

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS TODAY: THE ESSENTIALS

THIRD EDITION



Barbara A. Bardes

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Third Edition

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PREFACE

As we enter the 1990s, most political analysts predict little major change in the nation. We again have a Democratic Congress and a Republican president. The checks and balances that are always at work in our system will continue to be even more in evidence. We can be sure, though, that attempts by the Bush Administration to keep America prosperous and at peace introduce new political conflicts, an understanding of which will require knowledge of American political systems, practices, and institutions.

In this Third Edition we offer a systematic presentation that allows the student to master an understanding of our political system. We know how important relevance and currency are to today's students. That is why we have undertaken all necessary steps to integrate the results of the 1988 elections into the chapters that follow. Student-readers will, we hope, gain a sense that America is at a crossroads as it enters the 1990s. The nation—politically, socially, and economically—is in good shape, but issues such as homelessness and poverty, health care, military preparedness, international cooperation, foreign competitiveness, and federal budget deficits remain areas of concern.

The goal of this textbook is to enable students to perceive and understand both the dynamics of political change and those structures and patterns which reinforce the stability of the system. We believe that it is important for students to gain a comprehensive understanding of the system and its historical roots while at the same time catching the excitement of current political events. The inclusion of the most up-to-date material available increases the students' enthusiasm for the political process, and, therefore, enhances their desire to learn.

A TOTAL LEARNING/TEACHING PACKAGE

This text, along with its numerous supplements, constitutes what we believe to be a total learning/teaching package. Specifically, the text itself contains numerous pedagogical aids and high-interest additions, such as:

1. *A Preview of Contents to Each Chapter.* To give the student an understanding of what is to come, each chapter starts out with a topical outline of its contents.
2. *What If...?* In order to stimulate student interest in the chapter topics, each chapter begins with a hypothetical situation that we call "What If...?" For example, in Chapter 3 we ask the hypothetical question, "What If... Federal Troops Were Used to Stop Drugs?"

3. *Marginal Definitions.* Because terminology is often a stumbling block to understanding, each important term is printed in boldface. More importantly, a glossary definition appears in the margins adjacent to the boldfaced terms. Additionally, all of the marginal definitions are contained alphabetically in a glossary at the end of the text.
4. *Did You Know?* Throughout the text, within the margins, are various facts and figures that we call "Did You Know?" They add relevance, humor, and a certain amount of fun to the student's task of learning about American government and politics.
5. *Profiles and Highlights.* Every chapter is enlivened with profiles of key individuals who have made unique contributions to the American political system. Also included in every chapter are Highlight boxes, which take a closer look at some of the interesting aspects of topics discussed in the chapter.
6. *Getting Involved.* Because we believe that the best way for students to get a firmer understanding of the American political system is by getting involved, we offer suggestions on ways for them to get involved in the system. At the end of each chapter there are suggestions of where to write, whom to call, and what to do.
7. *Point-by-Point Chapter Summary.* At the end of each chapter the essential points in the chapter are presented in a point-by-point format for ease of review and understanding.
8. *Questions for Review and Discussion.* In order to elicit student interest and discussion in and out of class, there are two to five questions for review and discussion at the end of each chapter.
9. *Selected References.* Important and understandable references are given at the end of each chapter. Each reference is annotated to indicate its usefulness and the area that it covers.
10. *Tables, Charts, and Photos.* As you can readily see, the text uses tables and charts, as well as photos, to summarize and illustrate important institutional, historical, or economic facts.

APPENDICES

So that this book can serve as a reference, we have included important documents for the student of American government to have close at hand. The documents included are:

- The U.S. Constitution
- The Declaration of Independence
- A list of presidents of the United States with pertinent biographical information
- Federalist Papers #10 and #51

A NEW APPENDIX ON RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

Because many students are asked to do a research project, we have added a new appendix on how to do research in government and political science. Included in that appendix are suggested reference sources and

suggested step-by-step procedures for choosing and analyzing a research topic.

