

# The New American Democracy

# ALTERNATE FOURTH EDITION

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# Dedication

To George Cole, John Kessel, Wayne Merrick, and other members of the Allegheny College Political Science Department, circa 1966

To Harding C. Noblitt, Concordia College

To Richard Keiser and Steven Schier, Carleton College

And to Paul Paskoff, Jay Perkins, and Wayne Parent, Louisiana State University

In appreciation for their teaching excellence

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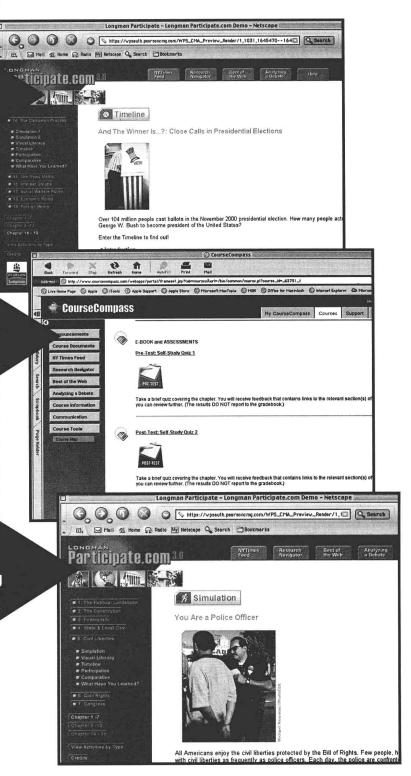
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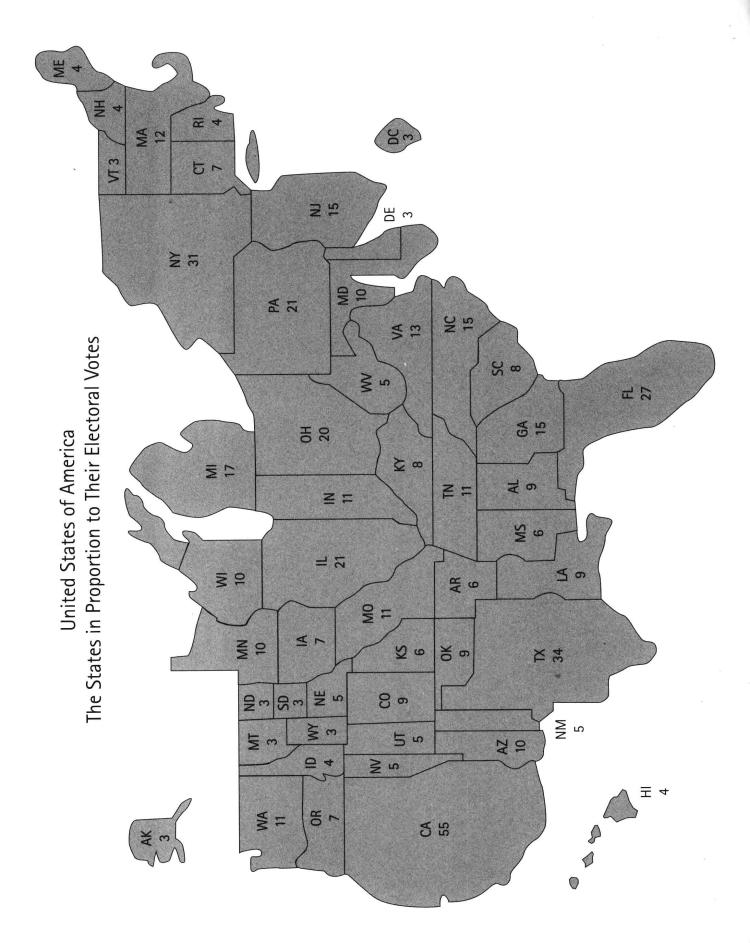
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# To the Students

This text grew out of a decade of teaching the introductory course together. As we listened to each other's lectures each year we noticed that our course was evolving into one whose underlying theme was both more specific than, and different from, the themes that could be found in other American government textbooks. Specifically, elections and their repercussions gradually became the primary connecting thread that tied together our lectures and discussions. In part, this emphasis reflected our own backgrounds and interests. Morris Fiorina has devoted his professional career to the study of elections—both narrowly, in the sense of why people vote the way they do, and more broadly, in the sense of how elections affect politicians, political institutions, and the policies they produce. Paul Peterson began his career with a focus on citizen participation in the War on Poverty and later studied the way the federal system limited what local officials could do. In recent years, he has examined the ways elections shape government response to budget deficits, welfare needs, race relations, educational issues, and the changing foreign policy environment.

