State and Local Government

Using MicroCase® ExplorIt



Christopher Craven Stream

WADS STUDENT VERSION

State and Local Government

Using MicroCase® ExplorIt

FIRST EDITION

Christopher Craven Stream University of Nevada, Las Vegas





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TO THE INSTRUCTOR/ PREFACE

State and Local Politics: Using MicroCase ExplorIt is designed to supplement texts on state and local government. The text gives students software that allows them to analyze and critically evaluate real state and local data. This workbook includes MicroCase Student ExplorIt, a user-friendly program that makes it easy for students to manipulate and learn from real data without getting bogged down in complicated statistical software. Several research-quality data files are also included.

The major purpose or theme of this book is that state and local governments in America play an important role in the political life of the country. While the balance of power between the states and the national government may not be all that balanced, it is still important to familiarize students with state and local governments. State and local governments do more than provide certain services such as education, road building or police protection. As the "laboratories of democracy," state and local governments lead the way in political and policy innovation. A focus on the causes and consequences of state and local policies offers particular insight into the American political system.

This book is organized to parallel that of most state and local government texts. Politics is covered first with topics including: value of comparative analysis, political culture, federalism and intergovernmental relations, elections, political parties, campaigns, and interest groups. Institutions are covered next: legislatures, governors, bureaucracies, state courts and constitutions. The next section focuses on local governments: participation in community politics, and metropolitan government. The final section includes policy issues of key concern to state and local governments: economic development, education, poverty and social welfare, the environment, finance and taxation.

This textbook follows the MicroCase approach which employs hands-on access to data files, and students will be able to browse the data to answer questions and discover trends regarding state and local politics both nationally and in their own state or community. Using the MicroCase approach to the study of state and local politics is "cutting edge" given that no other such supplemental book exists. The field of state and local politics has become a comparative field, yet most of the supplemental books in this area are simply case study readings. Thus, this text brings a more modern approach utilizing data to the field and to students interested in state and local politics and policies.

APPROACH AND THEME OF THE BOOK

State and local governments touch our lives everyday. They are the levels of government that most people have contact with. Most state and local services are people-related. They pick up our garbage, educate us, keep us safe from criminals, and perform a whole host of other vital people-services. They regulate a wide range of business activities, from banking to cutting hair. The state government is also the single largest employer in every state; in aggregate, local governments employ even more people than do the states. So, as a consumer of government services, as a regulated businessperson, and/or as an employee, state and local governments are intimately involved in each of our lives. The closeness of

city hall, the ease of an email or a telephone call allows citizens to directly observe their government in action and to readily express their opinions on issues of interest to them.

But state and local government is not always in the forefront of the minds of U.S. citizens. When we think of government or public policy, we usually think of the federal government. Today, with 24 hour media coverage, the war on terror and national political scandals, it's easy for students to get the impression that the federal government dominates the policy making process. While most of us can name the president and perhaps a few U.S. senators, not very many of us can name our governor or mayor, and even fewer of us can recognize the names of our state legislators and city councilpersons. But for most of us the only direct contact we will have with the Federal government is as visitors to Washington D.C.

One purpose of this workbook is to introduce students to these important arenas of government so that they might participate in them more knowledgeably, whether as a voter, an elected official, or at some level in-between. Through the study of state and local government and policies, I hope that students will be better able to meet their responsibilities as a citizen in our democracy. The lower levels of government are closer to us than the national government and thus present greater opportunities for citizen involvement and influence.

State and local governments have acquired considerable importance and greatly modernized themselves over the past three decades. Since the 1980s, states and their cities have adopted innovative policies in several areas, including education, corrections, health care and the environment. Certainly, the federal government plays a large role in domestic matters, but the states remain major decision makers. They have expanded their activities reflecting the larger role state and local governments now play in the lives of citizens. In fact, some of the most challenging policy problems and issues are being confronted by state and local governments.

To this end, there are three basic themes in this workbook:

- 1.) Comparative Differences among state and local governments What are the differences among the states? What are the differences among cities? Counties? What difference does variation make?
- 2.) Resurgence of state and local governments How have state and local governments enhanced their capacity to govern in the past 30 years? How have they changed?
- 3.) Policy Differences What policy differences exist among state and local government? What accounts for these policy differences?

