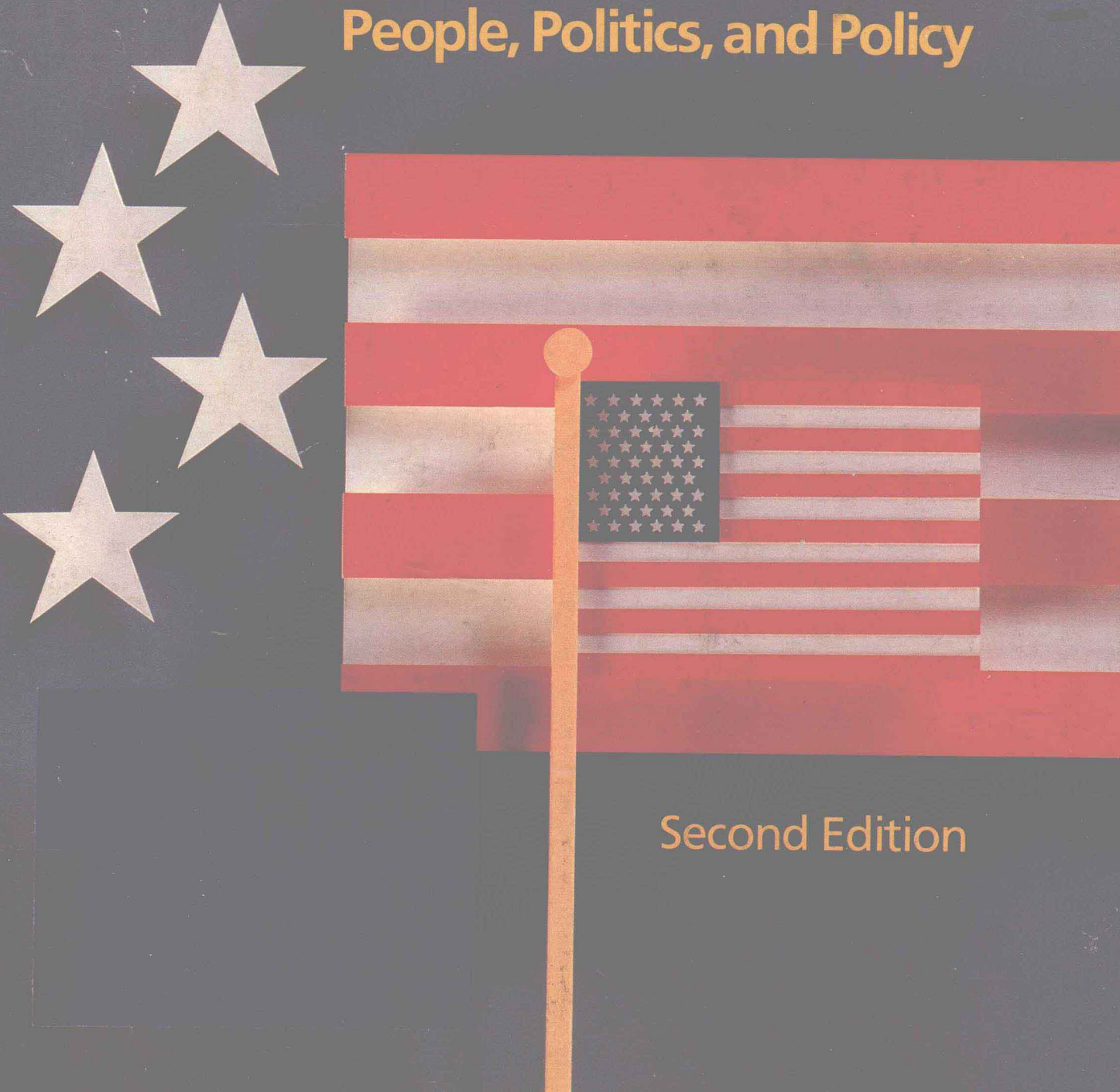


Robert L. Lineberry

Government in America

People, Politics, and Policy



Second Edition

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Robert L. Lineberry

University of Kansas



Little, Brown and Company

Boston Toronto

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Lineberry, Robert L.
Government in America.

Includes bibliographies and index.
1. United States—Politics and government.

