

POLITICS
IN
STATES
AND
COMMUNITIES

EIGHTH EDITION



THOMAS R. DYE

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AND
COMMUNITIES

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THOMAS R. DYE
Florida State University



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POLITICS
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To Joann

PREFACE

Since its first edition, *Politics in States and Communities* has maintained certain distinguishing features:

- Its focus on *politics*
- Its *comparative* approach
- Its concern with *explanation*
- Its interest in *policy*

The Eighth Edition continues the development of each of these themes. The focus remains on conflicts in states and communities and the structures and processes designed to manage conflict. This “conflict management” theme emphasizes the sources and nature of conflict in society, how conflict is carried on, how key decision makers in states and communities act in conflict situations, how public policies emerge and determine “who gets what.”



POLITICS

The *political conflict* theme guides the discussion of formal governmental structures: federalism, state constitutions, parties and primaries, apportionment, legislative organization, gubernatorial powers, court procedures, nonpartisanship, mayor and manager government, metropolitan government, community power, school boards and superintendents, tax systems, budget making, and so on.

This theme also guides the discussion of *illustrative studies* in state and local politics:

- Tax Limitation Initiatives
- Term Limit Battles
- Congress Raises the Drinking Age
- The States and ERA
- Money in Politics
- The Great Incumbency Machine
- Impeachment: Arizona’s Evan Mechem
- The Lawyering of America
- The Rejection of Rose Bird
- The War on Drugs
- Political Corruption
- “Reinventing Government”
- The Radical Style: Politics in Berkeley
- Minorities in Local Politics

Machine and Reform Politics in Chicago
Top Bananas in the Big Apple
Busing and Racial Balancing in Schools
The Battle over Abortion
The Inner City: Racial Tensions and Rioting
Wilder of Virginia: Putting Race to Rest
Educational Reform
Revolting Against Taxes
“No-Growth” Politics and the Nimby Syndrome

The timely case studies are designed to both improve understanding and stimulate interest in state and local politics.



COMPARISON

In each chapter, *comparative analysis* is used both to describe and to explain differences among states and communities in governmental structures, political processes, and public policy. Students observe the relative ranking of their own state on such measures as

Income
Education
Urbanization
Growth
Black and ethnic populations
Liberalism and conservatism
Reliance and Federal Aid
Party competition
Political participation
Interest groups
Black representation in legislatures
Professionalism in legislatures
Governors' powers
Governors' Fiscal Conservatism
Judicial selection
Crime rates
Police protection
Prison populations
Drop out rates
Educational spending
Income inequality
Welfare spending
Tax burdens

“Rankings of the states” are presented in clear bar graphs and plots. They enable students and instructors to assess their own state’s position in relation to all fifty states.



EXPLANATION

We want to know “what” is happening in American politics, but we also want to know “why.” *Comparative analysis* lays the groundwork for explanation. In each chapter, recent systematic research in the social sciences is summarized for undergraduate students. Difficult theoretical questions are presented clearly and concisely for undergraduates:

- Direct versus representative Democracy
- Politics and the popular initiative
- Why federalism?
- How money shifted power to Washington
- Are protests effective?
- The effects of party competition
- Apportionment, districting, and gerrymandering
- Are legislators responsible policy makers?
- Governors versus Legislatures
- Are school boards responsible policy makers?
- Are council members responsible policy makers?
- Crime and deterrence
- Types of cities and forms of government
- Privatization as Reform
- Reformism and public policy
- Models of community power
- How to study community power
- Metropolitan government as marketplace
- Explaining educational policies in the states
- Explaining welfare policies in the states
- Explaining state tax systems
- Explaining the tax revolt

The most recent systematic social science research of these topics is presented in the Eighth Edition.



