

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

{ SIXTH EDITION }

POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENT
and
INSTITUTIONAL
CHANGE

CAL JILLSON



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Political Development and Institutional Change

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AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

To J_{ANE}

"Give me liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience, above all liberties. And though all the winds of doctrine were let loose to play upon the earth, so Truth be in the field, we do injuriously...to misdoubt her strength. Let her and Falsehood grapple; who ever knew Truth put to the worse, in a free and open endeavor."

John Milton, *Aeropagitica*, 1644

PREFACE

American politics is not as simple as it looks. This has probably always been true, but it has never been truer than it is today. Whether you are president, pundit, scholar, or student, you have to decide what to make of Islamic fundamentalism, Russian democracy, global free trade, and Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons. Closer to home you have to decide what to make of gay marriage, the fear that social security might go broke, and judicial activism.

On the other hand, how difficult can it be for a college professor to introduce a college student to American politics? After all, politics and government are all around us: in the newspapers that we read, on the evening news that we watch, and in the high school history and civics courses that we all took—some more recently than others. We all have a general feel for American politics.

But for most students, even those who have been out in the world for a while between high school and college, information about politics and government comes in bits and pieces having little structure and less meaning. How do the pieces of American politics fit together, from public opinion and political participation, to constitutional limitations and political institutions, to the enactment of particular laws, policies, and programs? This book offers a systematic introduction to American government and politics for college and university students.

In my experience, students have three broad reactions to the initial description of virtually any aspect of the American political system. Whether the discussion is of the electoral process, the committee system in Congress, or the rules governing eligibility for food stamps, the preeminent and continuing question that students bring to the discussion is: How does it work? Answering this question—the descriptive question—is usually the easy part. Halfway through the answer, the student's brow begins to knit and that quizzical look that teachers know so well comes over the student's face, and he or she asks: Why do we do it that way? The teacher's answer, of course, is couched in terms of how things came to be this way—the historical explanation—and then, almost inevitably, and often immediately, students want to know about potential alternatives—the normative concern—isn't there a better way to do this?

My goal in this book is to provide solid descriptive and historical answers to the first two questions and open and encourage discussion among students

and between students and their teachers of the broader issues involved. Historical development and institutional change are the organizing themes of this book. History regularly empties ideas and institutions of their initial meanings and refills them with different, although never wholly different, meanings more relevant to the new day. Freedom, equality, and democracy did not mean the same thing to Thomas Jefferson as they came to mean to Abraham Lincoln or Franklin Roosevelt. They did not mean exactly the same thing to George W. Bush that they meant to his predecessors. Moreover, the presidency that Barack Obama occupies is simply not the same office that Roosevelt, Lincoln, or Jefferson occupied.

On the assumption that it is hard to know where you are going if you do not know where you have been, each chapter of this text opens with a discussion of the origins and development of the subject of the chapter, whether that be individual rights and liberties, the electoral system, the presidency, or America's place in the world. Once we know how some aspect of American politics stands today and how it got that way, we are in position to begin a discussion of what alternatives might look like. A truly useful text should show where we have been, where we are today, and where we seem to be headed.

I have chosen to write the brief American government text that you have before you rather than a book twice its size, because faculty know too much that is fascinating and students have too many interesting questions for any book to try to anticipate and address them all. What I have tried to do is to describe how the American political system works, how it came to work that way, and what the general range of possibilities, both for continuity and for change, seem to be. Where the conversation goes from there is up to students and their teachers, as it should be.

To students, I hope to say more than that politics is important, that it will affect your lives, time and again, continuously, and in important ways. I hope to provide a sense of how politics works so that when an issue arises about which you care deeply you will not feel helpless. Politics is not just a spectator sport. Rather, it is a sport in which all who turn out make the team and all who come to practice get to start—not always with the varsity, to be sure, but politics is a game that we are all entitled to play. To faculty teaching American government, I hope to help you communicate to your students both what we know as political scientists and how much fun we had in being part of the process of discovering it and teaching about it.