I. Title.

JK274.L573 1983 320.973 82-17953
ISBN 0-316-52664-9

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Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 82-17953

ISBN 0-316-52664-9

9 8 7 6 5 4

MU

Published simultaneously in Canada
by Little, Brown & Company (Canada) Limited

Printed in the United States of America

Text Design by Sandra Rigney
Picture Research by Pembroke Herbert

Text Credits

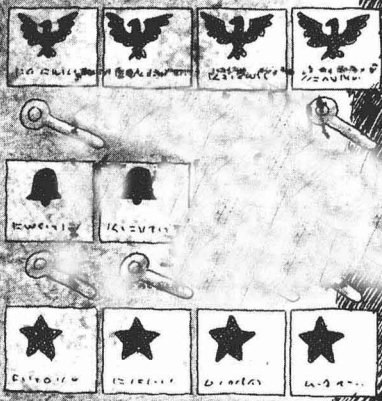
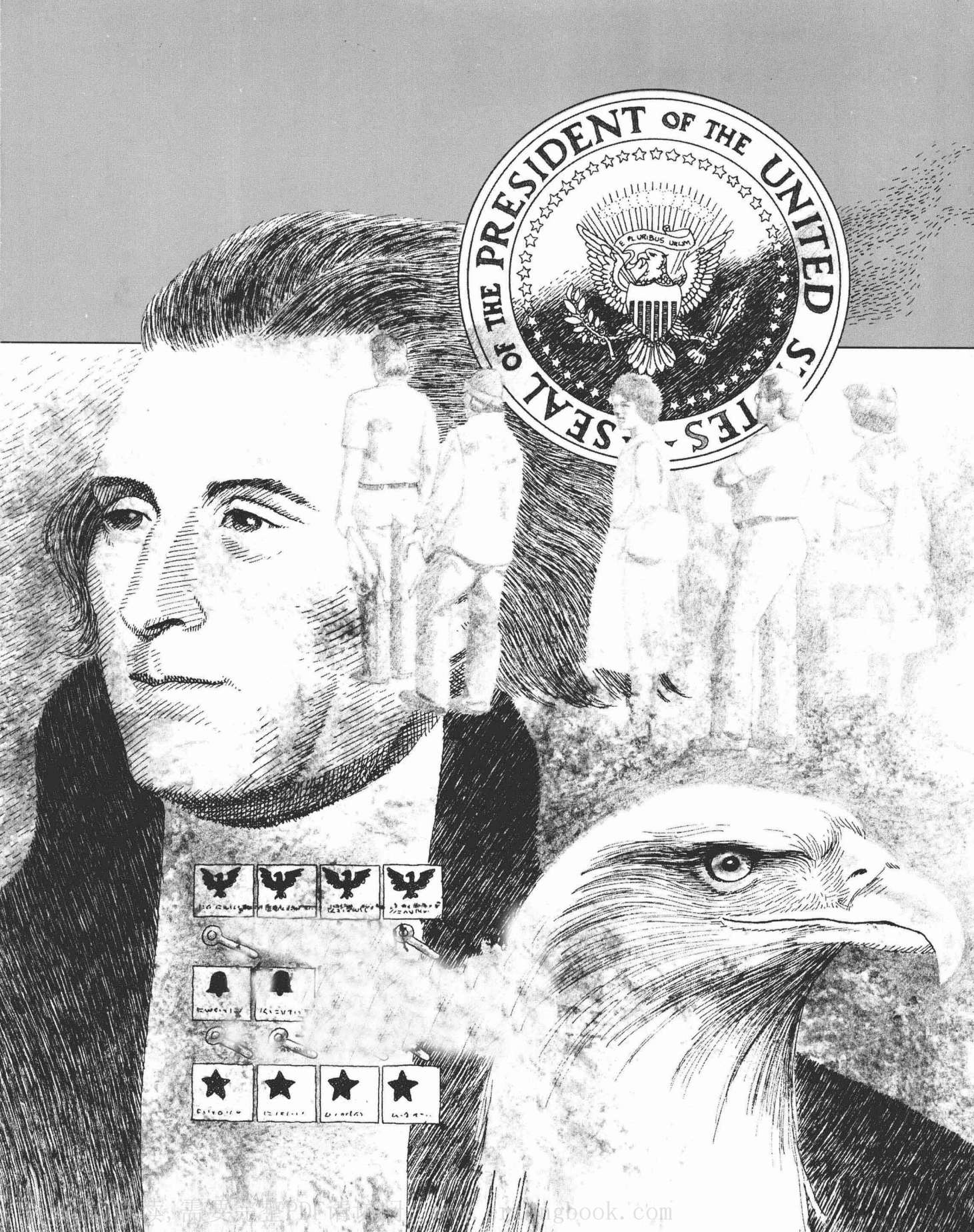
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Government in America