1988 ELECTION RESULTS TALLIED AND ANALYZED

Because we believe that students respond positively to up-to-date information, we have insured high student interest by including the latest presidential and congressional election results from November 1988. These results are presented in Chapter 1 on American democracy and political culture as well as in Chapter 6 on public opinion, Chapter 8 on political parties, Chapter 9 on campaigns and voting, and Chapter 10 on Congress. The analysis of the election in these chapters includes election results that show the strengths of incumbency in Congressional elections, and a discussion of voting turnout in 1988.

EXPANDED SUPPLEMENTS PACKAGE

We have developed, in conjunction with a number of our colleagues, supplementary teaching materials that, we believe, are among the best available today. For the Third Edition, we have greatly expanded the supplements package.

Study Guide

The student *Study Guide* was written by James McElyea of Tulsa Junior College, Oklahoma. Each chapter provides learning objectives, a topical outline, a list of terms and concepts, and a variety of self-study questions. New to this edition of the *Study Guide* is an essay describing how students can develop and improve their study skills for the American government course. The *Study Guide* is available for student purchase.

Instructor's Manual with Test Bank

The *Instructor's Manual* was written by Michael Dinneen of Tulsa Junior College and includes learning objectives and an annotated chapter outline with numerous teaching suggestions, examples, ideas for presentation, and supplemental lecture ideas. The test bank for the Third Edition has been thoroughly revised with many new items added. The test bank consists of multiple-choice, short-answer and essay questions.

Computerized Testing

A computerized testing program, WESTEST, containing the test questions from the *Instructor's Manual*, is available with this text. WESTEST may be obtained for the IBM PC and compatibles or the Apple II family of microcomputers. WESTEST allows instructors to create new tests, modify existing tests, change the questions from West's original test bank, and print tests in a variety of formats. Instructors can add questions of their own

to the test bank. Instructors should contact their West sales representative to inquire about acquiring WESTEST.

West's Computerized Study Guide

A new *Computerized Study Guide* is available with this edition. West's *Computerized Study Guide* allows students the opportunity to practice taking quizzes and tests on either IBM PC and compatibles or Apple II family of microcomputers and Macintosh computers. This new software contains a variety of self-testing formats, including multiple-choice, true/false, and essay. The instructor is able to add or edit the material. West's *Computerized Study Guide* is available free to adopters.

Videotapes

West Educational Publishing has acquired an extensive library of videotaped programs on topics in American politics. All qualified adopters of *American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials*, Third Edition, can select videotapes from this library for their institutions. Alternatively, adopters can choose from among selected half-hour video programs developed by the Dallas Community College District for the telecourse, "Government by Consent," airing in 1990.

An Introduction to Critical Thinking in American Politics

In keeping with the emphasis on critical thinking found in the Third Edition, we have written a new handbook entitled *An Introduction to Critical Thinking in American Politics*. This handbook introduces students to a series of critical-thinking techniques that will allow them to make better use of the information they receive about the political sphere from campaign speeches, mass media and privately sponsored publications. Although the examples used in the handbook relate specifically to American politics, the techniques in critical thinking presented can be of value to students in all their college courses, as well as their day-to-day activities. *An Introduction to Critical Thinking in American Politics* is available free, at the instructor's option, to all students who purchase a new copy of *American Politics and Government Today: The Essentials* Third Edition.

Enrichment Lectures

Each chapter has an Enrichment Lecture by the authors that includes full references plus one transparency. These provide additional lecture topics in outline form and are based upon the ideas presented in the "What If ...?" segments that open each chapter.

Transparency Acetates

A set of approximately 50 full color transparency acetates of key graphs, tables and diagrams found in the text is available to adopters of this text.

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Since we started this project a number of years ago, a sizable cadre of individuals has helped us in various phases of the undertaking. The following academic reviewers offered numerous constructive criticisms, comments, and suggestions during the preparation of the first edition of this text:

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Any errors that remain are our own. We welcome any and all comments from instructors and students alike. Comments that we have received on the first two editions have helped us improve it. Nonetheless, we know that we need to continue to make changes as the needs of instructors and students change.

Barbara Bardes
Steffen Schmidt
Mack Shelley

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