It was not just our own research interests, however, that brought election issues to the fore. Both of us attempt to keep our lectures connected to present-day government and politics, and as a reflection of a changing reality, we found our lectures increasingly infused with the connections between elections and the work of government. From experience we know that students are keenly aware of the way elections affect the strategies of politicians and the decisions of policy-makers, as well as a great many other things that happen in government. As a result, we have written a different kind of American government textbook, one that gives a central place to elections and their consequences.

# Level and Tone of This Textbook

Some educators think that today's students are less proficient in certain skills and less motivated than were students of a generation ago. Our view is that you may be different from those earlier students, but that does not mean that you are any less capable. In fact, you also have skills that were nonexistent years ago. (We bet that on average you are better at surfing the Internet than your professors!) As for motivation, that is something not purely your responsibility. It is our job as teachers to make the material as stimulating to you and as relevant to your lives as possible. Our premise is that undergraduate students are fully capable of understanding information and analyses that are clearly expressed. For this reason, this book emphasizes meaning and significance. It contains considerable interpretation in addition to the essential facts.

We do not shy away from controversy. Some individuals in American higher education would protect students from intellectual discomfort. The consequences of such beliefs include well-intentioned efforts to place some subjects and arguments outside the boundaries of classroom discussion. We do not agree with this approach. Our view is that politics is fundamentally about conflict. People have conflicting interests and, even more seriously, conflicting values. Politics is the nonviolent resolution of such conflicts. People can settle their disagreements and rise above their dislikes through political deliberation, or they can choose weapons, as so many have over the course of human history.

We believe that you need to learn to engage in such political deliberation. Within the bounds of civil discourse, you should be challenged, even at times provoked. Education proceeds by defending one's viewpoints and by learning to understand those of others. Thus, in the chapters that follow, we consider arguments that some of you may find uncomfortable. In the realm of education, a better, clearer understanding supersedes all other values.

Although the study of American politics is far more than the study of current events, a book that emphasizes the importance of elections can make its points come to life by placing them in the context of contemporary politics. This fourth edition is a careful revision of the third edition, updated to include information about important recent events such as the war against terrorism, the arrival of a new era in international politics, the latest Supreme Court decisions, and the 2004 campaign and elections. Of course, these stories—like politics generally—continue to evolve, and we hope this text provides you with the information you need to understand future developments.

# Specific Features

This book has a number of specific features, many related to our elections theme. We call your attention to the following:

- Each chapter introduces you to the subject matter with an **opening vignette** on a high-interest issue or incident. Some vignettes are classics from American history, while others are based on current events. Examples include a discussion of the 2004 presidential election (Chapter 1—Democracy in the United States); a discussion of national reaction to "suspect" minorities in the wake of wars (Chapter 4—American Political Culture); the Supreme Court's "unsought responsibility" in the 2000 election (Chapter 9—The Courts); and the redefinition of George W. Bush's presidency in the wake of terrorism (Chapter 13—The Presidency: Powers and Practice). Following each vignette is a list of the questions and topics that the chapter covers.
- To illustrate the book's focus on electoral forces, some chapters include a box entitled **Election Connection**, describing the relationship between elections and institutions or policies. For instance, Chapter 4's box describes Republican efforts to court Hispanic voters; Chapter 6's discusses the controversy over nonvoters in 2000 who actually turned out; and Chapter 10's reports on the campaign finance scandals and reform attempts.

- Many chapters contain an **International Comparison** box that compares a feature of American government with a similar feature in other countries. These boxes will give you a better understanding of the strengths and limitations of American democracy by letting you think about real alternatives, not just unattainable ideals. Chapter 2's feature box looks at the making of a constitution in Iraq; and Chapter 4's compares citizenship requirements in Europe to those in the United States. Chapter 10's explains why campaign financing isn't such a big issue in other countries.
- You are given an opportunity to exercise your own critical thinking by considering a **Democratic Dilemma** in some chapters. Are there instances in which democratic values are in conflict? Will policy changes or institutional reforms actually achieve the goals their proponents claim? This box presents arguments pro and con, poses questions, and invites students to grapple with them. Examples include Chapter 3's comparison between categorical and block grants, Chapter 6's reflection on whether voters can speak for those who abstain; Chapter 8's discussion of gridlock and the impact of divided government; and Chapter 16's query as to whether campus speech codes unduly restrict free speech.
- Critical thinking questions accompany figures, photographs, and boxes to provoke discussion and thought about the issues at hand.
- Each chapter includes full **marginal definitions** for key terms that are boldfaced in the text and included in the end-of-book Glossary.
- At the end of each chapter we include an **On the Web** feature to direct readers to Web sites where they can find more information on the topics discussed.
- Also included at the end of each chapter are a Chapter Summary, Key Terms
  (alphabetized at the end of the chapter, with page references), and annotated
  Suggested Readings.
- Throughout the text, icons appearing in the margins refer readers to websites available with this text, MyPoliSciLab and LongmanParticipate.com 3.0. Each icon appears next to a particular topic and indicates that a simulation, visual literacy exercise, interactive timeline, participation activity, or comparative government exercise related to that topic exists on the sites. Each activity provides feedback, helps the reader better understand the concepts presented in the text, and makes learning fun. See the front of this text for more information on these exciting, interactive, and valuable resource.

