

Understanding the Political World

A Comparative Introduction to
Political Science

James N. Danziger

Tenth Edition



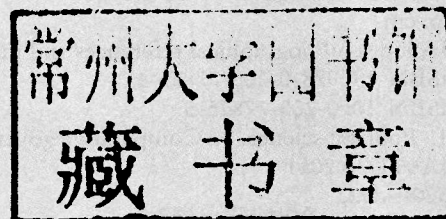
UNDERSTANDING THE POLITICAL WORLD

A Comparative Introduction to Political Science

TENTH EDITION

JAMES N. DANZIGER

University of California, Irvine



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PREFACE

The wry French observation *Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose* is sometimes applied to the study of the political world. One of the exciting elements of studying and teaching politics is that there is a constant flow of intriguing occurrences. As I write, a somewhat unique U.S. president tries to deliver on promises of “change you can believe in.” Freedom House (2009) laments substantial “setbacks” in the worldwide shift to democracy. Violence and disorder are spreading across Afghanistan. Climate change seems to be causing massive, negative effects that cannot be reversed. And many governments struggle with how to revive their political economies from the most severe economic depression in nearly four generations.

Yet there are always new leaders who offer excitement and promise, ebbs and flows of democracy, troubled countries that command attention and concern, environmental challenges, and economic cycles. Political scientists embrace the interplay of continuity and change. They attempt to identify and communicate generalizations that capture broad processes and underlying dynamics. This is one of the ways in which things do remain the same—the goals of political analysis are always to search for regularities and patterns, to move from the specific to the general, in the development of compelling descriptions and explanations. Thus, it is always a wonderful challenge to write a new edition of this book. The preface of the last edition opened with Charles Dickens’s famous observation about the 1790s: “it was the best of times, it was the worst of times. . . .” That seems an apt characterization of the contemporary world. The combination of technologies, globalization, and government policies have lengthened our lives, increased the quantity and quality of material goods we enjoy, and opened us to an extraordinary range of experiences. That same combination is also associated with substantial and continuing human suffering, in a world where more than 1 billion people attempt to survive on less than subsistence-level food and without clean water; where more than one in six people have been forced to flee from their homes; where the constant carnage from war, terrorism, and other forms of intolerance and inhumanity to others seems commonplace.

In these best/worst times, it is essential to understand the political world and to act sensibly in that world because politics is arguably the most critical domain in which our futures are being shaped. Thus, we should consider whether the information, insights, and concepts of political science are useful. Can they help us understand the political world? Can they inform our value choices and normative judgments about public policies? Can they guide our policies and actions in ways that improve the quality of our lives, individually and collectively?

As its title indicates, addressing such questions is at the heart of *Understanding the Political World*. This book attempts to help the reader (you!) grasp how political scientists explore the world of politics, and it reflects on some of their insights about that world. It links the central analytic concepts of political science that have emerged over decades of research to the realities of the early twenty-first century. Using contemporary and some historical evidence, the book emphasizes empirical research that illuminates the processes and structures of politics. The level of analysis ranges from the individual's political beliefs and actions to the politics of groups and countries, to the dynamics of the global system.

This book asks you to assess whether it is possible and useful to develop generalizations about political phenomena. It combines attention to systematic descriptive analysis (the *what* questions) with efforts to explain underlying patterns (the *why* and *how* questions). Readers are continually reminded that they must consider the important normative questions about what *should* be done that are embedded in most issues about politics. Many topics are also presented in a manner that encourages you to think like a political scientist—to structure questions and assess evidence in order to make inferences.

This book is written for every person who wants to enrich his or her basic understanding of the political world and to learn how political scientists attempt to describe and explain politics. The reader might be in an introductory course in political science or comparative politics, but the book would also be useful for those taking a “capstone” course that integrates their political science studies. A reader might also be anyone who wants to think about the fascinating and confusing world of politics in a more informed and systematic way.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

Given the extraordinary rate of change in the political world, many examples and most quantitative data have been updated. In addition are the following significant differences from the previous edition:

- To enhance the pedagogical basis of the book:
 - *Every* chapter opens with a vignette set in a specific country to introduce the reader to a major theme in that chapter. Examples include the frustrated aspirations of the nation of Kurds for their own state; the political activism of Aung San Suu Kyi and others to promote democracy in Myanmar; President Obama's public policy responses to the economic crisis in the United States; and Hungary's shift from totalitarian communism to a democratic, market-based system.
 - *Every* chapter now has a Debate on an important political question, including new debates such as whether communism is “dead,” whether political “science” is feasible, and whether there is a global clash of civilizations. The arguments in Debates from the previous edition have been refined, and every Debate ends with critical questions for your consideration.
 - *Every* chapter has a Compare: a feature that explores a specific analytic question by applying the logic of comparative analysis. These features examine topics such as the levels of political participation in ten countries, a geopolitical

analysis of the actions of Cuba and Taiwan, the extent to which various countries are peaceful or conflict-oriented, and the different paths of political action chosen by Mohandas Gandhi and Osama bin Laden. Each Compare feature ends with critical questions.