People, Politics, and Policy



Preface

I PREFACED THE FIRST EDITION of *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy* with most of the following remarks (which hold true, by and large, for this second edition too). Like other American government books, this text includes ample core material about political behavior and political institutions—the essentials of American government. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*, however, takes a step beyond most other government books in stressing a public policy approach to American government. The study of public policy is, in my opinion, not merely fashionable but fundamental to understanding modern government. Put simply, a policy approach means that politics is “about” something. What politics is about is public policy. I will show that American politics has long been, and probably will continue to be, dominated by policies in three key arenas—equality, the economy, and energy/environment. Choices in these arenas form the cornerstone of political debate and the centerpiece of this book. This policy focus complements but does not crowd out the description of our political foundations and processes.

I have tried to demonstrate that studying American government does not mean learning a string of unconnected facts. Two evaluative issues are therefore woven throughout the book like the strands of a double helix. About American government, we persistently ask: How democratic is it, and how effective is it? Hence this is a thematic book.

There is a critical difference between being thematic and being dogmatic. No single theory of American government monopolizes these pages. Instead I insist that readers develop their own informed understanding of American government and politics. But to aid this task, I outline in Chapter 2 four venerable yet timely theories (democratic theory, elitism, pluralism, and hyperpluralism) to help guide understanding. Through these four lenses, which are applied to American politics, institutions, and policies, readers should be well prepared to check and balance their own views of how the system works.

Having taught several thousand students in introductory American government courses over the past dozen years, I believe they deserve and can handle the best that political science has to offer. Hence I incorporate, within the obvious limits of space, both new research evidence and material from the classics of contemporary political analysis. I have never understood why introductory American government books, unlike

those in economics and psychology, seem to see a necessary trade-off between timely, lively writing and serious analysis. I do not shy away from presenting important but complex concepts and evidence. I do believe that the principal task of an introductory book is to translate the major evidence of scholarship into language that students will find congenial. According to sales and users' comments, this approach seemed to work for a number of people—instructors and students alike!

Since there is a general feeling in textbook writing and publishing that one good edition deserves another, I now find myself writing the Preface to a new edition. This second edition of *Government in America* updates, expands, and, I hope, improves a book that has enjoyed success in a variety of institutions.

Responses to an extensive questionnaire sent to users and reviewers uniformly endorsed the main features and innovations of the first edition. Users praised writing style, presentation, theories, standards, the policy approach, and the inclusion of current research in political science. Even good things can be improved, however, and feedback indicated the need to fine-tune the coverage and approach. Here are some of the changes we have made.

Changes in the Second Edition

Coverage. In addition to updating facts, figures, and research, I have expanded the coverage in the *institutions* chapters (Chapters 11–15). Especially improved are the chapters on Congress, the president, and the courts, which now include more information on the procedures and processes of these institutions.

Chapter 19, *The Global Connection*. This chapter includes increased coverage of defense programs and spending.

Integrating Features. I have refined the use of the four theories, policy arenas, and evaluative standards throughout the text, paying particular attention to applicability and usefulness.

Makers of American Politics. Each chapter now includes one or two profiles of policymakers called “Makers of American Politics.” Their purpose is to show the influence that individuals in or out of government can have on policymaking.

Boxes. This device for presenting research and cases worked well in the first edition. In this revision, I have updated some old ones and have added many new ones.

Graphs. In response to reviewer comments, the graphs in the second edition have been carefully reworked and redesigned in a more inviting and understandable format.

All these changes have, I believe, made the book a better, more effective tool in the teaching of American government, a task that (unless my memory fails me) has been on my teaching agenda for fifteen years. My

students at Texas, Northwestern, and Kansas have taught me and continue to teach me as much as I have taught them.