In addition, the fourth edition feature, **Voices of the Permanent Campaign**, further emphasizes the election theme and concludes each major part of the text.

Based on important current events, each Voices presents a thought-provoking issue
and then illustrates how that issue plays out in the permanent campaign. Every
Voices includes a brief review of the issue at hand, consideration of opposing viewpoints, references to pertinent Web sites, and critical thinking questions. For example, the Voices that concludes Part 3 (Campaigns and Elections) describes the
complex politics of campaign finance.

### New to This Edition

The text has been carefully revised since its third edition. This fourth edition includes substantive rewrites, extensively revised features, and the inclusion of the latest information and examples on key topics. For example:

- The 2004 campaigns and elections
- · The concern about terrorism and the treatment of immigrants
- Recent developments in the area of campaign finance including 527 committees
- · Recent developments in state and local politics, including growing financial crises
- The latest Supreme Court decisions concerning federalism, civil liberties, and other issues, including discussion of the *Lawrence v. Texas* decisions.
- The politics of gun control
- The civil rights of Latinos, Asian Americans, and gays and lesbians
- The War Powers Resolution Act after 9/11

# Supplements for Students of Qualified College Adopters

- NEW! MyPoliSciLab for American Government with Longman Participate.com updated 3.0 version inside! MyPoliSciLab is a state-of-the-art, interactive online solution for your course. Available in CourseCompass, Blackboard, and WebCT, MyPoliSciLab offers students a wealth of simulations, interactive exercises, and assessment tools—all integrated with an online e-book version of this text. For each chapter of the text, students will navigate through a pre-test, post-test, chapter review, and a full chapter exam, so they can assess, review, and improve their understanding of the concepts within the chapters. In addition to the online chapter content and assessment, students will have access to Longman Participate.com 3.0, Longman's best-selling interactive online tool providing over 100 interactive exercises for students. LongmanParticipate.com 3.0 is also available as a website alone, independent of a course management system. To find out more, go to MyPoliSciLab at www.mypoliscilab.com. To find out more about LongmanParticipate.com 3.0, go to longmanparticipate.com.
- Companion Website (www.ablongman.com/fiorina). This text-specific, online study guide includes: Practice tests with feedback (multiple-choice, true/false, and fill-in-the-blank); Web Destinations; Chapter Summaries; Chatroom; Simulations; and Flash Cards.
- **Study Guide.** Written by Dennis Plane of Juniata College. The printed study guide features chapter outlines, key terms, practice tests, and critical thinking questions.
- Research Navigator and Research Navigator Guide. Research Navigator is a comprehensive Web site comprising three exclusive databases of credible and reliable source material for research and for student assignments: EBSCO's ContentSelect Academic Journal Database, the New York Times Search-by-Subject Archive, and "Best of the Web" Link Library. The site also includes an extensive help section. The Research Navigator Guide provides your students with access to the Research Navigator Web site and includes reference material and hints about conducting online research. Free to qualified college adopters.

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- Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics, Fifth Edition. Edited by William F. Grover, St. Michael's College, and Joseph G. Peschek, Hamline University, this collection of critical essays goes beyond the debate between mainstream liberalism and conservatism to fundamentally challenge the status quo. Available at a discount when ordered packaged with this text.
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   Gabriela Cowperthwaite, and Steven Horn. A unique and practical handbook

- that guides students through political participation with concrete advice and extensive sample material—letters, telephone scripts, student interviews, and real-life anecdotes—for getting involved and making a difference in their lives and communities.
- Texas Politics Supplement, Third Edition, by Debra St. John. A 90-page primer on state and local government and issues in Texas. Free when shrink-wrapped with text.
- California Politics Supplement, Third Edition, by Barbara Stone. A 70-page primer on state and local government and issues in California. Free when shrink-wrapped with text.
- Florida Politics Supplement, by John Bertalan. A 50-page primer on state and local government and issues in Florida. Free when shrink-wrapped with text.

# To Our Colleagues

The chapters that follow speak directly to students in down-to-earth language. In this preface we address their teachers, our colleagues, in more professional terms, about the reasons we decided to write this text.

