

W. PHILLIPS SHIVELY

# POWER & CHOICE

AN INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

FOURTH EDITION



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## AN INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

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FOURTH EDITION

**W. Phillips Shively**  
University of Minnesota

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## **POWER AND CHOICE**

### **An Introduction to Political Science**

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# ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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W. PHILLIPS SHIVELY is Professor of Political Science at the University of Minnesota, where he moved in 1971 after teaching at the University of Oregon and Yale University. He has also served as Visiting Professor at the University of Oslo in Norway. His research, which has appeared in numerous articles, deals with the comparative study of elections, and he has written *The Craft of Political Research*, an introduction to research techniques. He has also had practical political experience as a lobbyist in Minnesota. His true love is bird-watching.

**To Ruth Phillips Shively  
and  
Arthur W. Shively**

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# PREFACE

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This book provides a general, comparative introduction to the major concepts and themes of political science. For a number of years I had taught a course that attempted to accomplish this aim, and that experience had shown me how badly we need a text that is conceptually alive and that engages students with concrete examples of analysis without losing them in a clutter of definitional minutiae. That is what I aimed for when I first wrote this book, and I've been most pleased at the response it has elicited.

The title of the book, *Power and Choice*, indicates a subsidiary theme that recurs at intervals. Politics may be seen as (1) the use of power or (2) the production of a public choice. Often one or the other is heavily emphasized in approaching the subject. Marxism emphasizes politics as the use of power, while pluralism and much formal modeling work emphasize the emergence of public choices. For our present purpose I have defined politics as the use of power to make common decisions for a group of people, a definition that obviously demands that one hold both perspectives simultaneously. At various stages of my presentation I note instances in which an emphasis on just one of the two halves of the definition may yield a distorted interpretation.

Behind this subsidiary theme lies a broader theme that remains largely implicit—that political analysis is best conducted eclectically, rather than being straitjacketed into a single approach. My own research is squarely in the “behavioral” realm, for instance, but I found as I was working on this book that necessities of exposition and understanding pulled me toward a greater emphasis on policy and institutions than I had originally intended. Similarly, the state as an organizer of politics thrust itself more to the fore than I had anticipated. Distinctions that provide useful boundaries for research proved unhelpful in my efforts to build an understanding of politics among students; I think this is a healthy sign.

Material in the book is presented topically rather than on a country-by-country basis; but in order to add the sort of detailed contextual grounding that students gain from a country presentation I have included within each substantive chapter a couple of extended examples from countries that particularly display the conceptual material of that chapter. For instance, Chapter 2, which deals with the state, concludes with detailed sections on the European Union and on the establishment and maintenance of the

Nigerian state. Similarly, Chapter 15 (Bureaucracy and the Public Sector) gives detailed treatment to France, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil.

### NEW TO THE FOURTH EDITION

Just two years into the third edition of this book, much has changed. The Soviet Union has now broken up (though parts of it show signs of getting back together again); Czechoslovakia has split; South Africa has become a majoritarian democracy; Nigeria seems to be confirmed in military rule; and so on around the world. At the very least, a major updating was needed at this point.

However, I have also taken advantage of the need for updating to make several substantive changes. I have added new treatment of the role of empirical and normative theory in chapter 1. I have added two new sections, on political culture and on corruption. Since Italy's new electoral system is a mess to handle pedagogically, I have substituted Israel as an example of proportional representation. Finally, my view of the possible emerging world order when I wrote the third edition was surely colored too much by the optimism of 1991. In this new edition, the bloodletting in Yugoslavia adds the darker side of the new order.

I have been very pleased by the response to this book. It is a wonderful experience to run into people who have used it and felt that it had helped them. I am grateful to the many people who have given me suggestions or corrections. And in particular, I am grateful to the following reviewers, who will notice many of their suggestions incorporated: Gregory Butler, New Mexico State University; Brian Coyer, Henry Ford Community College; Elizabeth Dowell, University of Houston; Jose Garcia, New Mexico State University; Susan Ann Kay, Miami University; John Tannehill, Millersville University; and Rolf H. W. Theen, Purdue University.

*W. Phillips Shively*

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PART **ONE**

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**INTRODUCTION**

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## POLITICS: SETTING THE STAGE

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Everyone knows something about politics, and many people know a great deal about it. It is an interesting, amusing, and moving spectacle that ranks not too far behind professional sports in the eyes of many. Political scientists, however, *study* politics and *analyze* it. This involves doing pretty much the same sorts of things that other people do who follow politics: we read the newspapers and listen to press conferences, take part in political campaigns, and so on. But we also do some things differently. We usually try to see both sides of any question and to keep our emotions in low key, because emotions can cloud judgment. We borrow deliberately from other disciplines—such as economics, history, sociology, psychology, and philosophy—to help us understand what is going on politically. And above all, as you will see later in this chapter, we try to be precise about the meanings of the words we use. Many words having to do with politics—such as “liberal,” “represent,” and even “politics” itself—are quite complex, but most people use them unthinkingly. Political scientists are careful to analyze the varied meanings of such words and to use them precisely, partly because it is important to know exactly what we mean by the words we use and partly because careful examination of a richly complex word may teach us a lot about the things it describes.

What do political scientists study? Over recent years we have seen work in which political scientists:

- Measured just how much it actually costs a country to lose a war
- Devised a new system of voting in primaries that might have led to a different set of candidates for most presidential elections
- Analyzed and explained the various styles that members of the U.S. Congress adopt in dealing with their constituents
- Studied the spread of pension reforms across the states