- *Every* chapter has a Focus: the elaboration of a concept in political science that is grounded in the detailed discussion of a particular country, such as an examination of the electoral system in South Africa, political socialization in China, the evolution of women's political rights in the United States, microcredit in Bangladesh, and the political economy of Mexico. Each country Focus also poses critical questions.
- To streamline reading and clarify the book's framework, the Boxes of previous editions have been revised to serve as Compare or Focus features or are integrated into the text.
- Two new acid tests are introduced (one each in Chapters 14 and 15) to encourage the reader to evaluate his or her values and priorities about life in a political society while also recognizing the difficult trade-offs that are evident when one examines actual data on the performance of different political systems.
- The analysis employed to classify the world's countries in Chapters 13–15 is updated to reflect the continuing evolution of many countries.
- Chapter 15, on the transitional developed countries, has been substantially rewritten to emphasize the significant shifts in both the newly industrializing countries and the postcommunist developed countries.
- On the Web, a list of useful and relevant Internet sites, and For Further Reading suggestions at the end of each chapter have been updated and expanded.

FEATURES

The tenth edition of *Understanding the Political World* retains the conceptual framework of previous editions, focusing on politics at every level, from that of the individual person to the level of the global system. To enrich the reader's understanding, it employs a comparative perspective, considering evidence and examples from many countries in all regions of the world. This approach is guided both by Aristotle's wise observation that all thinking begins in comparison and by a recognition that the political world is now truly global.

The book is organized to provide the reader with a brief characterization of how political scientists study politics in a comparative framework, and then uses such a framework to focus on how to understand politics at the level of the individual and the group, the different ways in which political institutions are organized, the dynamics of important political processes, and the key patterns of politics in major clusters of countries.

- Chapter 1 and the Appendix introduce the logic of political science and the methods of comparative political analysis.
- Chapters 2–4 examine both normative political theory and also the empirical study of political behavior at the individual and group levels, describing and explaining the causes of political beliefs and actions.

- Chapters 5–8 emphasize the structural and institutional elements of political systems, offering concepts and examples that characterize the different ways in which people organize themselves politically.
- Chapters 9–12 analyze crucial political processes, such as public policymaking and the exercise of power, political and economic development, politics across national borders, and political violence.
- Chapters 13–15 explain in detail how important groups of countries try to achieve their broad goals of prosperity, stability, and security within the complex international environment. These chapters provide specific analyses of the developed countries, the developing countries, and two sets of transitional developed countries—the postcommunist developed countries and the newly industrializing countries.

In addition, the tenth edition retains the following key features:

- Many discussions and debates provide memorable applications of key concepts such as power, authority, political violence, equality, and globalization, and key issues such as whether terrorism is ever justifiable, and whether interest groups are good for democracy.
- Continual use of country-based examples ground every topic in relevant, specific realities.
- Numerous presentations of current data, often in graphical form, facilitate analysis and comparisons on many topics.
- The extensive use of photographs and political cartoons illuminates themes in a manner that complements the textual discussions.
- A recurring focus on political economy emphasizes the significance of linkages between the political system and the economic system.
- An engaging, readable style draws the reader in.

SUPPLEMENTS

Longman is pleased to offer several resources to qualified adopters of *Understanding the Political World* and their students that will make teaching and learning from this book even more effective and enjoyable. Several of the supplements for this book are available at the Instructor Resource Center (IRC), an online hub that allows instructors to quickly download book-specific supplements. Please visit the IRC welcome page at www.pearsonhighered.com/irc to register for access.

For Instructors and Students

MyPoliSciKit for *Understanding the Political World*. This premium online learning companion that features multimedia and interactive activities to help students make connections between concepts and current events. The book-specific assessment, video case studies, simulations, comparative exercises, mapping exercises, Financial Times newsfeeds, current events quizzes, politics blog, and MySearchLab encourage comprehension and critical thinking. With Grade Tracker, instructors can easily

follow students' work on the site and their progress on each activity. MyPoliSciKit is available at no additional charge when packaged with this book. To learn more, please visit www.mypoliscikit.com or contact your Pearson representative.

For Instructors

MyPoliSciKit Video Case Studies. This DVD series contains video clips featured on MyPoliSciKit for this and other Longman political science titles. Featuring video from major news sources and providing reporting and insight on recent world affairs, this DVD helps instructors integrate current events into their courses by letting them use the clips as lecture launchers or discussion starters.

Instructor's Manual/Test Bank. Written by James N. Danziger, this resource includes up-to-date chapter summaries, multiple-choice questions, essay questions, and ideas for classroom discussions. Available exclusively on the IRC.

Pearson MyTest. This powerful assessment generation program includes all of the items in the test bank. Questions and tests can be easily created, customized, and saved online and then printed, allowing instructors ultimate flexibility to manage assessments anytime and anywhere. To start using, please visit www.pearsonmytest.com.

PowerPoint Presentation. Organized around a lecture outline, these electronic presentations contain maps, figures, and tables from each chapter. Available exclusively on the IRC.

Digital Transparency Masters. These downloadable transparency masters include all of the maps, figures, and tables found in the text. Available exclusively on the IRC.

