. But how well does Congress provide a meeting ground between consent and governing? How are society's demands taken into account in debates on the floor of Congress and deliberations by its committees? What interests turn out to be most effectively "represented" in Congress? What is the modern Congress's constituency?

Chapter 6 explores the same questions for the presidency. Although Article II of the Constitution provides that the president should see that the laws made by Congress are "faithfully executed," the presidency was always part of our the-

ory of representative government, and the modern presidency has increasingly become a law *maker* rather than merely a law implementer. What, then, does the strong presidency do to the conduct and the consequences of representative government? Chapter 7 treats the executive branch as an entity separate from the presidency, but ultimately it has to be brought back into the general process of representative government. That, indeed, is the overwhelming problem of what we call "bureaucracy in a democracy." After spelling out the organization and workings of "the bureaucracy" in detail, we then turn to an evaluation of the role of Congress and the president in imposing some political accountability on an executive branch composed of roughly 5 million civilian and military personnel.

Chapter 8 on the judiciary should not be lost in the shuffle. Referred to by Hamilton as "the least dangerous branch," the judiciary truly has become a co-equal branch to such an extent that if Hamilton were alive today, he would probably eat his words.

Part 3 we entitle simply "Politics" because politics encompasses all the efforts by any and all individuals and groups inside as well as outside the government to determine what government will do and on whose behalf it will be done. Our chapters take the order of our conception of how politics developed since the Age of Revolution and how politics works today: Chapter 9, "Public Opinion"; Chapter 10, "Elections"; Chapter 11, "Political Parties"; Chapter 12, "Groups and Interests"; and Chapter 13, "The Media."

Part 4 is entitled "Governance." These are chapters primarily about public policies, which are the most deliberate and goal-oriented aspects of the still-larger phenomenon of "government in action." We begin Chapter 14, "Government in Action: Public Policy and the Economy," by looking at policies that are concerned with the conduct of business, the obligations of employers, the rights and limits of workers to organize, and the general ability of the economy to operate without flying apart. Chapter 15, "Government and Society," looks at policies that affect society at large, outside and beyond the economic marketplace. Since ours is a commercial society, many policies aimed at the society have direct economic consequences. For example, many aspects of what we call the welfare system are social policies, but they have a profound effect on the economy because welfare, as we put it, changes the rules governing who shall be poor. Chapter 16, "Foreign Policy and Democracy," turns to the international realm and America's place in it. Our concern here is to understand American foreign policies and why we have adopted them. Given the traditional American fear of "the state" and the genuine danger of international involvements to domestic democracy, a chapter on foreign policies is essential to a book on American government and also reveals a great deal about America as a culture.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Our students at Cornell, Johns Hopkins, and Harvard have already been identified as an essential factor in the writing of this book. They have been our most

immediate intellectual community, a hospitable one indeed. Another part of our community, perhaps a large suburb, is the discipline of political science itself. Our debt to the scholarship of our colleagues is scientifically measurable, probably to several decimal points, in the footnotes of each chapter. Despite many complaints that the field is too scientific or not scientific enough, political science is alive and well in the United States. It is an aspect of democracy itself, and it has grown and changed in response to the developments in government and politics that we have chronicled in our book. If we did a "time line" on the history of political science, as we have done in each chapter of the book, it would show a close association with developments in "the American state." Sometimes the discipline has been out of phase and critical; at other times, it has been in phase and perhaps apologetic. But political science has never been at a loss for relevant literature, and without it, our job would have been impossible.

There have, of course, been individuals on whom we have relied in particular. Of all writers, living and dead, we find ourselves most in debt to the writing of two—James Madison and Alexis de Tocqueville. Many other great authors have shaped us as they have shaped all political scientists. But Madison and Tocqueville have stood for us not only as the bridge to all timeless political problems; they represent the ideal of political science itself—that political science must be steadfastly scientific in the search for what is, yet must keep alive a strong sense of what ought to be, recognizing that democracy is neither natural nor invariably good, and must be fiercely dedicated to constant critical analysis of all political institutions in order to contribute to the maintenance of a favorable balance between individual freedom and public power.

We are pleased to acknowledge our debt to the many colleagues who had a direct and active role in criticism and preparation of the manuscript. The first edition was read and reviewed by Gary Bryner, Brigham Young University; James F. Herndon, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University; James W. Riddlesperger, Jr., Texas Christian University; John Schwarz, University of Arizona; Toni-Michelle Travis, George Mason University; and Lois Vietri, University of Maryland. We also want to reiterate our thanks to the four colleagues who allowed us the privilege of testing a trial edition of our book by using it as the major text in their introductory American Government courses. Their reactions, and those of their students, played an important role in our first edition. We are grateful to Gary Bryner, Brigham Young University; Allan J. Cigler, University of Kansas; Burnet V. Davis, Albion College; and Erwin A. Jaffe, California State University—Stanislaus.

