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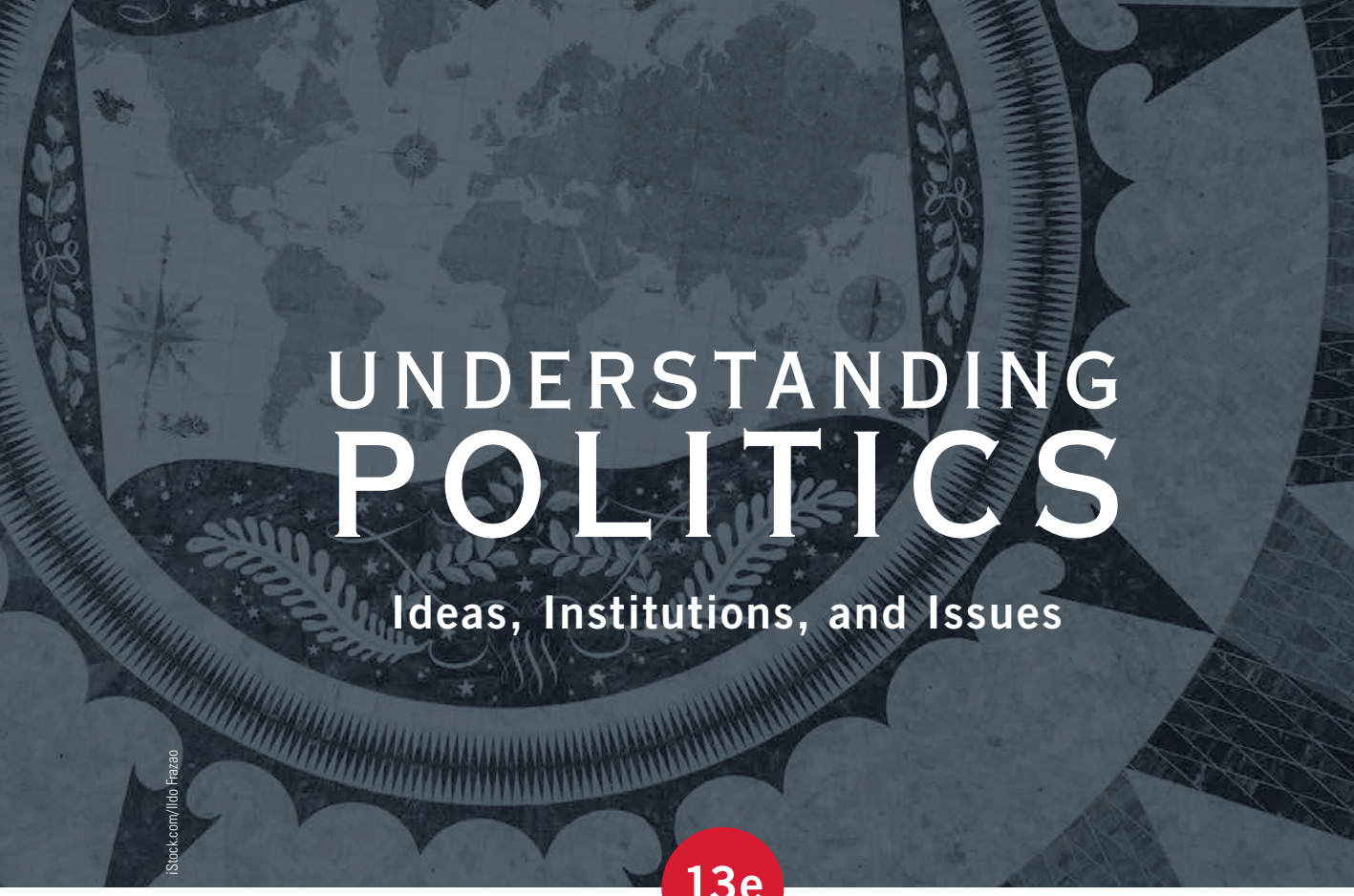
UNDERSTANDING POLITICS

Ideas, Institutions, and Issues

THOMAS M. MAGSTADT, PH.D.



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Preface

We live in a global age. Events anywhere in the world affect people everywhere. Terrorist acts, wars, natural disasters, economic downturns, banking crises, and volatile stock markets are everyday occurrences. Signs of entropy are all around. Climate change and rapidly disappearing biodiversity threaten the planet and raise questions that cross over into a dark region where eschatology trumps science. Seismic events and violent storms in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, western Sumatra, or northern Japan may be localized, but if they disrupt the global economy, their indirect effects can be far-reaching.

The same applies to political events. The September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks happened in New York City—they were local—but they led to costly wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The "war on terror" is now a global phenomenon. Fortunately, nothing on the scale of 9/11 has happened in the United States recently; unfortunately, major calamities occur in other parts of the world with dismal frequency and tragic consequences.

Things change with blinding speed. We now have smart weapons that make it possible to use unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), called "drones," armed with guns and bombs to kill from a safe distance, one of the recent developments explored in Chapter 15. Remote-controlled warplanes take the risk out of flying combat missions—a big change in the art and science of war fighting. In essence, the World Wide Web has been weaponized.

The same technological revolution is also changing the way we make things—all kinds of things. For example, we can now use a 3D laser printer to produce everything from medical implants to high-quality musical instruments, to racing-car parts, and, yes, guns.

Another big change is the rise of a global elite. The world had more millionaires than Australians in 2017—more than 36 million according to Credit Suisse's Global Wealth Report. Together, they make up 1 percent of the population but hold as much wealth as the bottom 46 percent. This global trend toward greater economic inequality and concentration of wealth is also evident in the United States, where the top 1 percent control 40 to 45 percent of the nation's wealth.[1]

The rise of a new global meritocracy is driven by brain power. In today's world, more than ever before, the wealth of nations and individuals is based on entrepreneurial science and engineering—that is, ideas converted into products for a global marketplace.

Technology is revolutionizing politics as well as business, but the basic nature of the decision makers—the people who run things—remains unchanged. Conflict in the world—the struggle for power—continues unabated, as does the search for peace, order, and justice.

Paradoxically, the limits of power, even in its most concentrated forms, are everywhere apparent—from ancient places, such as Palestine and Iraq in the Middle East and Afghanistan in Central Asia; to Europe, where the "euro crisis" threatens to undermine a supranational project six decades in the making; and to the United States with its relatively short history and even shorter memory. The cost of failed policies and corrupt, incompetent leadership is also apparent in our world—and our nation's capital.

But when it comes to the quality of citizenship, the implications of recent advances in telecommunications, Internet access, and social networking are not so clear. In our wired world, it's easier than ever before to learn more about what's happening in the world, to be more attuned to the news, and to vote more

intelligently. Despite this ease of learning, studies show a *decline* in civic knowledge and education in the United States.

This double deficiency—both at the top and at the bottom of political society—is a kind of stealth crisis: Much like a stealth bomber, it gives ample evidence of its existence but goes largely unnoticed. Meanwhile, there is no absence of injustice, intolerance, misguided idealism, zealotry, and human suffering—proof enough that the ever-more polluted and crowded planet we inhabit has not changed for the better, even though the West's fortunate few are far more secure and comfortable than the vast majority who live in the developing regions of the globe.

Since *Understanding Politics* made its debut in 1984, nothing has shaken my conviction that politics matters. Representative democracy is only as good as the quality of the electorate. Education, an independent press, and an attentive public are three keys to good government.

At a minimum, voters need a working knowledge of the political and economic forces that shape our world to make wise choices at the polls. In an unhappy twist, as news and information have become more readily accessible—thanks in no small part to the Internet—interest in public affairs and a willingness to get involved have declined. Indeed, many Americans are not engaged in the political process except perhaps to vote.

The study of politics is a gateway to a broader and better understanding of human nature, society, and the world. This idea is what originally inspired the writing of *Understanding Politics*. It is also what has sustained my own interest through multiple revisions—that, plus a sense that the book was, is, and always will be essentially a work in progress.