In this workbook, students will compare the fifty states and their local governments in terms of their social and economic differences, political and policy differences, and make an attempt to understand and explain these differences using the quantitative methods of political science.

Another goal, then, of this book is to introduce students to political science methods and the comparative study of states and communities. The study of state and local politics has changed over the years and so has the way many scholars now teach the class. The class used to be taught as simply the state and local politics of a particular state. That is, if the course was taught in Nevada, one would simply focus on Nevada politics. But the field of state and local politics has changed. The task of scholars and students today is not only to describe politics and public policy, but also to explain differences found

from state to state, city to city and county to county through comparative investigation. Comparison is, of course, a vital part of explanation and has now become a vital part of the state and local politics field.

Therefore, the text and exercises in this workbook focus on the comparative approach to the study of states and local governments. In this workbook students are able to explore and directly examine the differences in state and local governments. By emphasizing comparison, students are able to explore and examine state and local government institutions, such as political parties and primaries, legislatures, bureaucracies, gubernatorial powers, courts, state and local citizen participation; and state and local policy choices such as tax systems, education spending, crime policy and so on.

The field of state and local politics is becoming more and more methodologically sophisticated. The MicroCase format not only allows for the incorporation of comparative analysis to help us answer the question of "why?" differences exist among states and communities but allows for the incorporation of changes in the methodology.

The methodological goal of this book is to guide students through an introduction to the key elements of several simple statistical applications, including a broad range of techniques for exploring and summarizing data as well as investigating and testing underlying relationships within the data. My hope is that students will gain an understanding of when and why to use these various techniques as well as how to apply them with confidence and interpret their output using MicroCase.

By using this text in conjunction with a complete state and local textbook, students will use all of the ExplorIt functions (mapping, scatterplot, cross-tabulation, univariate analysis, historical trends, auto analyzer) to learn how to use data to explore issues in state and local politics and how to investigate new ideas and conduct research to test these ideas. The functions used in this text allow students to investigate relationships between variables and test for "statistical significance."

Each chapter in the state and local text has two sections. The first section discusses a particular area of state and local politics (i.e. Governors) and demonstrates how data are used to support, augment and test the ideas proposed. It is possible to read this section without using the computer. However, all the graphics in the text can be created on a student's computer by following the ExplorIt guide. The exercise section that follows allows students to use ExplorIt to follow up on the ideas presented in section 1 by doing their own research to complete the exercises.

This MicroCase workbook also includes a section entitled "On Your Own." The questions in these sections are designed to get the students to examine the extent to which the general principles discussed in the workbook apply to their own state or community. It is my hope that having these self-discovery questions for the students will be a way to have them contribute to classroom discussions about how some of the general principles of state and local governments apply to their own community situation. I have found that since most students have some knowledge about their own state and local governments and their actions, they are often willing to join in the class discussion when given the opportunity.

An equally important purpose of my MicroCase book on state and local government is to let students discover many of the basic aspects of states and communities for themselves. For students who are interested in getting involved in government in some manner, they will have a much better chance of meaningful participation if they understand the particular workings of state and local governments.

GETTING STARTED

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to ExplorIt! With the easy-to-use software available for this workbook, you will have the opportunity to learn about state politics and policy by exploring the 50 states and dozens of issues about public policy and political behavior with data from around the United States.

Each exercise in this workbook deals with a theme in the study of state politics and policy. The preliminary section of each chapter uses data provided with the workbook to illustrate key issues related to the topic in question. You can easily create all the graphics in this part of the exercise by following the ExplorIt Guides you'll be seeing. Doing so will take just a few clicks of your computer mouse and will help you become familiar with ExplorIt. The ExplorIt Guides are described in more detail below.

Each exercise also has a worksheet section where you'll do your own data analysis. This section usually contains about a dozen questions that will either follow up on examples from the preliminary section or have you explore some new issues. You'll use the Student ExplorIt software to answer these questions.

SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS

- Windows 98 (or higher)
- 64 MB RAM (minimum)
- 20 MB of hard drive space
- Internet Access (broadband recommended)

Macintosh Note: This software was designed for use with a PC. To run the software on a Macintosh, you will need PC emulation software or hardware installed. Many Macintosh computers in the past few years come with PC emulation software or hardware. For more information about PC emulation software or hardware, review the documentation that came with your computer or check with your local Macintosh retailer.

