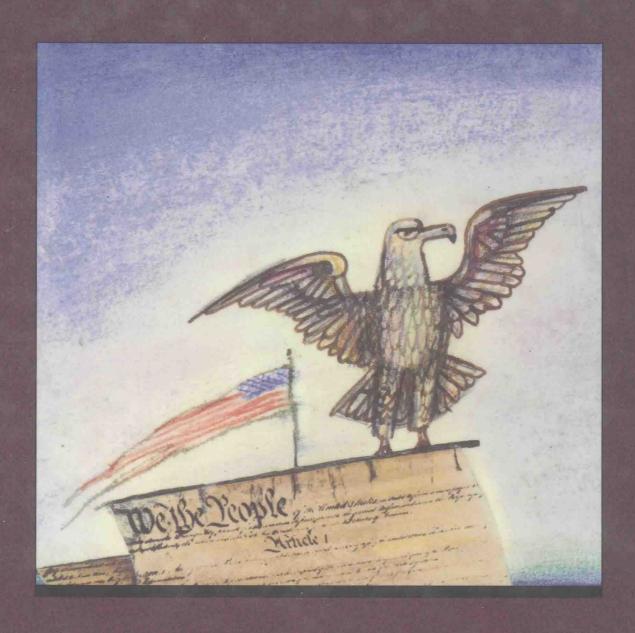
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

THIRD EDITION



Susan Welch / John Gruhl / Michael Steinman / John Comer

American Government

- THIRD EDITION -

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Department of Political Science, University of Nebraska—Lincoln



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A Student Study Guide

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To Our Parents

Delbert and Marie Welch Richard and Mary Gruhl Irv and Eileen Steinman Charles and Ruth Comer

Preface

American politics is exciting, important, and controversial, yet sometimes texts convey just the opposite to students. They try to cover everything, and in the process leave students stuffed with facts but bewildered as to their meaning. The excitement of American politics is lost.

As in previous editions, this third edition of our text, American Government, tries to interest students in learning about many important and controversial issues. We believe an introductory course succeeds if most students develop an understanding of major ideas, an interest in learning more about American government, and an ability to begin to understand and evaluate the news they hear about American political issues. Although a firm grounding in the essential "nuts and bolts" of American government is crucial, other approaches should be used for motivating students' interest in government.

We offer the essential "nuts and bolts" of American government, but we also want the student to understand why (and sometimes how) these important features have evolved, their impact on government and individuals, and why they are controversial (if they are) and worth learning. For example, we prefer students to leave the course remembering why campaign finance laws were created and why they have the impact they do than to memorize specific dollar limitations on giving for different types of candidates from different types of organizations. The latter will change or will soon be forgotten, but understanding the "whys" will help the student understand the campaign finance issue long after the course is over.

We have also tried to interest students by describing and discussing the impact of various features of government. For example, students who do not understand why learning about voter registration laws is

important may "see the light" when they understand the link between such laws and low voter turnout. Therefore, a particular emphasis throughout the book is on the *impact* of government: how individual features of government affect its responsiveness to different groups (in Lasswell's terms, "Who gets what and why?"). We realize that nothing in American politics is simple; rarely does one feature of government produce, by itself, a clear outcome. Nevertheless, we think that students will be more willing to learn about government if they see some relationships between how government operates and the impact it has on them as citizens of America.

Changes in the Third Edition

Writing a third edition of a text provides some interesting opportunities. One opportunity is, of course, to make the text as up-to-date as is possible given production schedules. This text contains material on significant events through the fall of 1989. Most importantly, in terms of new material, we analyze and incorporate the 1988 election campaign and its results into our discussion of several topics. Material on the Bush presidency is also found throughout the book.

Other important events and issues that have unfolded in the past two years—the savings and loan crises, the increasing intensity and salience of the debate over abortion rights, the changing standards of morality for public officials, homelessness, the growing gap between rich and poor and young and old—are also given substantial coverage.

Events in other parts of the world can dramatically affect the workings of American government. The new realities of the Gorbachev era in the Soviet Union

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and other changes in both eastern and western Europe affect our foreign and military spending policies, and these topics are discussed in chapters 19 and 20.

Working on the third edition also provides an opportunity to include material on issues and ideas that were perhaps shortchanged in earlier editions. Therefore, as environmental issues rise to the top of the national agenda, we have added nearly a half chapter on environmental policy, changing the title of chapter 18 to "Regulation and Environmental Policy." In chapter 1, we have added a major new section on American diversity; the theme of diversity is echoed in boxes throughout the book that focus on the political impact of particular kinds of diversity in the population.

Writing a third edition also gives us a chance to improve coverage in other ways. We have been extremely pleased by the reaction of instructors and students to our first two editions. We were especially pleased to win the American Government Textbook Award from the Women's Caucus for Political Science of the American Political Science Association. But we are also glad to respond to suggestions for improvement: we enlarged our treatment of political socialization in chapter 4; we devoted more time to explaining liberalism and conservatism in chapter 4, and we've integrated our discussions of presidential nomination and general election campaigns by transferring material on the nomination process from chapter 6 to chapter 7 and rewriting much of the discussion about presidential campaigns.

We have also completely revised and reorganized chapter 5, "Interest Groups." We provide much new material on a variety of groups, and integrate it into a simple typology of groups that we believe students will find useful. We have also substantially revised chapter 12, "The Bureaucracy."

Features of Each Chapter

Student interest and analytic abilities grow when confronted with a clash of views about important issues. Today there is much discussion about how to stimulate the critical thinking abilities of students. Beginning with the first edition, our text has provided features especially designed to do this by involving students in the controversies—and excitement—of American politics.