A successful introduction to politics must balance two key objectives: (1) dispel anxieties associated with the attempt to understand political science, especially for the uninitiated; and (2) provide the intellectual stimulation necessary to challenge today's college students. This book is testimony to the fact that the science and philosophy of politics fall squarely within the liberal arts tradition.

Mention of the science and philosophy of politics points to one of the deepest cleavages within the discipline: Analysts who approach politics from the standpoint of science often stress the importance of power, whereas those who view it through the wide-angle lens of philosophy often emphasize the importance of justice. But the distinction between power and justice—like that between science and philosophy—is too often exaggerated.

Moral and political questions are ultimately inseparable in the real world. The exercise of power, in itself, is not what makes an action political; rather, what makes power *political* is the debate about its proper or improper uses and who benefits or suffers as a result. Thus, whenever questions of fairness are raised in the realm of public policy (for example, questions concerning abortion, capital punishment, or the use of force by police or the military), the essential ingredients of politics are present. Excessive attention to either the concept of power or the notion of morality is likely to confound our efforts in making sense of politics or, for that matter, in finding lasting solutions to the problems that afflict and divide us. It is necessary to balance the equation, tempering political realism with a penchant for justice.

Similarly, the dichotomy so often drawn between facts and values is misleading. Rational judgments—in the sense of reasoned opinions about what is good and just—are sometimes more definitive (or less elusive) than facts. For example, the proposition that "genocide is evil" is true. (Its opposite—"genocide is good"—is morally indefensible.) It is a well-known fact that Adolf Hitler and the Nazis committed genocide. We can therefore say that Hitler was evil *as a matter of fact* and not "simply" because mass murder is abhorrent to our *personal* values.

Other value-laden propositions can be stated with a high degree of probability but not absolute certainty—for example, "If you want to reduce violent crime, first reduce poverty." Still other questions of this kind may be too difficult or too close to call: In the abortion controversy, for example, does the right of a woman to biological self-determination outweigh the right to

life? It makes no sense to ignore the most important questions in life just because the answers are not easy. Even when the right answers are unclear, it is often possible to recognize wrong answers—a moderating force in itself.

This book gives due attention to contemporary political issues without ignoring the more enduring questions that often underlie them. For example, a voter's choice regarding who would make the best mayor, governor, or president raises deeper questions: What qualifications are necessary for public office? What is wrong with a system that all too often fails to produce distinguished—or distinctive—choices? Similarly, conflicts between nation-states or social groups raise philosophical as well as empirical questions about why human beings continue to fight and kill one another on a mass scale.

Although I have tried to minimize the use of names and dates, political ideas cannot be fruitfully discussed in a historical vacuum. The choice of examples throughout the text is dictated by a particular understanding of the relationship between politics and history. The consequences of certain events in the first half of the twentieth century—World Wars I and II, the October Revolution in Lenin's Russia, the Holocaust in Hitler's Germany—are still present today. We too seldom think or talk about "living history"—about all the ways antecedents (decisions and actions in the past) influence the present and constrain the future.

Inevitably, some themes and events are discussed in more than one chapter: The world of politics is more like a seamless web than a chest of drawers. In politics, as in nature, a given event or phenomenon often has many meanings and is connected to other events and phenomena in ways that are not immediately apparent. Emphasizing the common threads among major political ideas, institutions, and issues helps beginning students make sense of seemingly unrelated bits and pieces of the political puzzle. Seeing how the various parts fit together is a necessary step toward understanding politics.

Understanding Politics employs a foundation-building approach to the study of politics and government. It begins by identifying political phenomena, such as war and terrorism, that students find interesting and then seeks to describe and explain them. In an effort to build on students' natural curiosity, I try to avoid much of the jargon and many of the technical or arcane disputes that too often characterize the more advanced literature in the field of political science.

Rather than probe the deepest recesses of a single discipline, the book unapologetically borrows insights from various disciplines, including history, economics, psychology, and sociology, as well as philosophy. It is intended to be a true liberal arts approach to the study of government and politics. The goal is ambitious: to challenge students to begin the lifelong learning process that can lead to a generation of citizens who are well informed, actively engaged, self-confident, and thoughtful, and who have a capacity for indignation in the face of public hypocrisy, dishonesty, stupidity, or gross ineptitude.

Chapter 1, "Introduction: The Study of Politics," defines the basic concepts of politics and centers on how and why it is studied. This chapter lays the groundwork for the remainder of the text and stands alone as its introduction. Chapter 2, "The Idea of the Public Good: Ideologies and Isms," deals with basic belief systems, including ideologies of the Right and Left, such as communism and fascism, and "isms" of the Right and Left, such as liberalism and conservatism.

Part 1, "Comparative Political Systems: Models and Theories," analyzes utopian, democratic, and authoritarian forms of government, as well as political systems caught in the difficult transition from authoritarian to democratic institutions. This part, which comprises Chapters 3 through 6, looks at different kinds of political regimes in a theoretical light.

Part 2, "Established and Emerging Democracies," consists of three chapters that examine parliamentary democracies (Chapter 7), transitional states (Chapter 8), and developing countries (Chapter 9). Almost all governments in today's world either aspire to some form of democracy or claim to be "democratic." This amazing fact is itself irrefutable evidence of the power of an idea. Though often abused, the idea

of democracy has fired the imaginations of people everywhere for more than two centuries. In an age when bad news is written in blood and body counts are more likely to refer to innocent civilians than armed combatants, we would do well to remember that democratic ideals have never before been so warmly embraced or so widely (if imperfectly) institutionalized.

In Part 3, "Politics by Civil Means: Citizens, Leaders, and Policies," four chapters (10 through 13) focus on the political process and public policy. The United States is featured in this section, which examines citizenship and political socialization, political participation (including opinion polling and voting behavior), political organization (parties and interest groups), political leadership, political ideologies (or divergent "approaches to the public good"), and contemporary public policy issues.

Part 4, "Politics by Violent Means: Revolution, War, and Terrorism," examines conflict as a special and universal problem in politics. It divides the problem into three categories: revolution, terrorism, and war (corresponding to Chapters 14, 15, and 16, respectively). Viewed from the aftermath of 9/11, when the president of the United States declared international terrorism to be the preeminent threat in the world and blurred the distinction between counterterrorist policy and all-out war, Part 4 is guaranteed to stimulate the curiosity of students and provoke spirited class discussions. Invading and occupying a country—namely, Iraq—that had nothing to do with the 9/11 attacks, did not possess "weapons of mass destruction," and did not pose a threat to the United States was a curious response to the problem posed by the existence of a malevolent terrorist network (al-Qaeda) harbored by a fundamentalist regime (the Taliban) in a land (Afghanistan) virtually impossible to subdue by conquest and notoriously impervious to outside influence. Indeed, this response affords ample opportunity for contemplation about the motives, causes, and consequences of war at the beginning of a new millennium.

Finally, Part 5, "Politics Without Government," introduces students to key concepts in the study of international relations, describes key patterns, and discusses perennial problems. Chapter 17 examines the basic principles and concepts in international relations, the evolving structure and context of world politics, certain key global issues, international law, and the role of the United Nations. Chapter 18 explores the role of international law and organizations—including the European Union and the United Nations—in a world riven by rivalries and facing environmental challenges on a scale of biblical proportions. The Afterword, "The Power of Knowledge," is a single paragraph. Students are encouraged to read it first and then to reread it at the end of the semester. My hope is that some will remember and apply it.

In this new edition, I have retained the pedagogical features found in previous editions with one exception: A short list of learning objectives replaces chapter outlines in this edition. Each chapter ends with a summary, review questions, and websites and readings resources. As with last edition, the glossary is posted on the book's website, which you can find at www.cengage.com/login. Endnotes for each chapter precede the index at the back of the book. In addition, the text contains a wide variety of photos, figures, maps, tables, and features, many of which have been revised or replaced with updated materials.