More than a generation ago, one of the leading political scientists of the century, Robert Dahl, published a textbook entitled *Pluralist Democracy in the United States*. Dahl was the acknowledged leader of the pluralist school of American political science, which viewed American politics as a collection of arenas in which leaders of organized interest groups bargained over the substance of public policies, with public officials involved both as brokers and as representatives of broader societal interests. Political institutions, in turn, were viewed as regularized bargaining arenas in which leaders were constrained by formal rules. *Groups, bargaining, leaders,* and *representation* were the operative terms for understanding American politics.

American politics has changed a good deal since Dahl wrote. Indeed, Dahl himself notes a number of these changes:

Without intending to do so, over the past thirty years or so Americans have created a new political order. Although it retains a seamless continuity with the order it has displaced, in its present form it constitutes something so new that journalists, commentators, scholars, and ordinary citizens are still struggling to understand it.<sup>2</sup>

Dahl argues that this new political order is more fragmented and more plebiscitary than the old one. The proliferation of interest groups combined with the deterioration of traditional party organizations has strengthened divisive forces and weakened unifying ones. Such political developments, along with social and technological changes, have exposed public officials to popular pressures more than in the past. As a consequence, Dahl contends, representation and deliberation have suffered. He worries that these changes might create "a pseudo-democratic facade on a process manipulated by political leaders to achieve their own agendas."

Another leading political scientist of Dahl's generation, Gabriel Almond, weighs in with similar sentiments:

Television and radio have largely preempted the print media and the primary opinion leaders.... Domestic and international events are brought into the living room with powerful visual and emotional impact—a telepopulism that constrains and distorts public policy. The deliberative processes of politics are diluted and heated by this populism, and by "instant" public opinion polls based on telephone samples.<sup>4</sup>

Although we do not agree with every particular of these indictments, they serve to emphasize that something has happened to American government since the days when an earlier generation of scholars characterized it as a pluralist democracy. For better or for worse, it has become something closer to a popular democracy. In the

pages that follow we describe the forces that have brought about these changes as well as their impact on contemporary politics, institutions, and policies. But, we are getting ahead of ourselves here.

Each year as we considered the range of texts available for the introductory American government course, we decided that available books, however worthy, did not match our views. In the first place, many gave less emphasis than we would like to topics that are essential parts of contemporary American politics—elections, most obviously, but also closely related topics such as public opinion, political participation, and the media. Second, in many texts the role of prime mover implicitly is assigned to the courts, whereas we see electoral context as an important influence on judicial activity and judicial outcomes. Third, contemporary textbooks typically separate the study of elections from other major headings: constitutional fundamentals, bureaucratic politics, the courts, and the formation of public policies. As James Stimson comments:

In our texts public opinion is a chapter or two. The various branches of government are usually a chapter each. And the connection between what the public wants and what the government does is on the page fold between them. Public opinion is conceptualized as a set of measures and processes that do not speak to government. Governing institutions are studied in a manner which doesn't deny public opinion influence, but doesn't permit its active study. When citizens of Washington, DC, could not vote the analogy was complete; all opinion was outside the beltway, all government was inside.<sup>5</sup>

This book breaks down the artificial and unfortunate separation identified by Stimson. Rather than discuss public opinion in one self-contained chapter, political participation in a second, and elections in a third, then move on to a series of institutional chapters, we give public opinion and electioneering their due in individual chapters devoted to those topics, but we continue to trace their effects on other political and institutional processes. Thus, the chapters of this text bear the familiar titles, but they are linked by an extended discussion of the pervasiveness of electoral influences in the new American democracy.

When we began writing the first edition of this book almost 15 years ago, we knew that our argument for the contemporary dominance of electoral forces would meet with some resistance. Most of the developments we described were fairly recent and we understood that some colleagues might not see as sharp a break with the pre-1960s era as we did. But the passing of the years has lessened the novelty of our argument. Under Bill Clinton's "horse-race" presidency, the line between electioneering and governing all but disappeared, as the techniques of the campaign moved to the very pinnacle of government.6 Under George W. Bush, political adviser Karl Rove became a symbol of the permanent campaign, dividing his time between offering advice to the president and such tasks as selecting Republican precinct coordinators for the 2004 race.7 Our view that contemporary American politics is a "permanent campaign" is now common. In fact, the Pew Charitable Trusts recently organized a consortium of public-policy think tanks to study the permanent campaign-how it has affected the range of American institutions and the policy process, with what consequences, and whether a line between electioneering and governing might once again be drawn.8 This fourth edition now lies squarely in the mainstream of thinking about American politics.

We emphasize that to say that public opinion, political campaigns, and elections are of great import is to offer neither a celebrationist nor a cynical interpretation of