For subsequent editions, we relied heavily on the thoughtful manuscript reviews we received from David Canon, University of Wisconsin; Russell Hanson, Indiana University; William Keech, Carnegie Mellon University; Donald Kettl, University of Wisconsin; Anne Khademian, University of Wisconsin; William McLauchlan, Purdue University; J. Roger Baker, Wittenburg University; James Lennertz, Lafayette College; Allan McBride, Grambling State University; Joseph Peek, Jr., Georgia State University; Grant Neeley, Texas Tech

University; Mark Graber, University of Maryland; John Gilmour, College of William and Mary; Victoria Farrar-Myers, University of Texas at Arlington; Timothy Boylan, Winthrop University; Robert Huckfeldt, University of California—Davis; Mark Joslyn, University of Kansas; Beth Leech, Rutgers University; Charles Noble, California State University, Long Beach; For the eighth edition, we benefited from the comments of Scott Ainsworth, University of Georgia; Thomas Brunell, Northern Arizona University; Daniel Carpenter, Harvard University; Brad Gomez, University of South Carolina; Paul Gronke, Reed College; Marc Hetherington, Bowdoin College; Gregory Huber, Yale University; Robert Lowry, Iowa State University; and Anthony Nownes, University of Tennessee; Scott Adler, University of Colorado—Boulder; John Coleman, University of Wisconsin—Madison; Richard Conley, University of Florida; Keith Dougherty, University of Georgia; John Ferejohn, Stanford University; Douglas Harris, Loyola College; Brian Humes, University of Nebraska—Lincoln; Jeffrey Jenkins, Northwestern University; Paul Johnson, University of Kansas; Andrew Polsky, Hunter College—CUNY; Mark Richards, Grand Valley State University; Charles Shipan, University of Iowa; Craig Volden, Ohio State University; and Garry Young, George Washington University.

We are also extremely grateful to a number of colleagues who were kind enough to lend us their classrooms. During the past eight years, we had the opportunity to lecture at a number of colleges and universities around the country and to benefit from discussing our book with those who know it best—colleagues and students who used it. We appreciate the gracious welcome we received at Austin Community College, California State University—Fullerton, University of Central Oklahoma, Emory University, Gainesville College, Georgia Southern University, Georgia State University, Golden West College, Grambling State University, University of Houston—University Park, University of Illinois—Chicago, University of Illinois—Urbana-Champaign, University of Maryland—College Park, University of Massachusetts—Amherst, Morgan State University, University of North Carolina—Chapel Hill, University of North Texas, University of Oklahoma, Oklahoma State University, Pasadena City College, University of Richmond, Sam Houston State University, San Bernadino Valley College, Santa Barbara City College, Santa Monica College, University of Southern California, Temple University, University of Texas—Austin, Texas Tech University, Virginia Commonwealth University, and University of Wisconsin–Madison.

We owe a debt to Greg Wawro of Columbia University, who served as an intellectual bridge between the sixth and seventh editions, and helped us set our sights for future editions of the book. We owe a special debt to Paul Gronke of Reed College for authoring the new "Applying the Five Principles of Politics" and "Politics in the News—Reading between the Lines" features. We also are grateful for the talents and hard work of several research assistants, whose contribution can never be adequately compensated: Mingus Mapps, Douglas Dow, John Forren, Michael Harvey, Doug Harris, Brenda Holzinger, Steve McGovern, Melody Butler, Nancy Johnson, Noah Silverman, Rebecca Fisher, David Lytell, Dennis

Merryfield, Rachel Reiss, Nandini Sathe, Rob Speel, Jennifer Waterston, and Daniel Wirls. For the seventh edition, Israel Waismel-Manor devoted a great deal of time and energy and original ideas.

Jacqueline Discenza not only typed several drafts of the manuscript, but also helped to hold the project together. We thank her for her hard work and dedication.

Theodore Lowi would like to express his gratitude to the French-American Foundation and the Gannett Foundation, whose timely invitations helped him prepare for his part of this enterprise.

Perhaps above all, we wish to thank those who kept the production and all the loose ends of the book coherent and in focus. Steve Dunn has been an extremely talented editor, continuing to offer numerous suggestions for each new edition. Carol Flechner has been a superb manuscript editor, following in the great tradition of her predecessors. Diane O'Connor has been an efficient production manager. Denise Shanks brought a vision to the Web site and spent countless hours making it a reality. For their work on previous editions of the book, we want to thank Jan Hoeper, Kathy Talalay, Scott McCord, Margaret Farley, Traci Nagle, Margie Brassil, Stephanie Larson, Sarah Caldwell, Nancy Yanchus, Jean Yelovich, Sandra Smith, Sandy Lifland, Amy Cherry, Roby Harrington, and especially Ruth Dworkin.

We are more than happy, however, to absolve all these contributors from any flaws, errors, and misjudgments that will inevitably be discovered. We wish the book could be free of all production errors, grammatical errors, misspellings, misquotes, missed citations, etc. From that standpoint, a book ought to try to be perfect. But substantively we have not tried to write a flawless book; we have not tried to write a book to please everyone. We have again tried to write an effective book, a book that cannot be taken lightly. Our goal was not to make every reader a political scientist. Our goal was to restore politics as a subject matter of vigorous and enjoyable discourse, recapturing it from the bondage of the thirty-second sound bite and the thirty-page technical briefing. Every person can be knowledgeable because everything about politics is accessible. One does not have to be a television anchorperson to profit from political events. One does not have to be a philosopher to argue about the requisites of democracy, a lawyer to dispute constitutional interpretations, an economist to debate a public policy. We would be very proud if our book contributes in a small way to the restoration of the ancient art of political controversy.

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December 2003

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