New in the Thirteenth Edition

In the thirteenth edition, the popular features found in the twelfth edition are updated and enhanced. The "Politics and Pop Culture" features are designed to stimulate class discussion and demonstrate how movies and music play an important role in reflecting or challenging our ideas and opinions, shaping our perceptions, and heightening our awareness of the issues. Key events and major achievements of enduring importance are highlighted in "Landmarks in History." The feature "Politics and Ideas" give students a bird's-eye view of perennial questions and key issues in political theory and philosophy.

Change is a constant, and politics drives change. Much has happened in the United States and the world since the last edition went to press. The previous edition covered the 2014 midterm elections, the war in Ukraine, the rise

of the Islamic State (ISIS) in the Middle East, and various recent events at home and abroad. This edition covers the surprising election of Donald Trump and the 2018 midterm elections, which no less dramatically changed the balance of power in the U.S. Congress. It also covers the investigation led by Robert Mueller into Russian interference in the 2016 election and the possibility of collusion involving key members of the Trump campaign organization; the controversy over immigration and President Trump's demand for funding to build "the wall"; the historic government shutdown over this issue; and the constitutional power-of-the-purse questions raised after the president declared a state of emergency in an effort to bypass Congress and obtain funding for "the wall" through another avenue.

Meanwhile, many of the issues that plagued Barack Obama's presidency continued to divide Congress and the nation as Donald Trump entered the last year of his turbulent first term: the battle of the budget and acrimonious partisan politics surrounding the so-called fiscal cliff; the use of the filibuster to block votes in the U.S. Senate; and the deep divisions in U.S. society over such issues as gun control, income inequality, abortion, health care, tax fairness, gay rights, and gender equality. The new edition covers all of these issues, as well as immigration and the rise of right-wing nativist activism expressed in white nationalism, anti-immigrant rallies, racially motived mass shootings and televised pro-Trump rallies where xenophobic, flag-waving crowds remind the nation and the world that populism and liberalism have parted ways.

This edition also covers major recent events on the world stage, including the Brexit vote in the United Kingdom, the "yellow vest" political protest movement in France, and Russia's military intervention in the eastern Ukraine. Coverage of the aftermath of euro crisis is updated. The "agenda" samplers for the four liberal democracies featured in Chapter 7 (the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Japan) reflect recent developments. The material covering India and Israel, two of the world's most challenged representative democracies, has been updated as well.

This edition includes a wealth of other revisions, text enhancements, and new features too numerous to mention. I personally selected much of the artwork appearing in recent editions—a lot of work, but worth the effort, and fun to boot. Many of the photographers featured in these pages are amateurs with a good camera, a great eye, and a generous spirit.

Resources for Students

MindTap

As a student, the benefits of using MindTap with this book are endless. With automatically graded practice quizzes and activities, an easily navigated learning path, and an interactive eBook, you will be able to test yourself inside and outside of the classroom with ease. On your computer, phone, or tablet, MindTap is there when you need it, giving you easy access to flashcards, quizzes, readings, and assignments.

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AUTHOR: Thomas M. Magstadt
ISBN: 9780357137383

With this 13th edition, we've also introduced an exciting digital learning experience in MindTap. MindTap is a fully online learning experience built upon Cengage Learning content and correlating to a core set of learning outcomes. MindTap guides students through the course curriculum via an innovative Learning Path Navigator where they will complete reading assignments and opportunities to check and

articulate their learning—and identify where they need extra help. MindTap for *Understanding Politics* includes Wrap It Up Chapter Quiz concept comprehension questions; critical thinking Focus Questions, which combine the richness of primary source materials with a learn-by-doing approach to ensure students internalize the material; and Reflection activities, which can be used by an instructor as an individual written assignment or as part of a classroom discussion activity. A suite of skills tutorials that covers research and thesis development, data literacy, and source analysis supports students as they hone their critical analysis skills and prepare and compose their research and writing deliverables for the course.

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Resources for Instructors

AUTHOR: Thomas M. Magstadt
ISBN: 9780357137369
TITLE: **Instructor Companion Website for Magstadt, *Understanding Politics,* thirteenth edition**

This Instructor Companion Website is an all-in-one multimedia online resource for class preparation, presentation, and testing. Accessible through Cengage.com/login with your faculty account, you will find the following ancillaries available for download: book-specific Microsoft PowerPoint presentations; a Test Bank compatible with multiple learning management systems; and an Instructor's Manual.

The Test Bank, offered in Blackboard, Moodle, Desire2Learn, Canvas, and Angel formats, contains multiple-choice and essay questions for each chapter. Import the test bank into your learning management system (LMS) to edit and manage questions, and to create tests.

The Instructor's Manual contains chapter-specific learning objectives, an outline, key terms with definitions, and a chapter summary. Additionally, the Instructor's Manual features a critical thinking question, lecture launching suggestion, and an in-class activity for each learning objective.

The Microsoft PowerPoint presentations are ready-to-use, visual outlines of each chapter. These presentations are easily customized for your lectures. Access the Instructor Companion Website at www.cengage.com/login.

AUTHOR: Thomas M. Magstadt
ISBN: 9780357137413
TITLE: **IAC Cognero for Magstadt, *Understanding Politics,* thirteenth edition**

Cengage Learning Testing Powered by Cognero is a flexible, online system that allows you to author, edit, and manage test bank content from multiple Cengage Learning solutions, create multiple test versions in an instant, and deliver tests from your LMS, your classroom, or wherever you want. The test bank for the thirteenth edition of *Understanding Politics* contains multiple-choice and essay questions for each chapter.

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About the Author

Thomas M. Magstadt earned his doctorate at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). He has taught at the Graduate School of International Management, Augustana College (Sioux Falls), the University of Nebraska at Kearney, the Air War College, and the University of Missouri–Kansas City, and, most recently, the University of Kansas. He has also chaired two political science departments, worked as a foreign intelligence analyst, served as Director of the Midwest Conference on World Affairs, and lectured as a Fulbright Scholar in the Czech Republic. In addition to publishing articles in newspapers, magazines, and professional journals, Dr. Magstadt is the author of *An Empire If You Can Keep It* (Washington, DC: Congressional Quarterly Press, 2004); *Nations and Governments: Comparative Politics in Regional Perspective*, fifth edition (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2005); *Contemporary European Politics* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Cengage Learning, 2007); and *The European Union on the World Stage: Sovereignty, Soft Power, and the Search for Consensus* (BookSurge, 2010).

Chapter 1

Mario Tama/Getty Images News/Getty Images

Introduction

The Study of Politics

Learning Objectives

- LO1-1 Discuss the value of studying politics.
- LO1-2 Identify the three basic elements of politics, as well as the dynamics of each.
- LO1-3 Analyze the methods, models, and approaches for studying politics.
- LO1-4 Evaluate whether politics brings out the best or the worst in human nature—or both.

Politics is not for the faint-hearted. Almost never a day goes by without a crisis at home or abroad. Whenever we catch the news on our radio, TV, or computer, we are reminded that we live in a dangerous world. The rise of social media as a source of global news and networking has also transformed modern communications, for better or worse.

Today, it is all but forgotten that back in 2008, the spectacle of the world's only superpower paralyzed by extreme partisanship and teetering on the brink of a "fiscal cliff" loomed like a gathering storm. The politically charged atmosphere and the pervasive sense of an impending crisis was nothing new, but two events dominated the news. First, a financial meltdown and plummeting stock market wiped out fortunes and rocked the global economy to its very foundations. Second, Barack Obama became the first African American elected to the nation's highest office.

The partisanship only deepened in the years that followed President Obama's reelection in 2012. Republicans kept control of the U.S. House of Representatives, and 2014 they won big majorities in both the House and Senate. A new threat had emerged in the Middle East in the form of the so-called Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). In Washington, D.C., the federal government was crippled as Republicans and Democrats remained bitterly divided over everything from foreign policy to health care.

In 2016, Hillary Clinton was poised to become the first woman ever to be elected president of the United States in what close observers and pollsters predicted would be a landslide victory against a real-estate tycoon and reality TV star no one expected to win the Republican nomination, let alone the election. The polls were not wrong: Clinton received several million more votes than Trump, but Trump prevailed where it counts in the peculiar American system: the Electoral College (see Chapter 4, Constitutional Democracy).