Ancillaries

To accompany *Government in America*, Second Edition, the following are available:

The *Instructor's Manual* by Morton Sipress includes learning objectives, chapter summaries, teaching suggestions, and, most importantly, an expanded and reworked set of approximately two thousand test items. These test items are also available in a computerized format.

The *Study Guide* by Janice A. Beecher and Michael G. Maxfield includes learning objectives, chapter summaries, review and study questions, and suggestions for research activities.

Note to the Student

Learning about American government involves a dialogue, not a monologue. My job in this dialogue, as I see it, is to give you some evidence about how our system works and some tools and ideas for understanding it. Your first job is to master this evidence. But if that is all you do, you are absorbing, not learning. Your second task is to use evidence to reach your own informed conclusions and understandings about our system of government.

Several features of *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*, Second Edition, should make your task easier and, I hope, more enjoyable. First, note that each chapter begins with a memo. It outlines what I tried to put into the chapter and what I think you should get out of it. Each chapter ends with a concise summary. Of course, you need to pay attention to more than these bare bones to understand each chapter. Throughout each chapter, illustrations, tables, and case studies (all referred to by a boxed number such as [1]) provide supporting documentation for the text's arguments, or offer an extended example, or sometimes merely tell an interesting story. The chapter's key terms are printed like this: **judicial review**. They are also gathered together at the end of each chapter and defined in the glossary at the end of the book. Also at the end of each chapter is a short section listing books that will help you explore further the topic of each chapter. An appendix, *Beyond the Call of Duty: Data and Documents*, lists primary source material for further information and research.

You should also find useful a study guide to the text prepared by Janice A. Beecher and Michael G. Maxfield. It includes a thorough chapter summary, a set of learning objectives, a glossary, and a battery of sample test questions for each chapter. It also provides a set of exercises and activities to help you experience, rather than simply study, American government.

We rush rapidly toward the twenty-first century. Whether we arrive in good shape depends very much on government and its public policy choices. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*, Second Edition, is about those choices—past, present, and future. Being realistic, I do

not expect all of you to share my enthusiasm for the subject. But I do expect that by the end of this course all of you will know why American government is critical in shaping your future.

Acknowledgments

The preparation of this revision has not been accomplished without the help of many people.

So many colleagues and friends have been sources of good counsel that a mere mention understates my obligation to them. Richard Boyer, Greg Franklin, and Will Ethridge, a succession of editors at Little, Brown, succeeded in reconfirming what is already widely known: that Little, Brown is the finest "house" a political scientist could find. As my development editor, Jane Tufts played a key role in every aspect of the book, nurturing its author and nudging him, too, when that was required (as it often was). Book editor Elizabeth Schaaf's patience and good humor carried the book through the arduous production process, and copyeditor Tim Kenslea made many imaginative and helpful suggestions and improvements in the final manuscript. Janice A. Beecher, friend, former graduate student, and sometime collaborator, provided invaluable assistance to me and to the folks in Boston as well.

A great many colleagues in political science have read portions of this revision. Their advice has saved me from many errors and has put me onto new and often valuable tracks. I am particularly indebted to Larry Berman, University of California/Davis; Janet Boles, Marquette University; Greg Casey, University of Missouri; Robert Casier, Santa Barbara City College; Larry Dodd, Indiana University; Philip Dubois, University of California/Davis; George Edwards, Texas A & M University; Richard Elling, Wayne State University; Dennis Ippolito, Southern Methodist University; Herbert Jacob, Northwestern University; Charles A. Johnson, Texas A & M University; Michael Kraft, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay; Alan Monroe, Illinois State University; James Oliver, University of Delaware; David Olson, University of Washington; Kant Patel, Southwest Missouri State University; Pamela Rendeiro, Southern Connecticut University; Francis Rourke, Johns Hopkins University; Paul Rozycki, C. S. Mott Community College; Earl Shaw, University of Minnesota; Frank Sorauf, University of Minnesota; Charles Walcott, University of Minnesota; Stephen Wasby, State University of New York/Albany; and Betty Zisk, Boston University.

It is customary at this point to absolve all the aforementioned persons of any blame for the final product, the errors that creep in, and the interpretations that outrage despite their best efforts to warn me off. I willingly let all these good people off the hook but not without my thanks.

Nita, Nikki, and Keith have played a greater role than they might realize. Their devotion, good humor, and good sense make it all worthwhile.

R.L.L.

Lawrence, Kansas

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