

BRIEF  
EDITION

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KAREN O'CONNOR • LARRY J. SABATO

# AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

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ROOTS AND REFORM

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SECOND  
EDITION

USED

# American Government

ROOTS AND REFORM

Brief Edition  
Second Edition

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**Allyn and Bacon**

Boston ♦ London ♦ Toronto ♦ Sydney ♦ Tokyo ♦ Singapore



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Needham Heights, Massachusetts 02194  
A Simon & Schuster Company

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Composition/Prepress Buyer: Linda Cox  
Manufacturing Buyer: Megan Cochran  
Text and Art Designer: Deborah Schneck, Schneck-DePippo Graphics

#### **Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

O'Connor, Karen, 1952—

American government: roots and reform / Karen O'Connor, Larry J. Sabato. — 2nd ed., brief ed.

p. cm.

Includes index.

ISBN 0-02-389018-5 (alk. paper)

I. United States—Politics and government. I. Sabato, Larry.

II. Title.

JK274.026 1995b

320.973—dc20

95-19268

CIP

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Printed in the United States of America  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 00 99 98 97 96 95

# REFACE

Teaching introductory American government presents special challenges and rewards. It is a challenge to introduce a new discipline to beginning students. It is a challenge to jump from topic to topic each week. Above all, it is a challenge to motivate large and disparate groups of students to master new material. The rewards offered by success, however, can accumulate in students who pay more attention to their government, who participate in its workings as more informed citizens, and who better understand the workings of democracy as practiced in the United States.

We have witnessed some of these rewards from the lecture podium. With this book, we hope to offer our experiences in written form. Students need perspective and motivation; they also need to be exposed to information that will withstand the test of time. Our goal with this text is to transmit just this sort of information.

This Second Edition of our popular *American Government: Roots and Reform: Brief Edition* is not simply an update of the earlier edition of this book. Some chapters have been completely revised, old features such as “People of the Past” and “Then and Now” sections have been kept, but, in many chapters they have been replaced with new examples of the role that history plays in what happens today in American politics. User and reviewer suggestions prompted us to expand our popular “Toward Reform” and to add more detailed and expanded chapter summaries keyed to major headings in each chapter. And, the Glossary has been expanded and a new Case Glossary added. Sections have also been rewritten to reflect some of the major changes that continue to occur in the wake of the Republicans’ takeover of both Houses of Congress.

## Approach

We believe that we cannot fully understand the actions, issues, and policy decisions facing the U.S. government, its constituent states, or “the people” unless these issues are examined from the perspective of how they have evolved over time. Consequently, the title of this book is *American Government: Roots and Reform*. In its pages we try to examine how the United States is governed today by looking not just at present behavior but also at the Framers’ intentions and how they have been implemented over the years. For example, we believe that it is critical to an understanding of the role of political parties in the United States to understand the Framers’ fears of factionalism, how parties evolved, and when and why realignments in party identification occurred. In turn, a comprehension of these processes will help us to understand the kinds of officials we have elected over the years.

In addition to perennial questions raised by the Framers, we explore issues that the Framers could never have envisioned, and how the basic institutions of government

have responded to these new demands. For instance, no one more than two centuries ago could have foreseen election campaigns in an age when nearly all American homes contained television sets, and the airwaves abounded with political discussion on “talk radio.” Moreover, new demands have periodically forced governmental reforms, so understanding the dynamics of change is essential for introductory students.

Our overriding concern is that students understand their government as it exists *today*. In order to do so, they must understand how it was designed in the Constitution. They must appreciate a little of how it reached its effects. Each chapter, therefore, approaches its topic with a combination of perspectives that we believe will best facilitate this approach.

In writing this book, we chose to put the Institutions of Government (Part Two) before Political Behavior (Part Three). Both sections, however, were written independently, making them easy to switch for those who prefer to teach about the actors in government and elections *before* discussing the institutions of government. To test the book, we have each taught from it in both orders with no pedagogical problems.

## Features

**Philosophical Perspective.** Every chapter includes a few sentences from *The Federalist Papers* (with the exception of Chapter 4, which begins with an Anti-Federalist quotation). These passages are explained in captions and then used as references at relevant points in the chapter. From them, students learn that government was born amidst burning issues of representation and power, issues that continue to smolder today.

**Historical Perspective.** Every chapter uses history to serve two purposes: first, to show how institutions and processes have evolved to their present states, and second, to provide some of the color that makes information memorable. A richer historical texture helps to explain the present; it also helps to free the course from the time-bound nature of newspaper headlines.

**Comparative Perspective.** Changes in Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Latin and Central America, and Asia reminds us of the preeminence of democracy, in theory if not always in fact. As new democratic experiments spring up around the globe, it becomes increasingly important for students to understand the rudiments of presidential *versus* parliamentary government, of multiparty *versus* two-party systems, and so on. In order to put American government in perspective, therefore (while avoiding the enormous complexities of huge transnational comparisons), we have used the model of Great Britain as a comparison. Throughout our chapter discussions, comparisons are drawn to Great Britain wherever appropriate points arise. By comparing the two governments, students learn the basic differences between presidential and parliamentary democracies.

In this new edition we have added diagrams to better illustrate these points.

## The Ancillary Package

The ancillary package for *American Government: Roots and Reform: Brief Edition*, Second Edition, reflects the pedagogical goals of the text: to provide information in a useful context and with colorful examples. We have tried especially hard to provide materials that are useful for instructors and interesting and helpful to students.