Political culture plays a big role in shaping public policy, and optimism is part of America's political DNA. Despite a deepening recession in 2008, there was a new sense of hope. Indeed, hope was the key theme of Barack Obama's successful bid to become America's first African American president in 2008—many voters longed for the end of two costly wars and the dawn of a new era in America. But by 2012, hope had given way to anger and disappointment.

Obama's economic stimulus package was widely viewed as a Wall Street "bailout"—a massive multibillion-dollar gift to the very financial institutions that had caused the problem. It was also criticized as a "jobless recovery": Unemployment rose to nearly 10 percent, and youth unemployment (among 16- to 19-year-olds) rose about 25 percent in 2010. Nearly half of young people aged 16 to 24 did not have jobs, the highest number since World War II.

Obama also spearheaded a controversial health care reform that satisfied few, confused everyone, and angered many voters on both sides of the acrimonious debate. His decision to order a "surge" in Afghanistan, committing 30,000 more U.S. troops to an unpopular and unwinnable war, did not placate Congress or greatly improve his standing in the opinion polls, nor did his decision to withdraw the last U.S. combat troops from Iraq at the end of 2011.

Despite a constant chorus of criticism and a barrage of attack ads from the right, Obama won reelection in 2012. The embattled president's troubles in dealing with a recalcitrant Republican majority in Congress, however, continued unabated. His decision in the fall of 2014 to launch a major bombing campaign against ISIS in Iraq and Syria—in effect, resuming a war that had officially ended three years earlier—did not appease the opposition or boost his popularity, which fell to new lows in 2014.

The president's declining popularity was a major factor in setting the stage for the Republican victory in the 2014 midterm elections when voters gave the GOP a majority in the Senate. Republicans also gained seats in the House, where they had won back control in 2010 and whittled the Democrats' majority in the Senate (see especially Chapter 11, Political Participation, and Chapter 13, Issues in Public Policy).

Donald Trump's election in 2016 radically changed the landscape of American politics. On the campaign trail, Trump vowed to ban Muslims and build a wall to stop illegal immigration. He promised to lower the tax rate, give tax cuts to working Americans, and repeal and replace the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act ("Obamacare").

As a candidate, Trump declared climate change to be a hoax and claimed the Paris climate accord was a severe drag on the U.S. economy. He called the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) a disaster and inveighed against the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). He vowed to bring U.S. troops home, called the Middle East a "total and complete mess," and tweeted, "Our troops are being killed by the Afghanis we train and we waste billions there. Nonsense!"

In Chapter 13, we revisit these issues and explore how the attempt to implement them has played out. As Donald Trump's first term wore on, Washington was facing total gridlock: A government shutdown at the end of 2018—the upshot of President Trump's demand for $5 billion to build the wall—left no doubt about the state of chaos. The public was bitterly divided over the president's fitness for high office, and the Special Counsel's investigation into Russia's interference in the 2016 election, possible collusion, and obstruction of justice sullied the Trump presidency.

In this charged atmosphere of anger and uncertainty, Americans were questioning the survival of the political system itself. Was it on the verge of collapse? Is the world's oldest and richest democracy immune to a catastrophic system failure? If you were desperate for an answer, who would you ask?

LO1-1 WHY STUDY POLITICS?

The belief that anyone with a college education will have a basic understanding of political ideas, institutions, and issues is wishful thinking. There is a mountain of evidence showing that contention is simply not true; moreover, there is a mountain of empirical evidence to prove it beyond any doubt. To begin to understand the power of politics—and the politics of power—we have to make a careful study and, above all, keep an open mind.

Self-Interest

Because personal happiness depends in no small degree on what government does or does not do, we all have a considerable stake in understanding how government works (or why it is not working). Federal work-study programs, state subsidies to public education, low-interest loans, federal grants, and court decisions that protect students' rights are but a few examples of politics and public policy that directly affect college students. For farmers, crop subsidies, price supports, and water rights are crucial policy issues. Environmental regulations are often the target of intense lobbying on the part of power companies, the oil and gas industry, and mining interests.

Taxes are a hot-button issue for nearly everyone. Most people think they pay too much and others pay too little. Do you know *anyone* who wants to pay *more* in taxes? Actually, at least one super-rich guy argues that people in his income bracket ought to pay more—Warren Buffet.

Politics is a pervasive fact of life. Like it or not, no one can escape its products—rules, laws, and policies—or its effects. We often think of politics as something that happens only in Washington, D.C., or maybe our state capital. A former Speaker of the House, Tip O'Neill, is often quoted as saying, "All politics is local." Is it? When you have the answer and can explain it, you will be one giant step closer to understanding the drama—the possibilities and limitations—of political life in modern society.

Through the study of politics, we become more aware of our dependence on the political system and better equipped to determine when to favor and when to oppose change. At the same time, such study helps to reveal the limits of politics and the obstacles to bringing about any major change in a society. It is sobering to consider that each of us is only one person in a nation of millions (and a world of billions), most of whom have opinions and prejudices no less firmly held than our own.

The Public Interest

What could be more vital to the public interest in any society than the moral character and conduct of its citizens? Civil society is defined by and reflected in the kinds of everyday decisions and choices made by ordinary people leading ordinary lives. At the same time, people are greatly influenced by civil society and the prevailing culture and climate of politics. We are all products of our circumstances to a greater extent than most of us realize (or care to admit). Politics plays a vital role in shaping these circumstances, and it is fair to say the public interest hangs in the balance.

politics
The process by which a community selects rulers and empowers them to make decisions, takes action to attain common goals, and reconciles conflicts within the community.

LO1-2 Basic Concepts of Politics

What is **politics**? It has been defined in various ways. For Aristotle (384–22 BC), it was "the art of the possible." For students of Harold Lasswell (1902–78), political science is the study of "who gets what, when, how." For political scientist David Easton (1917–2014), it was the "authoritative allocation of values." The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines politics as "the art or science of government or governing."

Governing is all about making rules, which in turn involves making decisions about rules—and rulers. Who makes the rules? Who decides? In states founded on a constitution, who decides depends on the language in the charter itself; as such, it is an intrinsically political question. If the answer is "We the People" (as in the Preamble to the U.S. Constitution), does that mean all the people or only certain favored people? The attempt to resolve this question in an ever-changing society is a major theme in American history.

Many people tend to view politics as inherently corrupt and corrupting—hence the term "dirty politics." Is this true? Are there notable exceptions? Can you think of any?

We may not agree on how to define politics, but we know what it is when we see it—and we often dislike what we see. We are quick to see politics as the main cause of society's ills.

English historian Sir John Seeley once wrote a clever little couplet that goes like this: "History without Political Science has no fruit, Political Science without History has no root." By the same token, try to imagine society without government; now try to imagine government without politics. When things go awry, it is all too easy to blame "politics" and give the politicians responsible for creating the mess a pass. In a properly ordered society, this book argues, politics is the solution to the problem of bad politicians and uninformed voters.

Like other disciplines, political science has a lexicon and language all its own. We start our language lesson with three words that carry a great deal of political freight: *power*, *order*, and *justice*.

Power

Power is the currency of all politics. Without power, no government can make and enforce laws, provide security, regulate the economy, conduct foreign policy, or wage war. Although many kinds of power exist, in this book we are interested in *political* power. Coercion plays an important role in politics, but political power cannot be equated with force. Indeed, the sources of power are many and varied. A large population, a booming economy, a cohesive society, and wise leadership—all are examples of quite different power sources.

We often define power in terms of national wealth or military spending. We once called the most formidable states Great Powers; now we call them "superpowers." Power defined in this way is tangible and measurable. Critics of this classical view make a useful distinction between "hard power" and "soft power." Hard power refers to the means and instruments of brute force or coercion, primarily military and economic clout. Soft power is "attractive" rather than coercive: The essence of soft power is "the important ability to get others to want what you want."[1]

Power is never equally distributed. Yet the need to concentrate power in the hands of a few inevitably raises three big questions: Who wields power? In whose interests? And to what ends?

power
The capacity to influence or control the behavior of persons and institutions, whether by persuasion or coercion.