NETWORK VERSIONS OF STUDENT EXPLORIT

A network version of Student ExplorIt is available at no charge to instructors who adopt this book for their course. We strongly recommend installing the network version if students may be using this software on lab computers. The network version is available from the Instructor Companion page for this book at http://politicalscience.wadsworth.com.

INSTALLING STUDENT EXPLORIT

A card has been packaged with this book. This card contains a PIN code and a website address from which you can download the Student ExplorIt software needed to complete the exercises in this book. You must have this card to obtain the software. Only one person may use this card.

To install Student ExplorIt to a hard drive, you will need to follow the instructions on the card to register for access. Once you are on the download screen, follow these steps in order:

- 1. Select DOWNLOAD to begin downloading the software.
- 2. You will then be selected with a choice:
 - a. Run this program from its current location. This is the recommended option and this option will allow the installation to begin as soon as the file is downloaded to your computer.
 - b. Save this program to disk. This option will allow you to save the downloaded file to your computer for later installation. This option also provides you a file that will reinstall the software in the event this is needed. If you select this option you will then need to specify where to save the file. Be sure to select a location where you can easily find the file. This file is named STU176771.exe. Once the file has downloaded, locate the downloaded file and open or double-click the file name.
- 3. A security warning may appear next. Select [Yes].
- 4. The next screen will display the name of this book. Click [OK] to continue.
- 5. The next screen shows where the files needed for the installation will be placed. We strongly recommend you accept the default location, but if desired, you can specify a new location. Click [Unzip] to begin the install.
- During the installation, you will be presented with several screens, as described below. In most cases you will be required to make a selection or entry and then click [Next] to continue.

The first screen that appears is the **License Name** screen. Here you are asked to type your name. It is important to type your name correctly, since it cannot be changed after this point. Your name will appear on all printouts, so make sure you spell it completely and correctly! Then click [Next] to continue.

A **Welcome** screen now appears. This provides some introductory information and suggests that you shut down any other programs that may be running. Click [Next] to continue.

You are next presented with a **Software License Agreement**. Read this screen and click [Yes] if you accept the terms of the software license.

The next screen has you Choose the Destination for the program files. You are strongly advised to use the destination directory that is shown on the screen. Click [Next] to continue.

7. The Student ExplorIt program will now be installed. At the end of the installation, you will be asked if you would like a shortcut icon placed on the Windows desktop. We recommend that you select [Yes]. You are now informed that the installation of Student ExplorIt is finished. Click the [Finish] button and you will be returned to the opening Welcome Screen. To exit completely, click the option "Exit Welcome Screen."

STARTING STUDENT EXPLORIT

There are two ways to run Student ExplorIt: (1) from a hard drive installation, or (2) from a network installation. Both methods are described below.

Starting Student ExplorIt from a Hard Drive Installation

If Student ExplorIt is installed to the hard drive of your computer (see earlier section "Installing Student ExplorIt"), locate the Student ExplorIt "shortcut" icon on the Windows desktop, which looks something like this:



To start Student ExplorIt, position your mouse pointer over the shortcut icon and double-click (that is, click it twice in rapid succession). If you did not permit the shortcut icon to be placed on the desktop during the install process (or if the icon was accidentally deleted), you can follow these directions to start the software:

Click [Start] from the Windows desktop.

Click [Programs].

Click MicroCase.

Click Student ExplorIt - CO.

After a few seconds, Student ExplorIt will appear on your screen.

Starting Student ExplorIt from a Network

If the network version of Student ExplorIt has been installed to a computer network, double-click the Student ExplorIt icon that appears on the Windows desktop to start the program. You will need to enter your name each time you start the network version. Anything you print from software will display the name you enter and the current date. (Note: Your instructor may provide additional information that is unique to your computer network.)

MAIN MENU OF STUDENT EXPLORIT

Student ExplorIt is extremely easy to use. All you do is point and click your way through the program. That is, use your mouse arrow to point at the selection you want, and then click the left button on the mouse.

