

POLITICAL SCIENCE

FOUNDATIONS

FOR A

FIFTH MILLENNIUM

GREGORY M. SCOTT

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POLITICAL SCIENCE

Foundations for a Fifth Millennium

Gregory M. Scott

University of Central Oklahoma

江苏工业学院图书馆
藏书章

Foreword by Charles Q. Jones



PRENTICE HALL

Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Scott, Gregory M.

Political science : foundations for a fifth millennium / Gregory M. Scott ; foreword by Charles O. Jones.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0-13-207572-5

1. Political science. 2. Political science—Study and teaching.

I. Title.

JA71.S323 1996

320—dc20

96-33648

CIP

This book was set in 10/12 Baskerville by ElectraGraphics, Inc.
and was printed and bound by R. R. Donnelley & Sons.
The cover was printed by Lehigh Press.

Editor in Chief: Nancy Roberts
Acquisitions editor: Michael Bickerstaff
Editorial assistant: Anita Castro
Editorial/production supervision
and interior design: Mary McDonald
Copy editor: Ann Donahue
Cover design: Bruce Kenselaar
Buyer: Bob Anderson



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Simon & Schuster/A Viacom Company
Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 07458

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Printed in the United States of America
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN 0-13-207572-5

Prentice-Hall International (UK) Limited, *London*
Prentice-Hall of Australia Pty. Limited, *Sydney*
Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., *Toronto*
Prentice-Hall Hispanoamericana, S.A., *Mexico*
Prentice-Hall of India Private Limited, *New Delhi*
Prentice-Hall of Japan, Inc., *Tokyo*
Simon & Schuster Asia Pte. Ltd., *Singapore*
Editora Prentice-Hall do Brasil, Ltda., *Rio de Janeiro*

Foreword

Charles O. Jones

University of Wisconsin—Madison

Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium, by Gregory M. Scott, is more than a textbook; it is a substantial achievement. Professor Scott has undertaken an awesome task—that of introducing students to how politics has been studied and explored through time, indeed, virtually from the beginning of human relationships. The obstacles to such a feat are many: loss of continuity, overwhelming detail, imbalances of various kinds, creating an encyclopedia rather than a text. He has avoided these pitfalls through a prodigious effort of selecting signal developments in the growth and maturity of political scholarship, being ever sensitive to the need for integration.

Scott identifies creativity as a central feature of political science. In doing so, he has clearly challenged himself to be inventive. He has met that challenge; evidence for this conclusion is found in the distinctive features of the book. He associates what political science is today with what it has been through time by identifying the larger questions of state building and social relations that have faced the designers of governments and the practitioners of politics. Therefore the reader can relate contemporary political science, as displayed in the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association as well as in its organized sections, to antecedent developments.

The best textbooks influence the curriculum. That will be the case with *Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium*. The book requires teachers and students to make connections and seek generalizations beyond those that are common in introductory courses. The historical, contextual, and theoretical features of the book are central to this effect, as is the scope and sweep of the undertaking.

Finally, I admire the author's nerve in writing this book. It suits his accent on creativity as characteristic of political inquiry. But I have another reason for my respect. We are at a time in history when many of the fundamental questions of government and politics identified by Professor Scott form the agenda in many, perhaps most, political systems. Yet we are told that apathy about politics is common throughout the world and among our audience as teachers, *i.e.*, college-age students in the United States.

Political scientists typically have been indifferent about promoting their discipline, perhaps even defensive in the face of criticism of methods by those in the so-called "hard" sciences. Professor Scott's book audaciously boosts our craft as treating the truly important issues. There was a time when I was quite casual about fostering study of my particular corner of the discipline, more or less assuming a

“take it or leave it” approach. I am no longer diffident. I strongly believe that college students must benefit from the product of the systematic study of politics. We have ourselves learned much in recent decades about the enduring questions. It is our obligation as teachers to transmit this knowledge to the students, who will be the active citizens and future leaders of government. Among its many fine contributions, Professor Scott’s book shows why.