The most basic question of all is "Who rules?" Sometimes we have only to look at a nation's constitution and observe the workings of its government to find the answer. At the same time, it may be difficult to determine who really rules when the government is cloaked in secrecy or when, as is often the case, informal patterns of power are very different from the textbook diagrams.

authority
Command of the obedience of society's members by a government.

legitimacy
The exercise of political power in a community in a way that is voluntarily accepted by the members of that community.

legitimate authority
The legal and moral right of a government to rule over a specific population and control a specific territory; the term *legitimacy* usually implies a widely recognized claim of governmental authority and voluntary acceptance on the part of the population(s) directly affected.

The terms *power* and *authority* are often confused and even used interchangeably. In reality, they denote two distinct dimensions of politics. According to Mao Zedong, the late Chinese Communist leader, "Political power flows from the barrel of a gun." Political power is clearly associated with the means of coercion (the regular police, secret police, and the army), but power can also flow from wealth, personal charisma, ideology, religion, and many other sources, including the moral standing of a particular individual or group in society.

Authority, by definition, flows not only (or even mainly) from the barrel of a gun but also from the *norms* that society accepts and even cherishes. These norms are moral, spiritual, and legal codes of behavior, or good conduct. Thus, authority implies **legitimacy**—a condition in which power is exercised by common consensus through established institutions. Note this definition does not mean, nor is it meant to imply, that democracy is the only legitimate form of government possible. Any government that enjoys the consent of the governed is legitimate—including a monarchy, military dictatorship, or theocracy.

The acid test of **legitimate authority** is not whether people have the right to vote or to strike or dissent openly, but how much *value* people attach to these rights. If a majority of the people are content with the existing political order as it stands (with or without voting rights), the legitimacy of the ruler(s) is simply not in question. But, as history amply demonstrates, it is possible to seize power and to rule without a popular mandate or public approval, without moral, spiritual, or legal justification—in other words, without true (legitimate) authority.

A military power seizure—also known as a *coup d'etat*—typically involves a plot by senior army officers to overthrow a corrupt, incompetent, or unpopular civilian ruler. One well-known example happened in Egypt in July 2013, following many months of turmoil and the outcome of a presidential election that became unacceptable to the military.

Power seizures also occurred in Mauritania and Guinea in 2008 and in Thailand as recently as 2014; many contemporary rulers, especially in Africa, have come to power in this manner. Adolf Hitler's failed "Beer Hall Putsch" in 1923 is another famous example of an attempt to seize power. Although such attempts often fail, they are usually evidence of political instability—as the case of Weimar Germany illustrates.

Claiming authority is useless without the means to enforce it. The right to rule—a condition that minimizes the need for repression—hinges in large part on legitimacy or popularity.

Legitimacy and popularity go hand in hand. Illegitimate rulers are inevitably unpopular rulers. Such rulers are faced with a hard choice: relinquish power or repress opposition. Whether repression works depends, in turn, on the answer to three questions. First, how widespread and determined is the opposition? Second, does the government have adequate financial resources and coercive capabilities to defeat its opponents and deter future challenges? Third, does the government have the will to use all means necessary to defeat the rebellion?

If the opposition is broadly based and the government waivers for whatever reason, repression is likely to fail. Regimes changed in Russia in 1917 and 1992 following failed attempts to crush the opposition. Two other examples include

Cuba in 1958, where Fidel Castro led a successful revolution, and Iran in 1978, where a mass uprising led to the overthrow of the Shah. A similar pattern was evident in many Eastern European states in 1989, when repressive communist regimes collapsed like so many falling dominoes.

If people respect the ruler(s) and play by the rules without being forced to do so (or being threatened with the consequences), the task of maintaining order and stability in society becomes much easier. It stands to reason that people who feel exploited and oppressed make poorly motivated workers. The perverse work ethic of Soviet-style dictatorships, where it was frequently said, "We pretend to work and they pretend to pay us," helps explain the decline and fall of Communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, dramatized by the spontaneous tearing down of the Berlin Wall in 1989.

Order

Order exists on several levels. First, it denotes the structures, rules, rituals, procedures, and practices that make up the political system embedded in every **society**. But what, exactly, is society? In essence, society is an aggregation of individuals who share a common identity. Usually that identity is at least partially defined by geography, because people who live in close proximity often know each other, enjoy shared experiences, speak the same language, and have similar values and interests. The process of instilling a sense of common purpose or creating a single political allegiance among diverse groups of people is complex and works better from the bottom up than from the top down. The breakup of the Soviet Union and Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, after more than seven decades as multinational states, suggests new communities are often fragile and tend to fall apart quickly if there are not strong cultural and psychological bonds under the political structures.

The Russian-backed secessionist movement that threatened to break up Ukraine in 2014–15 also illustrates the obstacles to maintaining order in a newly independent country where a national minority group is geographically concentrated. Russian speakers in parts of eastern Ukraine bordering on Russia constitute a solid majority and remain fiercely loyal to Moscow. The same is true in Crimea (previously part of Ukraine), where most people welcomed Russia's armed intervention. Russia annexed this strategically important region (the whole of the Crimean Peninsula) in March 2014.

The idea that individuals become a cohesive community through an unwritten **social contract** has been fundamental to Western political thought since the seventeenth century. Basic to social contract theory is the notion that the right to rule is based on the consent of the governed. Civil liberties in this type of community are a matter of natural law and natural rights—that is, they do not depend on written laws but rather are inherent in Nature. Nature with a capital *N* is a set of self-evident truths that, in the eyes of social contract theorists, can be known through a combination of reason and observation. A corollary of this theory is that whenever government turns oppressive—for example, when it arbitrarily takes away such natural rights as life, liberty, and (perhaps) property—the people have a right to revolt (see Chapter 14, Revolution).

order
In a political context, refers to an existing or desired arrangement of institutions based on certain principles, such as liberty, equality, prosperity, and security. Also often associated with the rule of law (as in the phrase "law and order") and with conservative values such as stability, obedience, and respect for legitimate authority.

society
An aggregation of individuals who share a common identity. Usually that identity is at least partially defined by geography, because people who live in close proximity often know each other, enjoy shared experiences, speak the same language, and have similar values and interests.

social contract
A concept in political theory most often associated with Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacque Rousseau, and John Locke; the social contract is an implicit agreement among individuals to form a civil society and to accept certain moral and political obligations essential to its preservation.

government
The persons and institutions that make and enforce rules or laws for the larger community.

republic
A form of government in which sovereignty resides in the people of that country, rather than with the rulers. The vast majority of republics today are democratic or representative republics, meaning that the sovereign power is exercised by elected representatives who are responsible to the citizenry.

state
In its sovereign form, an independent political-administrative unit that successfully claims the allegiance of a given population, exercises a monopoly on the legitimate use of coercive force, and controls the territory inhabited by its citizens or subjects; in its other common form, the major political-administrative subdivision of a federal system, which is not sovereign but rather depends on the central authority (often called the "national government") for resource allocations (tax transfers and grants), defense (military protection and emergency relief), and regulation of economic relations with other federal subdivisions (nonsovereign states) and external entities (sovereign states).

Government is a human invention by which societies are ruled and binding rules are made. Given the rich variety of governments in the world, how might we categorize them all? Traditionally, political scientists have distinguished between **republics**, in which sovereignty (discussed later in this section) ultimately resides in the people, and governments such as monarchies or tyrannies, in which sovereignty rests with the rulers. Today, almost all republics are democratic (or representative) republics, meaning they have political systems wherein elected representatives responsible to the people exercise sovereign power.[2]

Some political scientists draw a simple distinction between democracies, which hold free elections, and dictatorships, which do not. Others emphasize the type of political economy in a country, distinguishing between governments enmeshed in capitalist or market-based systems and governments based on socialist or state-regulated systems. Finally, governments in developing countries face different kinds of challenges than do governments in developed countries. Not surprisingly, more economically developed countries often have markedly more well-established political institutions—including political parties, regular elections, civil and criminal courts—than most less developed countries, and more stable political systems.