The main menu is the starting point for everything you will do in Student ExplorIt. Look at how it works. Notice that not all options on the menu are always available. You will know which options are available at any given time by looking at the colors of the options. For example, when you first start the software, only the Open File option is immediately available. As you can see, the colors for this option are brighter than those for the other tasks shown on the screen. Also, when you move your mouse pointer over this option, it becomes highlighted.

EXPLORIT GUIDES

Throughout this workbook, "ExplorIt Guides" provide the basic information needed to carry out each task. Here is an example:

➤ Data File: STATES

➤ Task: Mapping

➤ Variable 1: 55) POP_02

➤ View: Map

Each line of the ExplorIt Guide is actually an instruction. Let's follow the simple steps to carry out this task.

Step 1: Select a Data File

Before you can do anything in Student ExplorIt, you need to open a data file. To open a data file, click the Open File task. A list of data files will appear in a window (e.g., COLONIAL, USCOUNTY, GSS, etc.). If you click on a file name once, a description of the highlighted file is shown in the window next to this list. In the ExplorIt Guide shown above, the > symbol to the left of the Data File step indicates that you should open the STATES data file. To do so, click STATES and then click the [Open] button (or just double-click STATES). The next window that appears (labeled File Settings) provides additional information about the data file, including a file description, the number of cases in the file, and the number of variables, among other things. To continue, click the [OK] button. You are now returned to the main menu of Student ExplorIt. (You won't need to repeat this step until you want to open a different data file.) Notice that you can always see which data file is currently open by looking at the file name shown on the top line of the screen.

Step 2: Select a Task

Once you open a data file, the next step is to select a program task. Six analysis tasks are offered in this version of Student ExplorIt. Not all tasks are available for each data file, because some tasks are appropriate only for certain kinds of data. Mapping, for example, is a task that applies only to ecological data, and thus cannot be used with survey data files.

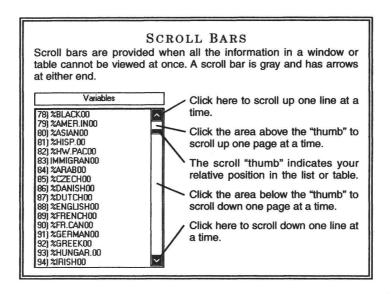
In the ExplorIt Guide we're following, the ➤ symbol on the second line indicates that the Mapping task should be selected, so click the Mapping option with your left mouse button.

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Step 3: Select a Variable

After a task is selected, you will be shown a list of the variables in the open data file. Notice that the first variable is highlighted and a description of that variable is shown in the Variable Description window at the lower right. You can move this highlight through the list of variables by using the up and down cursor keys (as well as the <Page Up> and <Page Down> keys). You can also click once on a variable name to move the highlight and update the variable description. Go ahead-move the highlight to a few other variables and read their descriptions.

If the variable you want to select is not showing in the variable window, click on the scroll bars located on the right side of the variable list window to move through the list. See the following figure:



By the way, you will find an appendix at the back of this workbook that contains a list of the variable names for key data files provided in this package.

Each task requires the selection of one or more variables, and the ExplorIt Guides indicate which variables should be selected. The ExplorIt Guide example here indicates that you should select 55) POP_02 as Variable 1. On the screen, there is a box labeled Variable 1. Inside this box, there is a vertical cursor that indicates that this box is currently an active option. When you select a variable, it will be placed in this box. Before selecting a variable, be sure that the cursor is in the appropriate box. If it is not, place the cursor inside the appropriate box by clicking the box with your mouse. This is important because in some tasks the ExplorIt Guide will require more than one variable to be selected, and you want to be sure that you put each selected variable in the right place.

To select a variable, use any one of the methods shown below. (Note: If the name of a previously selected variable is in the box, use the <Delete> or <Backspace> key to remove it-or click the [Clear All] button.)

Type the number of the variable and press <Enter>.

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- Type the name of the variable and press < Enter>. Or you can type just enough of the name to
 distinguish it from other variables in the data-POP would be sufficient for this example.
- Double-click the desired variable in the variable list window. This selection will then appear in
 the variable selection box. (If the name of a previously selected variable is in the box, the newly
 selected variable will replace it.)
- Highlight the desired variable in the variable list, and then click the arrow that appears to the
 left of the variable selection box. The variable you selected will now appear in the box. (If the
 name of a previously selected variable is in the box, the newly selected variable will replace it.)