Preface

Political science, the creative, thoughtful study of political behavior, has enriched human understanding for four millennia. At least as early as 2000 BCE, people were recording the motives, strategies, and actions of political leaders and commenting upon the efficiency, effectiveness, and ethics of rulers and regimes.

Unlike other introductions to political science, which only survey or compare forms of government or focus primarily upon ideologies, *Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium* is about the progress, accomplishments, and challenges of the *discipline* of political science. Introducing political science as an expression of human creativity, this text covers the full span of the discipline's history, subject matter, methods, and creative accomplishments, not only in the United States but around the world.

The scope of *Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium* is unique among introductions to the study of politics. The text proceeds in five parts. Part I begins by introducing political science as an expression of creativity and encourages students to think imaginatively and precisely about politics. It then surveys the development of the study of politics from its origins at about 2000 BCE to the 1990s. Part II explains the subject matter of the discipline, discussing the great issues of politics (freedom, equality, justice) and the varieties of political ideologies that have developed in response to these issues. Part II then demonstrates the application of the comparative method to the study of political behavior by comparing the political systems first of the United States and Israel and then those of North and South Korea. Part III explains how political scientists study politics, examining general approaches and schools of thought and explaining the most widely used quantitative methods in the discipline, including surveys, experiments, case studies, and content analysis. Part IV introduces six subfields of the discipline, each in its own chapter: American government—political analysis, American government—policy analysis, American constitutional law, comparative government and politics, international relations, and political theory. Each chapter provides a general introduction to the subfield followed by a recently published article in that subfield. The chapter on international relations, for example, prepares the student for a discussion of the relationship of war to democracy and then presents Mansfield and Snyder's "Democratization and War," an article arguing that, contrary to popular perceptions, democracies in their early phases are more likely to go to war than long-established and stable nondemocratic states. Finally, Part V surveys the development of the discipline of political science in twelve foreign countries, and then discusses some recent developments in each of the forty-seven program divisions of the American Political Science Association.

In addition to the wide variety of topics covered within the text, *Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium* includes several letters written specifically to its student readers by such noted personalities as former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzak Shamir, Russian dissident Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, U.S. Trade Representative Mickey Kantor, Democratic presidential candidate Michael Dukakis, and United States Senator Sam Nunn.

Political Science: Foundations for a Fifth Millennium has been written to inspire students to engage the study politics creatively and thoughtfully, and in so doing to join the magnificent multimillennial quest for enlightenment that constitutes the discipline of political science.

Gregory M. Scott

TO

Stephen Wayne
Tom Rossetti
Michael Smith
Hubert Morken
Michael Brint
Dante Germino
Kenneth Thompson

and to the memory of Jacques Ellul

WITH APPRECIATION FOR THE SUPPORT, ENCOURAGEMENT,
AND EFFORTS OF

Jill MacKay Scott

Steve Garrison

John George
Randall Jones
Louis Furmanski
Youngtae Shin

AND FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF

Be Reasonable: Selected Quotations for Inquiring Minds
(Laird Wilcox & John George, Prometheus Books, 1994)

and

Stephen E. Bennett
John C. Berg
Mary Dietz
Christine Di Stefano
Michael Dukakis
Miriam Golden
Susan Hekman
Charles O. Jones
Nolan Jones
Michael Kantor

Joyce Kaufman
Richard Lau
David Mares
Sam Nunn
David O'Brien
Edward Portis
Paul Quirk
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Michael Ward
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Richard Worthington
Vladimir Zhirinovsky
Catherine Zuckert

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1

Welcome to the Creative Study of Politics

Much may be expected from the progress and diffusion of political science.

—James Madison

What do you already know about political science? You know it is an academic discipline, something taught in college—and something you are beginning to study. Something you may not yet know is that political science affects your daily life, directly and indirectly, in countless ways. Your freedom to select the school you want to attend, your confidence in the quality of the canned tuna that you buy, the amount that is taken from your paycheck every week, all these aspects of your life and many more are determined by presidents, members of congress, justices, and hundreds of other government officials. Many of these individuals gained their knowledge of politics and government directly from political science. Consider, for example, that America's Founding Fathers were avid students of some of history's greatest political analysts, whom we shall discuss, and constructed a constitution based upon what they had learned from their studies. Consider further that attorneys are represented more than any other profession, not only in the leadership of the court system, but in national and state legislatures as well. What did these attorneys major in, as undergraduate students, more than any other college major? The answer is political science. Even most of those who did not major in political science have had courses in politics and government in high school or college.