FEATURES AND CHANGES

The sixth edition retains many of the features from the previous editions.

The Constitution Today

"The Constitution Today" is a new feature prepared for the sixth edition. Each chapter opens with a vignette that highlights the continuing relevance, even

centrality, of the Constitution to our most critical modern political debates and controversies. The United States is very unusual in this regard. The Founders invented the idea of a written constitution resting on the foundation of popular sovereignty. Many nations now have written constitutions, but no nation reveres its constitution the way Americans do theirs. Moreover, no nation gives its constitution the central role that Americans do in shaping the outcome of important substantive political debates and battles. In America, it has often been said, every major political dispute eventually will end up before the courts so that the proposed political outcomes can be measured against the Constitution.

The first two chapters in this book deal with the origins of American political principles and how those principles informed and shaped the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. We open these chapters with explorations of the idea of “American exceptionalism” and of the deep historical resonance of Barack Obama’s famous “Speech on Race” delivered during the 2008 presidential campaign. In Chapters 3 through 16, we highlight the relevance of key provisions of the Constitution to our most important contemporary political battles. This new feature, “The Constitution Today,” spotlights the way that the provisions of the Constitution shape and structure our fights over issues like gay marriage, gun control, campaign contributions and free speech, states rights, congressional redistricting, health care reform, war powers, and much more. These vignettes bring to life otherwise obscure provisions of the Constitution by highlighting the critical issues that they decide. They are identified in the text by the following symbol



Focus Questions

Each chapter opens with a set of focus questions that prepare the student for the major points made in the chapter. The questions later appear in the margin where the text addresses that particular question, allowing students to easily scan the chapter for a quick review after they have completed their reading.


“Pro & Con” and “Let’s Compare” Boxes

As in the previous edition, the book includes two different types of boxed features. “Pro & Con” features offer opposing viewpoints to controversial issues currently in the news and “Let’s Compare” features place the discussion of U.S. institutions and processes in a global context, giving students a sense of possible alternatives to the American political tradition.

End-of-Chapter Features

Each chapter closes with a timeline, a summary, a list of central concepts and cases, and suggestions for additional reading. Finally, this new edition directs students to the Internet for more information on topics discussed in the text. At the end of each chapter are URLs that direct students to further information on issues, institutions, groups, and data discussed in the book.

Companion Reader: Perspectives On American Government

To supplement the new 6th edition of *American Government: Political Development and Institutional Change*, I have joined with David Robertson of the University of Missouri, St. Louis, to develop an American Government reader. This reader, which we have called *Perspectives on American Government: Readings in American Political Development and Institutional Change* (Routledge, 2010), facilitates deeper exploration of key themes in the text. The chapter order of the text and the reader has been aligned so that they can be assigned together if instructors wish. Each chapter of the reader is composed of six or seven selections, usually two or three classic readings, from Locke, the Federalist, Jefferson, Tocqueville, and the like, and four or five of the most outstanding American Political Development (APD) essays of recent years from today's top scholars. This reader will deepen and enrich the learning experience of students using this text. These readings are identified in the Suggested Readings sections at the end of each chapter of this volume by the following symbol .

Online Resources

American Government offers a website for both students and instructors at www.routledge.com/textbooks/jillson. This site contains a wealth of useful resources to help students as they learn about American politics and instructors as they prepare their courses.

For Instructors

Instructor Manual Chapter by chapter, the manual provides answers to the text's Focus Questions; chapter outlines; lecture outline suggestions with options for behavioral, APD, institutional, or political theory approaches to the course; projects, exercises, and activities; and additional resources.

Test Bank A full test bank for each chapter, with multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay questions, available as Word documents, for the Respondus testing software, or in formats compatible with uploading to Blackboard, WebCT, or other Virtual Learning Environments.