You Are There. Each chapter opens with a scenario called "You Are There." In a page or two the student reads about a real-life political dilemma faced by a

public official or a private citizen involved in a controversial issue. Students are asked to put themselves in that individual's shoes, to weigh the pros and cons, and to decide what should be done. The instructor may want to poll the entire class and use the "You Are There" as a basis for class discussion. In the "Epilogue" at the end of the chapter, we reveal the actual decision and discuss it in light of the ideas presented in the chapter.

About one half of the "You Are There" features are new to this edition and include scenarios relating to Justice O'Connor's decision in the 1989 Supreme Court abortion case (chapter 14), the ethics controversies involving Jim Wright (chapter 9), President Bush and the drug issue (chapter 1), the interest group battle over Supreme Court nominations (chapter 5), and negative campaigning in the 1988 presidential election (chapter 7).

Focus on an Issue. A second feature designed to stimulate students' critical abilities is the "Focus on an Issue," found in each chapter. Each focus describes an important current issue or controversy—such as affirmative action or who should decide where to bury nuclear waste—and raises a number of key questions to help students think systematically about its pros and cons. Class discussion or written assignments can be based on this feature. About one third of the focus boxes are new or substantially revised.

Boxes. In each chapter several boxes highlighting interesting aspects of American politics draw the students into the material. Many illustrate how government and politics really work in a particular situation—how a corporation lobbies for government benefits, how a seemingly powerless group is able to organize for political action, how interest groups solicit money by mail, and how political polls are done—while others highlight features of government that may be of particular interest to students—what standard of risk should government use in regulating acne medication, how ethnicity shapes voting behavior, and the impact of federal programs on students, for example.

Several other features help students organize their study:

Outline. Each chapter begins with an outline of its contents.

Key Terms. Key terms are boldfaced within the text and listed at the end of each chapter.

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Further Reading. A brief, annotated list of further readings contains works that might be useful to a student doing research or looking for further reading.

Glossary. A glossary at the end of the book defines terms that may be unfamiliar to students.

The Organization and Contents of the Book

While the basic organization of American government books is fairly standard, our text has a unique chapter on money and politics and a half chapter on environmental politics. Other features include a civil rights chapter that integrates a thorough treatment of constitutional issues concerning minorities and women; a discussion of the civil rights and women's rights movements, and contemporary research on the political status of these groups. We include in this chapter the special legal problems of Hispanics and Indians.

Substantive policy chapters reinforce the emphasis on the impact of government action. Our social welfare policy chapter is unique in its treatment of social welfare programs for the middle income and wealthy as well as the poor. A chapter on economic policymaking complements the section on budgeting found in the chapter on Congress. The treatment of economic policy highlights the relationship between politics and the economy, and should help the student better understand issues such as the deficit, inflation, and unemployment. The chapter on regulation and the environment emphasizes the underlying rationale for regulation and its problems and benefits. A chapter on military spending highlights many current and recurrent political issues in military preparedness and the leadership of our military forces. The chapter on foreign policy places current foreign policy issues in the context of the history of our foreign policy aims, especially since World War II.

Some instructors will prefer not to use any of the policy chapters. The book stands as a whole without them, as many policy examples are integrated into the rest of the text. Different combinations of the policy chapters may also be used, as each chapter is independent.

The organization of the book is straightforward. After material on democracy, the Constitution, and federalism, the book covers linkages, including money and politics, then institutions, and finally policy. Civil liberties and rights are treated after the chapter on the judiciary. But the book is flexible enough that instructors can modify the order of the chapters. Some instructors will prefer to cover institutions before

process. Others may prefer to discuss civil liberties and rights when discussing the Constitution. Still others may wish to integrate some of the policy chapters into the treatment of institutions. For example, the economic policy chapter could be used in conjunction with the section in the Congress chapter on the budget. The military spending chapter illustrates several points made in the chapter on Congress and could be used with it. The foreign policy chapter fits nicely with the treatment of the presidency. The chapter on regulation and environmental policy could serve as a case study following the chapter on bureaucracy.

Supplementary Materials

The supplementary materials complement the book.

Instructor's Manual. Written by the authors of the text, the instructor's manual provides lectures, lecture suggestions, and in-class exercises for each chapter. Suggestions for out-of-class papers and projects are also provided. A student questionnaire is included to allow instructors to collect student data that can be used in class throughout the semester as a comparison with national poll data presented in the book.

Instructional Materials on Diskettes. The lectures and other material in the instructor's manual are provided on computer diskettes. So is the student questionnaire, which will spare instructors the trouble of having it retyped or re-entered on computer disks.

Student Study Guide. An excellent Student Guide, written by Susan Rigdon of the University of Illinois and Johns Hopkins University, provides students with exercises emphasizing the major points of each chapter. Chapter objectives and key terms are reviewed. Practice multiple choice questions are provided. Unlike many such guides, this one also helps the students learn to write essays, thus emphasizing the improvement of analytic skills. Essay writing tips are given, then illustrated in each chapter.

Computer Exercises. We provide computer exercises for student use. These include practice multiple choice questions for use in a game format or individual use.

Videotapes. We also provide a set of videotapes that can be used with the chapters on Congress and elections.

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Acknowledgments

We would like to thank the many people who have aided and sustained us during the lengthy course of this project. Our current and former University of Nebraska colleagues have been most tolerant and helpful. We thank them all. In particular, we appreciate the assistance of John Hibbing, Philip Dyer, Robert Miewald, Beth Theiss-Morse, Louis Picard, John Peters, David Rapkin, Peter Maslowski, David Forsythe, W. Randy Newell, and Steven Daniels who provided us with data, bibliographic information, and other insights that we have used here. We are especially grateful to Philip Dyer, Alan Booth, Louis Picard, Robert Miewald, and John Hibbing who read one or more chapters and saved us from a variety of errors.

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