Whether it is being taught in a college classroom, formulated in a position paper, or practiced in a professional conference, political science is always a search for enlightenment. It is the energy, work, and product of a world-wide community of scholars, teachers, practitioners, researchers, and consultants engaged in a quest for understanding and answers. It is an organized academic discipline with deep divisions, debts to other fields, controversies, aspirations, opportunities, and challenges, tied together by a common purpose: understanding politics. Political scientists today draw upon a distinguished heritage of four millennia of thoughtful observation of politics, and they invite you to participate with them in one of humanity's most stimulating intellectual adventures.

The Dynamics of *Politics*

What has your own experience told you about the political aspects of life? We seem to know politics when we see it, but we often find it hard to define. Some things appear to be very political, and others not at all. What quality makes some things political and others not? Consider the following:

- President Clinton's State of the Union Address
- A letter from Senator Edward Kennedy to the citizens of Massachusetts
- The 1996 Platform of the Republican Party
- A political cartoon by Doonesbury
- A campaign speech by Phil Gramm
- An editorial in the *New York Times*

The items above are obviously political. We readily understand that they are for the purpose of expressing or furthering one person's or a group of people's views or interests. Now examine the following list:

- *Anonymously* donating to the American Lung Association
- Reading a bedtime story to a child
- Giving blood to the Red Cross
- Refinishing an old table
- Dancing in the rain
- Cooking fettucine

Although there may possibly be something political about the items on the list above, we do not normally think about them as being political. These activities do not involve people who are attempting to further their own political interests. There are many aspects of life that are not political. Look at this list:

- A teacher's attempt to get you to learn
- Your attempt to influence a teacher to get a better grade
- An argument with your brother or sister over who gets to drive the car, with an appeal to your parents
- A sermon
- A conversation at a cocktail party
- A speech at a meeting of the Rotary Club



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What is it that makes each of these situations at least potentially political? What quality do they all share? To answer this question is to understand the fundamental nature of politics.

Politics: A Definition

Politics has been defined by many people in many different ways. According to some of the more popular definitions, politics is:

- The science of “who gets what, when, and how” (Harold Lasswell, *Politics: Who Gets What, When and How*, 1936)
- The authoritative allocation of values (David Easton, *The Political System*, 1953, 129)
- The activity by which differing interests within a given unit of rule are conciliated by giving them a share in power proportional to their importance to . . . the whole community (Bernard Crick, *In Defense of Politics*, 1962, 21)
- The process of making government policies (Austin Ranney, *Governing: An Introduction to Political Science*, 1990, 25)
- The art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly, and applying the wrong remedies (Groucho Marx)

In spite of the differences among these definitions, however, several qualities are common to them all:

- Politics is *relational*, that is, it has to do with relationships among people or groups of people.
- Politics concerns *interests and power*. The signature of political activity is the attempt on someone’s part to further his own interest, increase her own power, or to reduce the influence of someone else.
- Politics is *dynamic*. This means that politics is not a snapshot of an event or a place in time, nor is it a collection of snapshots. It is a process or an activity that is perpetually in motion; constantly changing; and continually expressing, transforming, and conforming to the people, trends, and events through which it operates.

The immediate connotation of the word “politics” is usually negative. We typically see politicians as manipulators who do things for people to get something from them. The fact is, however, that politics is absolutely necessary to our lives. Think about it. As human beings we find ourselves in a world in which we have many physical and emotional needs and desires but insufficient resources to meet all of them. In such a situation, we have perhaps three basic alternatives for getting our needs met. We can:

1. Deny our needs in favor of the needs of others.
2. Attempt to take what we need by force.