PowerPoint Lecture Slides Instructors can access sample lecture slides, mirroring the lecture outlines provided in the Instructor Manual and complete with figures and tables from the text.

Course Management Cartridges Instructors have access to course cartridges to upload into Blackboard, WebCT, or Moodle, making all the features of both the student site and instructor resources readily accessible in the platform you're already using.

For Students

Chapter Summaries Summaries help students home in on the main points of each chapter.

Practice Quizzes Self-tests for each chapter provide students instant feedback on their answers.

Flashcards Interactive flashcards allow students to test their knowledge of the book's key concepts.

Participation Activities Activity prompts encourage students to explore further the themes of the book, asking them to apply those themes to their own experiences.

Interactive Timelines These timelines bring to life key dates and eras illustrated in each chapter of the text through links to relevant articles, videos, and websites, thus enhancing students' understanding of these pivotal milestones in American politics.

Links Useful websites and resources are provided here to allow for further investigation of the material.

Updates

The sixth edition has been updated and revised in several important ways. In the first five editions of this text, Chapter 13 dealt with Civil Liberties and Civil Rights. In this and future editions, Civil Liberties and Civil Rights will be treated in separate chapters (Chapters 13 and 14) and, therefore, more fully. Likewise, Chapter 6, Interest Groups, has been expanded and a major new discussion of the battle over health care reform has been added. Moreover, chapter opening vignettes, "The Constitution Today," highlighting the relevance of specific provisions of the U.S. Constitution to the chapter's content and, just as importantly, to the major issues of the day, have been added. Finally, the sixth edition has been thoroughly updated to provide complete coverage of the early years of the Obama presidency and of the public reaction that produced the powerful Republican resurgence in the 2010 midterm elections.

PLAN OF THE BOOK

This sixth edition of *American Government: Political Development and Institutional Change* is divided into sixteen chapters. Each chapter begins with a new vignette and several focus questions designed to introduce and display the main themes of the chapter. The subject matter of each chapter is presented in five or six major sections, with each major section divided internally into subsections, in explicit outline form, so that it is easy for students to understand and study.

Chapters 1 through 3 present the political principles and constitutional foundations of American politics. Chapter 1 describes the ideas about

government that the colonists carried from the old world to the new and the effects of the openness and bounty of the new continent on those ideas. Chapter 2 describes the social, economic, and political institutions that were in place in the American colonies as the Revolution approached. The historical and practical knowledge of the revolutionary generation provided the menu of institutional possibilities from which they chose as they first designed their state governments, the Articles of Confederation, and later the U.S. Constitution. Chapter 3 describes changes in the broad structure of American federalism as the nation evolved from agriculture, to industrial powerhouse, to global superpower.

Chapters 4 through 8 describe how Americans learn about politics, organize their thinking about politics, and come together in interest groups, social movements, and political parties to affect the course of politics. Chapter 4 describes how Americans get their political information and what the distribution of partisan and political opinion among Americans looks like. Chapter 5 describes the American mass media and the role that they play in determining which political issues and what political information comes to our collective attention. Chapter 6 describes how Americans come together in interest groups to press their ideas, interests, and demands for change on government. Chapter 7 describes the changing role that political parties, including third parties, play in elections and governance. Chapter 8 describes how citizens, variously informed and organized, use the process of campaigns, elections, and voting to select their political leaders and, much more broadly, the policies that their leaders will implement.

Chapters 9 through 12 describe the major institutions of the national government and how they relate to each other and to the problems and issues that confront them. Chapter 9 describes the structure of the Congress and the legislative process through which it seeks to represent and respond to the ideas, needs, and interests at large in the country. Chapter 10 describes the range of responsibilities and expectations that confront the American president and the American presidency. Chapter 11 describes the bureaucratic structure of the national government and the dilemmas that face the bureaucrats who staff them as they seek to deliver a wide range of services fairly, efficiently, and at a reasonable cost. Chapter 12 presents the structure of the federal judiciary and the ongoing controversy over whether its role should be one of judicial activism or of judicial restraint.