To further extend the application of multimedia learning enhancements to the teaching of American Government, the following supplements are available for use in conjunction with *American Government: Roots and Reform*:

**CNN Video.** Through an exclusive arrangement with CNN, adopters of the book will receive a specially edited compilation of recent CNN News stories for classroom use. News footage is organized chapter by chapter, and keyed to topics in the text. Ask your Allyn & Bacon representative for details.

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**American Government: Readings and Cases.** This separate, full-scale reader in American Government by Karen O'Connor may be packaged along with the text at a

reduced price to students. This reader combines classic articles, including extensive selections from *The Federalist Papers*, with some of the best current political science and a strong component of key and landmark cases. Thoughtful pedagogy includes chapter introductions and end of chapter questions to foster students' critical thinking.

**Study Guide.** A study guide for students is available that includes chapter synopses, outlines, key terms, multiple choice, matching and true/false questions with answers for student self-tests.

**Instructor's Manual.** The Instructor's Manual includes lecture ideas, discussion questions, classroom activities, and a guide to video and other resources.

**Test Bank.** Completely revised and expanded, the test bank provides more than 1,500 multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions. A **Computer Test Bank** in IBM or Macintosh formats is also available.

**Transparencies.** A full set of over 54 color transparencies, including U. S and world maps, is available for classroom use.

## Acknowledgments

Karen O'Connor thanks the thousand-plus students in her National Government courses who, over the years, have pushed her to learn more about American government and to have fun in the process. She especially thanks some of her Emory colleagues—Alan Abramowitz, Courtney Brown, and Cornell Hooten—who were always willing to share books, ideas, suggestions, and newspaper clippings. She also thanks Dean Howard Hunter of the Emory Law School for providing access to LEXIS and NEXIS, which allowed this book to be as current as possible. Thanks also to former students John R. Hermann, Sue Davis, Kaenan Hertz, Jenny Jacob and Paul Fabrizio for their research assistance at various phases of the first edition. Kimberley Beakley, now at Duke University and Bernadette Nye at Emory University helped in innumerable ways in our preparation of this second edition. And, Gregg Ivers at American University and Nancy E. McGlen at Niagara University have always been there to offer suggestions, friendship, and encouragement.

While we were writing the first edition, Laura Van Assendelft provided the assistance and fresh perspective that only a graduate student studying for her Ph.D. comprehensive exam in American Government could offer. Laura worked tirelessly on the book and even brought homemade cookies as a reward for completed chapters. Her familiarity with the book proved invaluable as later when, as an assistant professor at Mary Baldwin College, she compiled the Test Bank for this new edition.

Larry Sabato wishes to thank his University of Virginia colleagues and staff, including Clifton McCleskey, Chairman of the Department of Government and Foreign Affairs; graduate students Bruce Larson and Dan Kritenbrink; and technical assistant Nancy Rae. We also thank Jeffrey Anderson of Brown University, who helped provide comparisons between the American and British systems of government.

No project such as this can ever be completed on time without tremendous support from the publisher. First with Macmillan, and now with Allyn and Bacon, we have had the good fortune to work with many talented individuals, including (at Macmillan) Bruce Nichols, Robert Miller and David Chodoff. At Allyn and Bacon we'd like to thank our editor, Stephen Hull, Marjorie Payne, the production administrator, and Karon Bowers, our marketing manager. One constant for which we are particularly grateful is the continuing involvement of development editor Jane Tufts.

Finally, many of our peers reviewed various stages of the manuscript and earned our gratitude in the process: Martin Wiseman, Mississippi State University; Mark Silverstein, Boston University; Steve Mazurana, University of Northern Colorado; Shirley Anne Warshaw, Gettysburg College; Jon Bond, Texas A&M University; Doris Graber, University of Illinois at Chicago; Bruce Oppenheimer, Vanderbilt University; Cary Covington, University of Iowa; Marjorie Hershey, Indiana University; Ruth Bamberger, Drury College; Greg Caldeira, Ohio State University; David Cingranelli, SUNY at Binghamton; Mark Landis, Hofstra University; Charles Hadley, University of New Orleans; Danny Adkison, Oklahoma State University; Kenneth Kennedy, College of San Mateo; and Evelyn Fink, University of Nebraska.

This Second Edition greatly profited from the painstaking reviews and comments of the following people:

James Anderson	Texas A&M University	John Kincaid	University of North Texas
Judith Baer	Texas A&M University	Jonathan E. Kranz	John Jay College
Christine Barbour	Indiana University	Nancy Kucinski	University of North Texas
Stephen A. Borrelli	University of Alabama	Valerie Martinez	University of North Texas
Ann Bowman	University of South Carolina	Clifton McCleskey	University of Virginia
Steve Chan	University of Colorado	Joseph Nogee	University of Houston
Clarke E. Cochran	Texas Tech University	Mary Alice Nye	University of North Texas
Anne N. Costain	University of Colorado	Richard Pacelle	University of Missouri-St. Louis
John Domino	Sam Houston State University	Marian Lief Palley	University of Delaware
Alan S. Engel	Miami University	Leroy N. Rieselbach	Indiana University
Stacia L. Haynie	Louisiana State University	David Robertson	Public Policy Research Centers, University of Missouri-St. Louis
Marjorie Hershey	Indiana University	Frank Rourke	Johns Hopkins University
Cornell Hooton	Emory University	Frank J. Sorauf	University of Minnesota
Dennis Judd	University of Missouri-St. Louis		
Donald F. Kettl	University of Wisconsin		

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