POLICY

Public *policy* is what governments do, and state and local governments in America do many things that touch the lives of all of us. This text is divided roughly into three parts: federalism and state politics, local politics and community power, and public policy. Specific attention is devoted to policy questions in

Crime in the states
Police and law enforcement
State correctional policies
The death penalty
Abortion
The states and school desegregation
Affirmative action
The politics of higher education
The politics of "no-growth"
Housing and development policy
Poverty in America
Health care in the states
The tax revolt
The politics of budgeting
Fiscal stress and cutback management

The Eighth Edition reflects the changing dynamics of conflict in states and communities, including debates over term limits and incumbency advantages, battles over abortion restrictions following *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, controversies over the privatization of governmental services, fights over educational performance and its measurement, and disputes over welfare and health care reform. It describes increased minority representation in state legislatures and city councils, following recent redistricting under federal court supervision. It focuses new attention on conflicts between governors and legislatures and the "gridlock" resulting from divided party control of state government. It reports on conditions in the nation's inner cities and racial tensions and rioting in Los Angeles and elsewhere. It describes the evolution of governmental reform, including the "reinventing government" movement supported by Bill Clinton in Arkansas. It focuses anew on local battles over the control of land use and the conflicting interests of developers, landowners, "no-growthers," environmentalists, and "Nimbys."

If this book has a theme, it is that states and communities in America play an important role in the political life of the nation. State and local governments do more than merely provide certain services such as education, road building, or fire protection. They also perform a vital political function by helping to resolve conflicts of interests in American society.

THOMAS R. DYE

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1

POLITICS IN STATES AND COMMUNITIES



A POLITICAL APPROACH TO STATES AND COMMUNITIES

The management of conflict is one of the basic purposes of government. Two hundred years ago, James Madison wrote that the control of “factions” was the principal function of government. He defined a faction as a number of citizens united by common interests that opposed the interests of other citizens “or to the permanent and aggregate interests of the community.” He thought that regulating such conflict was “the principal task of modern legislation.”¹ To paraphrase Madison, the management of conflict is “the principal task” of state and local government.

Politics is the management of conflict. An understanding of “politics” in American states and communities requires an understanding of the major conflicts confronting society and an understanding of political processes and governmental organizations designed to manage conflict. State and local governments do more than provide public services such as education, highways, police and fire protec-

¹ James Madison, *The Federalist*, Number 10. New York: Modern Library, 1958.

tion, sewage disposal, and garbage collection. These are important functions of government to be sure; but it is even more important that government deal with racial tensions, school disputes, growth problems, economic stagnation, minority concerns, poverty, drugs, crime, and violence. These problems are primarily *political* in nature; that is, people have different ideas about what should be done, or if government should do anything at all.

Moreover, many of the service functions of government also engender political conflict. Even if “there is only one way to pave a street,” political questions remain. Whose street will get paved? Who will get the paving contract? Who will pay for it? Why not build a school gym instead of paving the street?

So it is appropriate that a book on *politics* in states and communities deals not only with the structure and organization of state and local government, but also with many of the central policy questions confronting American society. It is true that these problems are national in scope, but they occur in our communities and our states. And much of this book is devoted to describing how these questions arise in state and local settings, and how state and local governments confront them.



A COMPARATIVE APPROACH TO STATES AND COMMUNITIES

The task of political science is not only to *describe* politics and public policy in American states and communities, but also to *explain* differences encountered from state to state and community to community through comparative analysis. We want to know *what* is happening in American politics, and we want to know *why*. In the past, the phrase “comparative government” applied to the study of foreign governments, but American states and communities provide an excellent opportunity for genuine comparative study, which is *comparing political institutions and behaviors from state to state and community to community in order to identify and explain similarities or differences*.

Comparison is a vital part of explanation. Only by comparing politics and public policy in different states and communities with different socioeconomic and political environments can we arrive at any comprehensive explanations of political life. Comparative analysis helps us answer the question *why*.

American states and communities provide excellent “laboratories” for applying comparative analysis. States and communities are not alike in social and economic conditions, in politics and government, or in their public policies. These differences are important assets in comparative study because they enable us to search for relationships between different socioeconomic conditions, political system characteristics, and policy outcomes. For example, if differences among states and communities in educational policies are closely associated with differences in economic resources or in party politics, then we may assume that economic resources or party politics help “explain” educational policies.

State politics are often affected by unique historical circumstances. (See Figure 1-1, Table 1-1.) Louisiana is distinctive because of its French-Spanish colonial background, and the continuing influence of this background on its politics today.