In the modern world, the **state** is the sole repository of **sovereignty**. A sovereign state is a community with well-defined territorial boundaries administered by a single government capable of making and enforcing laws. In addition, it typically claims a monopoly on the legitimate use of force; raises armies for the defense of its territory and population; levies and collects taxes; regulates trade and commerce; establishes courts, judges, and magistrates to settle disputes and punish lawbreakers; and sends envoys (ambassadors) to represent its interests abroad, negotiate treaties, and gather useful information. Entities that share *some* but not all of the characteristics of states include fiefdoms and chiefdoms, bands and tribes, universal international organizations (such as the United Nations), and regional supranational organizations (such as the European Union).

In the language of politics, state usually means **country**. France, for instance, may be called either a state or a country. (In certain federal systems of government, a state is an administrative subdivision, such as New York, Florida, Texas, or California in the United States; however, such states within a state are not sovereign.)

The term *nation* is also a synonym for *state* or *country*. Thus, the only way to know for certain whether *state* means part of a country (for example, the United States) or a whole country (say, France or China) is to consider the context. By the same token, context is the key to understanding what we mean by the word *nation*.

A **nation** is made up of a distinct group of people who share a common background, including geographic location, history, racial or ethnic characteristics, religion, language, culture, or belief in common political ideas. Geography heads this list because members of a nation typically exhibit a strong collective sense of belonging associated with a particular territory for which they are willing to fight and die if necessary.

Countries with relatively homogeneous populations (with great similarity among members) were most common in old Europe, but this once-defining characteristic of European nation-states is no longer true. The recent influx of newcomers from former colonial areas (in particular, the Muslim-majority countries of North Africa, the Arab world, and South Asia) and post–Cold War east–west population movements in Europe have brought the issue of immigration to the forefront of politics in France, Germany, the United Kingdom, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, and even the Scandinavian countries. Belgium, in contrast, provides a rare example of a European state divided culturally and linguistically (French-speaking Walloons and Dutch-speaking Flemish) from the start.

India, Russia, and Nigeria are three highly diverse states. India's constitution officially recognizes no fewer than eighteen native tongues! The actual number spoken, however, is far larger. As a nation of immigrants, the United States is also very diverse, but the process of assimilation eventually brings the children of newcomers, if not the newcomers themselves, into the mainstream.[3]

The **nation-state** is a state encompassing a single nation in which the overwhelming majority of the people form a dominant in-group who share common cultural, ethnic, and linguistic characteristics; all others are part of a distinct outgroup or minority. This concept is rooted in a specific time and place—that is, in modern Western Europe. (See Landmarks in History: The Peace of Westphalia for the story of the first nation-state.) The concept of the nation-state fits less comfortably in other regions of the world, where the political boundaries of sovereign states—many of which were European colonies before World War II—often do not coincide with ethnic or cultural geography. In some instances, ethnic, religious, or tribal groups that were bitter traditional enemies were thrown together in new "states," resulting in societies prone to great instability or even civil war.

Decolonization after World War II gave rise to polyglot states in which various ethnic or tribal groups were not assimilated into the new social order. Many decades later, the all-important task of **nation-building** in these new states remains far from finished. Thus, in 1967, Nigeria plunged into a vicious civil war when one large ethnic group, the Igbo, tried unsuccessfully to secede and form an independent state called Biafra. In 1994, Rwanda witnessed one of the bloodiest massacres in modern times when the numerically superior Hutus slaughtered hundreds of thousands of Tutsis, including women and children. In 2018, nine of the ten most violent countries in the world were located in the Middle East, Central Asia, and Africa, including Syria (1), Afghanistan (2), South Sudan (3), Iraq (4), Somalia (5), Sudan (6), the Central African Republic (7), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (8), and Pakistan (9). Number ten on the list was North Korea.[4]

In India, where Hindus and Muslims frequently clash and sporadic violence breaks out among militant Sikhs in Punjab, and where hundreds of languages and dialects are spoken, characterizing the country as a nation-state misses the point altogether. In Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon), Hindu Tamils have long waged a terrorist guerrilla war against the majority Singhalese, who are Buddhist.

Even in the Slavic-speaking parts of Europe, age-old ethnic rivalries have caused the breakup of preexisting states. The Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, and Czechoslovakia are multinational states that self-destructed in the 1990s. More recently, in 2014–15, centrifugal tendencies threatened to split Ukraine in half.

sovereignty
A government's capacity to assert supreme power successfully in a political state.

country
As a political term, it refers loosely to a sovereign state and is roughly equivalent to "nation" or "nation-state"; *country* is often used as a term of endearment—for example, in the phrase "my *country* 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty" in the patriotic song every U.S. child learns in elementary school; country has an emotional dimension not present in the word *state*.

nation
Often interchangeable with *state* or *country*; in common usage, this term actually denotes a specific people with a distinct language and culture or a major ethnic group—for example, the French, Dutch, Chinese, and Japanese people each constitute a nation as well as a state, hence the term nation-state; not all nations are fortunate enough to have a state of their own—modern examples include the Kurds (Turkey, Iraq, and Iran), Palestinians (West Bank and Gaza, Lebanon, Jordan), Pashtuns (Afghanistan), and Uighurs and Tibetans (China).

nation-state
A geographically defined community administered by a government.