For Students

Longman Atlas of World Issues (0-321-22456-5). Introduced and selected by Robert J. Art of Brandeis University and excerpted from the acclaimed Penguin Atlas Series, the *Longman Atlas of World Issues* is designed to help students understand the geography and major issues facing the world today, such as terrorism, debt, and HIV/AIDS. These thematic, full-color maps examine forces shaping politics today at a global level. Explanatory information accompanies each map to help students better grasp the concepts being shown and how they affect our world today. Available at no additional charge when packaged with this book.

Goode's World Atlas (0-321-65200-2). First published by Rand McNally in 1923, *Goode's World Atlas* has set the standard for college reference atlases. It features hundreds of physical, political, and thematic maps as well as graphs, tables, and a pronouncing index. Available at a discount when packaged with this book.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many sources of ideas and information constitute the basis of *my* understanding about politics. Broadly, you should know that I was born and have primarily been educated in the United States. I have also studied, lived, and/or spent significant periods in

Western and Eastern Europe, South America, Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. I have circumnavigated the globe twice on Semester at Sea. The people I met and the events I experienced in all these places have certainly influenced my perceptions about politics.

More direct contributions to this book have come from my colleagues in political science and from the many students and others in the political world with whom I have interacted. I have drawn deeply and often from the ideas of these groups.

By the publication of a tenth edition, the layers of contributions and ideas to the construction of this book are deep, rich, and indescribable. In every edition, there is a list of people who added positively to that edition, and I continue to be grateful to them all. Explicit guidance and advice regarding the writing of this particular edition have come from several valuable sources: the cadre at Longman Publishers, including Vikram Mukhija, Donna Garnier, Toni Magyar, Lindsey Prudhomme, and Al Dorsey; scholarly colleagues who have offered useful suggestions, and especially Russell Dalton, Lindsey Lupo, and Kevin Olson; and students who have provided feedback on the book, including those who provided specific material, undergraduates Cassandra Adams, Benjamin Bohr, Ali Bushra, Benjamin Dye, Madiha Shahabuddin, Neil Thakore, and Kerry Wakely. The reviewers, who offered very thoughtful and constructive commentaries for this edition, include Jodi Empol-Schwartz, Montgomery County Community College; Rachel Paul, Western Washington University; and Krista Wiegand, Georgia Southern University.

I am very grateful for the help provided by all these (and many unnamed) sources. Regarding the roads not taken and the missteps in this book, the responsibility is mine.

James N. Danziger

TO THE READER

The aim of this book is revealed by its title: It is meant to help you understand the political world. It assumes that you are willing to think about politics. It does not assume that you have substantial knowledge about politics or political science, or even that you know the difference between politics and political science. I hope that when you complete the book and any course in which you are reading it, you will feel that you have increased your knowledge about the contemporary political world.

The study of politics is full of fascinating questions. First are the questions about *what is*, such as: Who exercises political power, and what values and purposes guide them? Why do people accept political authority? How do people organize themselves politically? What factors are associated with political violence? A second set of questions concerns *what ought to be*: Who should exercise political power, and what values should they pursue? Why should people accept political authority? How should political structures be organized? When is political violence justifiable?

People disagree sharply about answers to both these descriptive (what is) and normative (what ought to be) questions. In addition, the study of politics provokes a third set of questions regarding *what we can actually know* about the political world. Here also there are major disagreements about the appropriate methods for describing and understanding politics.

Although this book cannot resolve the underlying disputes, it offers you the basis for making sense out of politics at all three levels. As author, I make some basic assumptions: that you can think systematically about politics and make general statements about how politics works; that you will learn more about politics by considering the politics of many different places; that every observer of politics (certainly including you and me) has biases, only some of which can be understood; that you need a variety of sources of ideas and information before you can make informed and sensible decisions about the value disagreements pervading politics; and that this book is one such source that can be helpful to you. My efforts will be successful to the extent that *you* ultimately judge my assumptions to be correct (especially the last one . . .).

It is inevitable that you will be frustrated with the treatment of politics at some (many?) points in this book. I would say: Reader, be merciful! The study of politics is very complex. Gather bits of understanding where you can find them.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

James N. Danziger is a research professor and former chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of California, Irvine, where he also has served as campuswide Dean of Undergraduate Education, Chair of the Academic Senate, Associate Director of the Center for Research on Information Technology and Organizations, and Director of the Capital Internship Programs. He is the recipient of many honors and awards, including a Marshall Scholarship (to Great Britain), a Foreign Area Fellowship, a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship, Phi Beta Kappa, and an IBM Faculty Award. He received the first UC Irvine Distinguished Faculty Lectureship Award for Teaching in 1987, the UC Irvine Distinguished Service Award in 1997, and UC Irvine's highest honor, the Extraordinarius Award in 2009. His Ph.D. is from Stanford University, and he has held visiting appointments at the universities of Aarhus (Denmark), Pittsburgh, and Virginia. His research has received awards from the American Political Science Association and the American Society for Public Administration. He has published extensively, particularly on information technology and politics. He has been an active participant in local politics and especially enjoys playing, coaching and refereeing sports, travel, music, and cinema.

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