Once you have selected your variable (or variables), click the [OK] button to continue to the final results screen.

Step 4: Select a View

The next screen that appears shows the final results of your analysis. In most cases, the screen that first appears matches the "view" indicated in the ExplorIt Guide. In this example, you are instructed to look at the Map view-that's what is currently showing on the screen. In some instances, however, you may need to make an additional selection to produce the desired screen.



POP_02 - 2002: RESIDENT POPULATION (THOUSANDS) (SA, 2002)

(OPTIONAL) Step 5: Select an Additional Display

Some ExplorIt Guides will indicate that an additional "Display" should be selected. In that case, simply click on the option indicated for that additional display. For example, this ExplorIt Guide may have included an additional line that required you to select the Legend display.

Step 6: Continuing to the Next ExplorIt Guide

Some instructions in the ExplorIt Guide may be the same for at least two examples in a row. For instance, after you display the map for population in the example above, the following ExplorIt Guide may be given:

Data File: STATES
Task: Mapping

➤ Variable 1: 53) WARM WINTR

➤ View: Map

Notice that the first two lines in the ExplorIt Guide do not have the > symbol located in front of the items. That's because you already have the data file STATES open and you have already selected the Mapping task. With the results of your first analysis showing on the screen, there is no need to return to the main menu to complete this next analysis. Instead, all you need to do is select WARM WINTR as your new variable. Click the [2] button located in the top left corner of your screen and the variable selection screen for the MAPPING task appears again. Replace the variable with 53) WARM WINTR and click [OK].

To repeat: You need to do only those items in the ExplorIt Guide that have the ➤ symbol in front of them. If you start from the top of the ExplorIt Guide, you're simply wasting your time.

If the ExplorIt Guide instructs you to select an entirely new task or data file, you will need to return to the main menu. To return to the main menu, simply click the [Menu] button located at the top left corner of the screen. At this point, select the new data file and/or task that is indicated in the ExplorIt Guide.

That's all there is to the basic operation of Student ExplorIt. Just follow the instructions given in the ExplorIt Guide and point and click your way through the program.

ADDITIONAL SHORTCUTS

There are some additional ways to navigate through the software that you may find helpful.

- If you are frequently switching between two to four data files, using the Windows 2000 or higher
 operating system, you can quickly change files from any screen by clicking [File] on the dropdown menu. The last four files opened will appear at the bottom of the drop down list. You can
 select the desired file from this list, the file will open automatically, and you will be returned to
 the main menu to select the desired task.
- Again, by clicking [File] on the drop-down menu, you can select [Open] to open any data file from any screen. When you open a new file you will automatically return to the main menu.
- To switch to a different statistical task, instead of returning to the main menu, select [Statistics] from the drop-down menu and select the desired task. NOTE: if you select a task that is not enabled on the main menu, a message box will open alerting you that this task is not available.
- You can open a list of available variables at any time by pressing the <F3> key.

ONLINE HELP

Student ExplorIt offers extensive on-line help. You can obtain task-specific help by pressing <F1> at any point in the program. For example, if you are performing a scatterplot analysis, you can press <F1> to see the help for the SCATTERPLOT task.

If you prefer to browse through a list of the available help topics, select Help from the pull-down menu at the top of the screen and select the **Help Topics** option. At this point, you will be provided a list of topic areas. A closed-book icon represents each topic. To see what information is available in a given topic area, double-click on a book to "open" it. (For this version of the software, use only the "Student ExplorIt" section of help; do not use the "Student MicroCase" section.) When you double-click on a book

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graphic, a list of help topics is shown. A help topic is represented by a graphic with a piece of paper with a question mark on it. Double-click on a help topic to view it.

If you have questions about Student ExplorIt, try the on-line help described above. If you are not very familiar with software or computers, you may want to ask a classmate or your instructor for assistance.

EXITING FROM STUDENT EXPLORIT

If you are continuing to the next section of this workbook, it is not necessary to exit from Student ExplorIt quite yet. But when you are finished using the program, return to the main menu and select the [Exit Program] button that appears on the screen.

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FIRST EDITION

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