LANDMARKS IN HISTORY

The Peace of Westphalia (1648): The Origins of the Modern Nation-State System

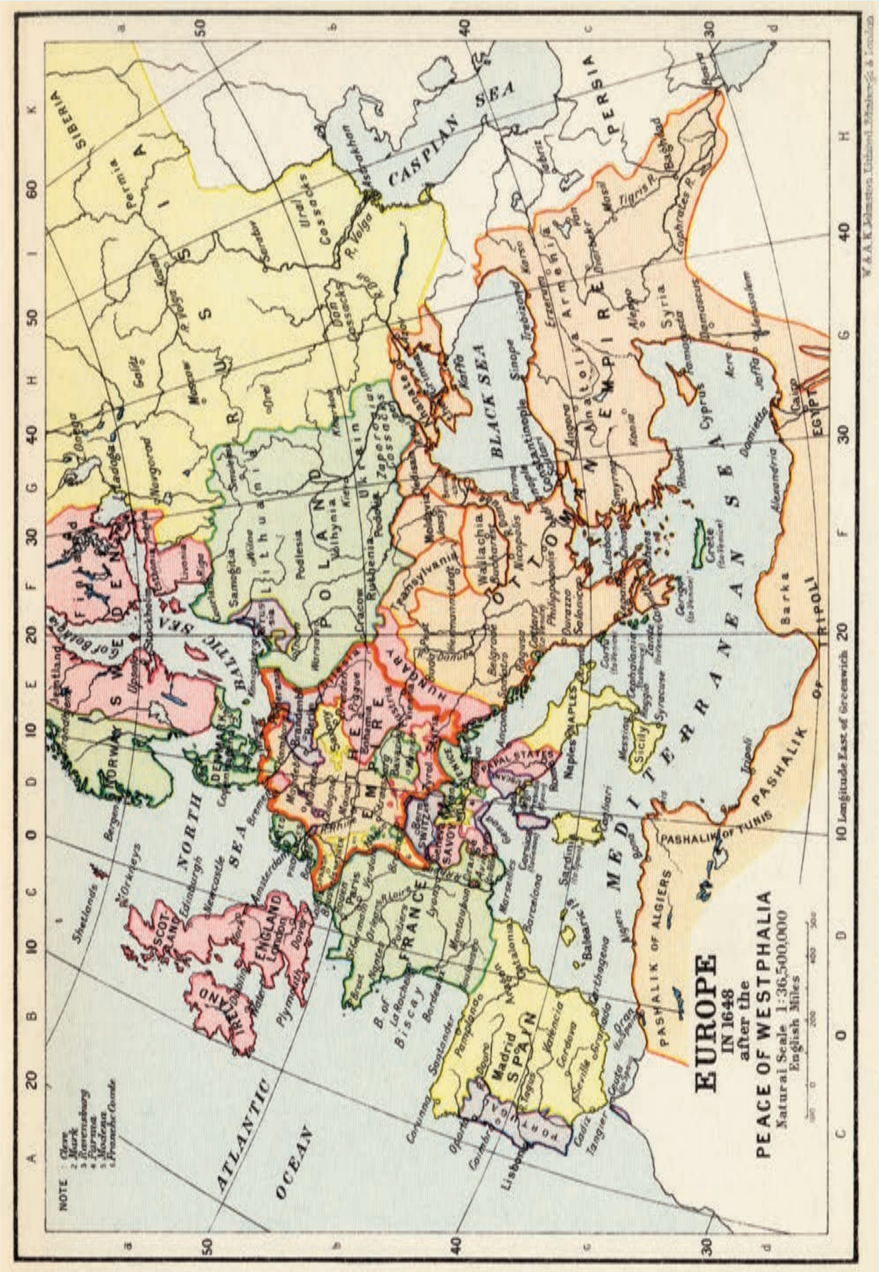


FIGURE 1.1 Dawn of the Nation-State System: Europe in 1648.

(Continued)

LANDMARKS IN HISTORY, Continued

Most historians believe the Peace of Westphalia marks the beginning of the modern European state system. The main actors in forging the peace, which ended the Thirty Years' War in 1648, were Sweden and France as the challengers, Spain and the dying Holy Roman Empire as the defenders of the status quo, and the newly independent Netherlands.

At first glance, the map of Europe in the mid-seventeenth century does not look much like it does today. However, on closer inspection, we see the outlines of modern Europe emerge (see Figure 1.1)—visual proof that the treaty laid the foundations of the nation-state as we see it in Europe today.

The emergence of the nation-state system transformed Europe from a continent of territorial empires into one based on relatively compact geographic units that share a single dominant language and culture. This pattern was unprecedented, but would shape both European and world history in the centuries to come.

Under Napoleon's rule, France attempted to establish a new continental empire at the beginning of the nineteenth century but ultimately failed. Two other empires—Austria-Hungary and Russia—remained, but they were eclipsed by a rising new nation-state at the end of the nineteenth century and perished in World War I. After World War I, only the newly constituted Soviet empire existed in Europe. Following World War II, what remained of Europe's overseas colonial empires also disintegrated. Today, the entire world, with few exceptions, is carved up into nation-states—the legacy of a treaty that, for better or worse, set the stage for a new world order.

Finally, **stateless nations** such as the Palestinians, Kurds, and Native Americans (known as First Nations in Canada) share a sense of common identity but no longer control the homelands or territories they once inhabited. The tragic reality of nations without states has created highly volatile situations, most notably in the Middle East.

nation-building
The process of forming a common identity based on the notion of belonging to a political community separate and distinct from all others; often the concept of "nation" is based on common ethnolinguistic roots.

stateless nations
People (or nations) who are scattered over the territory of several states or dispersed widely and who have no autonomous, independent, or sovereign governing body of their own; examples of stateless nations include the Kurds, Palestinians, and Tibetans (see also *nation*).

Justice

The many willingly accept the rule of the few if—and only if—they believe the common good is significantly advanced in the process. When the lucky or favored few benefit from public policy designed to serve private interests, eventually people stop trusting the government to do the right thing—to be fair. The stage is then set for rebellion or repression, or both. The result can be, and often has been, a prelude to periods of great political instability, economic regress, and egregious human rights violations.

The concept of **justice** is no less fundamental than power in politics, and it is essential to a stable order. Is power exercised fairly, in the interest of the ruled, or merely for the sake of the rulers? For more than two thousand years, political observers have maintained the distinction between the public-spirited exercise of political power, on the one hand, and self-interested rule, on the other hand. This distinction attests to the importance of justice in political life.

Not all states and regimes allow questions of justice to be raised; in fact, throughout history, most have not. Even today, some governments brutally and systematically repress political dissent because they fear the consequences of its expression.

Often, criticism of *how* a government rules implicitly or explicitly raises questions about its moral or legal *right* to rule. One of the most important measures of liberty is the right to question whether the government is acting justly.

justice
Fairness; the distribution of rewards and burdens in society in accordance with what is deserved.

Erkan Avci/Anadolu Agency/Getty Images

Citizens unhappy about government policies at home or abroad can express themselves in any number of ways, including demonstrations and marches. Here in Washington, D.C., citizens are protesting the National Security Agency's mass surveillance, as revealed by Edward Snowden in 2013.

Questions about whether a particular ruler is legitimate or a given policy is desirable stem from human nature itself. The Greek philosopher Aristotle (384–22 BCE) observed that human beings alone use reason and language "to declare what is advantageous and what is just and unjust." Therefore, "it is the peculiarity of man, in comparison with the rest of the animal world, that he alone possess a perception of good and evil, of the just and unjust."[5]

The same human faculties that make moral judgment possible also make **political literacy**—the ability to think and speak intelligently about politics—necessary. In other words, moral judgment and political literacy are two sides of the same coin.

political literacy
The ability to think and speak intelligently about politics.

LO1-3 The Problem of Dirty Hands

Based on everyday observation, it is easy to get the impression that politics and morality operate in separate realms of human experience, that power always corrupts, and that anyone who thinks differently is hopelessly naïve. Political theorists have long recognized and debated whether it is possible to exercise power and still remain true to one's principles—the so-called problem of "dirty hands."

In politics, anything is possible, including the unthinkable. When morality is set aside, justice is placed entirely at the mercy of raw power.

The rise and fall of Nazi Germany (1933–45) under Adolf Hitler illustrates the tremendous impact a regime can have on the moral character of its citizens. At the core of Nazi ideology was a doctrine of racial supremacy. Hitler ranted about the superiority of the supposed Aryan race. The purity of the German nation was supposedly threatened with adulteration by inferior races, or *untermenschen*. Policies based on this maniacal worldview resulted in the systematic murder of millions of innocent men, women, and children. Approximately 6 million Jews and millions of others, including Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals, and people with disabilities, were killed in cold blood.

During the Nazi era, the German nation appears, at first glance, to have become little more than an extension of Hitler's will—in other words, the awesome moral responsibility for the Holocaust somehow rested on the shoulders of one man, Adolf Hitler. But some dispute this interpretation. For example, according to Irving Kristol,

> When one studies the case of The Nazi there comes a sickening emptiness of the stomach and a sense of bafflement. Can this be all? The disparity between the crime and the criminal is too monstrous.

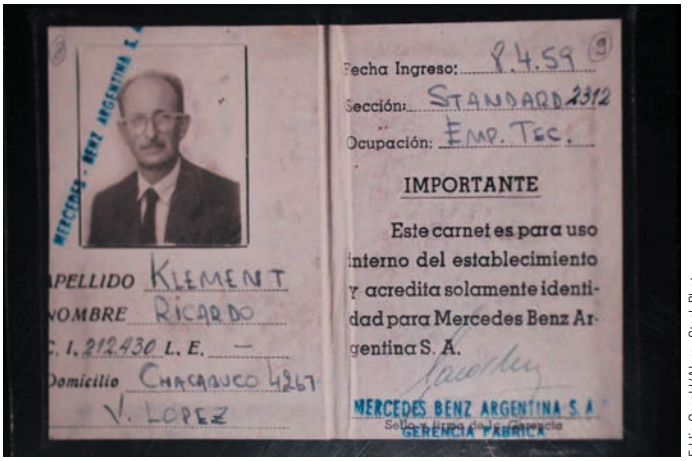
> We expect to find evil men, paragons of wickedness, slobbering, maniacal brutes; we are prepared to trace the lineaments of The Nazi on the face of every individual Nazi in order to define triumphantly the essential features of his character. But the Nazi leaders were not diabolists, they did not worship evil. For—greatest of ironies—the Nazis, like Adam and Eve before the fall, knew not of good and evil, and it is this cast of moral indifference that makes them appear so petty and colorless and superficial.[6]

One such person, according to the late German-born political theorist Hannah Arendt, was Otto Adolf Eichmann, the Nazi officer in charge of Jewish affairs in the Third Reich, who engineered and directed the genocide or extermination program known in history as the Holocaust. In Arendt's view, Eichmann was not a particularly unusual man.[7]

Following Eichmann's capture in 1960 and his subsequent trial for war crimes, Arendt wrote a famous series of articles for *The New Yorker,* later published in a book entitled *Eichmann in Jerusalem: The Banality of Evil*. The subtitle of the book underscored Arendt's central argument—namely, that far from being one of the masterminds of the Holocaust, Eichmann was an ordinary man with no original ideas, great ambitions, or deep convictions. Rather, he had a strong desire to get ahead, to be a success in life. He took special pride in his ability to do a job efficiently.