Finally, Chapters 13 through 16 provide a broad overview of the domestic and international policy issues and opportunities facing the United States in the new century. Chapters 13 and 14 link the changing scope and character of our civil liberties and civil rights to the evolving character of our society. Chapter 15 explores the tension between our desire to provide social programs to aid and assist the neediest among us and our desire to keep taxes low so that citizens can enjoy the fruits of their labor and American companies and products can remain competitive in the global economy. Chapter 16 seeks to place America and its future, both the futures of its individual citizens and of the nation collectively, within the broad and rapidly changing context of the world economy and the world political environment.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many debts were incurred in the writing and revision of this book. My greatest debt remains to all the authors who went before and upon whom I had the good fortune to draw. Completion of this new edition of *American Government* leaves me with a renewed sense of pleasure and pride in our collective enterprise—political science.

Much of this sense of pleasure and pride comes from remembering how many fine people contributed to the conception, development, and completion of this book, particularly the Routledge team and the reviewers. Michael Kerns, acquisitions editor, has been unwavering in support of this enterprise. The team that he assembled eased my way tremendously. Felisa Salvago-Keyes, development editor, and Siân Findlay, project editor in production, pulled all of the pieces together in the end and actually made a book of the raw materials that I provided them.

I owe special thanks to David Tatom and Stacey Sims for their stalwart support of this book. I also received wonderful support from the staff of the Political Science Department and the John Tower Center for Political Studies at Southern Methodist University. I would like to thank Noelle McAlpine, Jane Sterling, Chris Carberry, and Catrina Whitley. Several colleagues, including Dennis Ippolito, Dennis Simon, Joe Kobylka, Jim Gerhardt, Brad Carter, Matthew Wilson, and Jim Hollifield came to my aid more frequently than either they or I would like to remember.

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BRIEF CONTENTS

Chapter 1	THE ORIGINS OF AMERICAN POLITICAL PRINCIPLES	1
Chapter 2	THE REVOLUTION AND THE CONSTITUTION	25
Chapter 3	FEDERALISM AND AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT	57
Chapter 4	POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION AND PUBLIC OPINION	85
Chapter 5	THE MASS MEDIA AND THE POLITICAL AGENDA	114
Chapter 6	INTEREST GROUPS: THE POLITICS OF INFLUENCE	146
Chapter 7	POLITICAL PARTIES: WINNING THE RIGHT TO GOVERN	179
Chapter 8	VOTING, CAMPAIGNS, AND ELECTIONS	214
Chapter 9	CONGRESS: LOCAL REPRESENTATION AND NATIONAL LAWMAKING	253
Chapter 10	THE PRESIDENT: GOVERNING IN UNCERTAIN TIMES	290
Chapter 11	BUREAUCRACY: REDESIGNING GOVERNMENT FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY	329
Chapter 12	THE FEDERAL COURTS: ACTIVISM VERSUS RESTRAINT	363
Chapter 13	CIVIL LIBERTIES: ORDERED LIBERTY IN AMERICA	398
Chapter 14	CIVIL RIGHTS: WHERE LIBERTY AND EQUALITY COLLIDE	427
Chapter 15	GOVERNMENT, THE ECONOMY, AND DOMESTIC POLICY	458
Chapter 16	AMERICA'S PLACE IN A DANGEROUS WORLD	495
Appendix A	THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE	529
Appendix B	THE ARTICLES OF THE CONFEDERATION	532
Appendix C	CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES	538

Appendix D	FEDERALIST NUMBER 10, 51, AND 78	550
Appendix E	PARTISAN CONTROL OF THE PRESIDENCY, CONGRESS, AND THE SUPREME COURT	561
	ENDNOTES	565
	GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS	585
	GLOSSARY OF CASES	598
	INDEX	603