Although not particularly thoughtful or reflective in Arendt's view, Eichmann was intelligent in practical ways, attentive to details, a competent administrator capable of managing a major operation like the systematic mass murder of millions of Jews and other "enemies" and "degenerates." Arendt also describes Eichmann as somewhat insecure, but not noticeably more so than many "normal" people.

More recently, scholars have unearthed a treasure trove of research materials that challenge Arendt's thesis. In a well-documented 579-page tome entitled *Eichmann Before Jerusalem: The Unexamined Life of a Mass Murderer* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2014), German philosopher Bettina Stangneth shows clearly that Eichmann was a thinking man, a fanatical believer in German racial superiority who believed himself to have been involved in "creative" work and who—as a fugitive hiding out in Argentina after the war—was determined to secure his rightful place as a hero in German history. The notion that, in Kristol's words, "he knew not of good and evil" is no longer credible. Eichmann did not lose any sleep over dirty hands; instead, he gloried in having bloody hands.



Eddie Gerald/Alamy Stock Photo

Nazi mass murderer Adolf Eichmann. An ordinary man? Pictured here is the Red Cross identity document that Eichmann used to enter Argentina under the fake name Ricardo Klement in 1950. Have you ever known anyone who was loyal to a fault? Is blind obedience to authority uncommon? Why do people in the workplace often go along to get along?

LANDMARKS IN HISTORY

Schindler's List

Not all Germans, or Europeans, were as indifferent or self-serving in the face of evil as Adolf Eichmann. One notable example was Oskar Schindler, who is now widely renowned thanks largely to the movie *Schindler's List*.

Schindler was a German businessman who belonged to the Nazi Party. Schindler was no saint, but he used his business and political connections to save the lives of the Jewish workers whom he had first exploited.*

No doubt most of us would identify more with Schindler and other Christians who rescued Jews than with Eichmann, but the disturbing fact remains that far more Germans (including tens of thousands of Hitler Youth), mesmerized by Hitler's message of hate, behaved more like Eichmann than like Schindler.

At his trial for war crimes, Eichmann claimed to have no obsessive hatred toward Jews. In fact, we know now that Eichmann's "little man" self-portrait was a clever act designed to save him from the gallows.

Although Eichmann was not the mere functionary or "cog" he claimed to be, many Germans who participated directly in the Holocaust do fit this description—they were following orders, full stop. The fact that so many Germans blindly obeyed Eichmann and Hitler's other top lieutenants illustrates the fine line between indifference and immorality—and how easily the former can lead to the latter.

Eichmann exemplifies the worst in human nature; Schindler exemplifies the best. Both men were caught up in the same set of circumstances. Except for a depraved but ingenious demagogue named Hitler, Eichmann would not have become a war criminal and Schindler would not have become a paragon. If Hitler does not deserve the credit for producing an exemplar like Schindler, does he deserve the blame for producing a monster like Eichmann? Think about it.

Hint: On the one hand, if we are all products of the circumstances we are born (or thrust) into, we are thereby absolved of individual moral responsibility. On the other hand, if free will exists, then we cannot blame society for our misdeeds.

*To read more about Schindler and the courageous acts of other righteous Christians, see Eva Fogelman, *Conscience and Courage: Rescuers of Jews During the Holocaust* (New York: Doubleday, 1994). See also Samuel P. Oliner and Pearl M. Oliner, *The Altruistic Personality: Rescuers of Jews in Nazi Europe* (New York: Free Press, 1988).

LO1-4 How to Study Politics

Aristotle is the father of political science.[8] He not only wrote about politics and ethics, but he also described different political systems and suggested a scheme for classifying and evaluating them. For Aristotle, political science simply meant political investigation; thus, a political scientist was a person who sought, through systematic inquiry, to understand the truth about politics. In this sense, Aristotle's approach to studying politics more than two thousand years ago has much in common with what political scientists do today. In other ways, however, the discipline has changed a great deal since Aristotle's time.

There is no consensus on how best to study politics. Political scientists can and do choose among different approaches, ask different kinds of questions, and address different audiences. This fact is often a source of some dismay within the discipline, but it is hardly surprising and probably unavoidable given the vast universe of human activity the study of politics encompasses. Let us explore why and how contemporary political scientists study politics.

For What Purposes?

Some of the most important questions in politics are "should" and "ought" questions, the kind that scientists seeking objective truth tend to avoid. These are the great *normative* political questions that resonate throughout human history: When is war justified? Do people have a right to revolt? Is the right to life absolute? Is state repression always wrong? Does government have a right to keep secrets from the people? To invade the privacy of its citizens? What about censorship? Is government ever justified in placing limits on freedom of expression and freedom of the press? Should every citizen pay taxes at the same rate? If not, why not? Who should pay more and who less?

Such questions may seem too abstract or theoretical to have any practical value, but in fact they are behind the most controversial political issues of the day—abortion, gun control, LGBTQ rights, legalization of marijuana, capital punishment, and the list goes on. (See if you can think of more issues to add to this list and connect each issue to some fundamental question of justice or fairness.)

Some issues lend themselves to empirical analysis more than others. Studying elections, for example, can reveal flaws in the voting process—such as skewed voting districts or impediments to voter registration—and lead to appropriate changes or reforms, such as redistricting or switching from written ballots to voting machines. Opinion polls help leaders gauge the mood of the public and better understand the effect of government policies (see Chapter 11).

However, answers to many of the most basic questions in politics can be discovered only with a thorough knowledge of the facts and a rigorous process of analysis involving reason, logic, and dialogue. There are no shortcuts, and given that we are talking about the health and well-being of society, the stakes are too high to settle for anything less than our best efforts.

By What Methods?

Should political science strive to predict or forecast events? Is the study of politics a science akin to physics or chemistry? Answers to such questions lie in the realm of **methodology**. There are many ways to classify political scientists. We will focus on one basic distinction—the difference between *positivism* and *normativism*.

Positivism emphasizes empirical research (which relies on observation) and couches problems in terms of variables we can measure. **Behaviorism** is an offshoot of positivism that focuses mainly on the study of political behavior. Behaviorists use quantitative analysis to challenge the conventional wisdom—for example, what motivates voters or why a given election turned out the way it did. Following the facts—statistical data—wherever they may

methodology
The way scientists and scholars set about exploring, explaining, proving, or disproving propositions in different academic disciplines. The precise methods vary according to the discipline and the object, event, process, or phenomenon under investigation.

positivism
A philosophy of science, originated by Auguste Comte, that stresses observable, scientific facts as the sole basis of proof and truth; a skeptical view of ideas or beliefs based on religion or metaphysics.

behaviorism
An approach to the study of politics that emphasizes fact-based evaluations of action.

lead is the hallmark of the so-called hard sciences. The results of empirical research can cast long-standing "truths" into serious doubt or expose "facts" as fallacies.

Normativism is based on an idea closely associated with the German political philosopher Immanuel Kant. He stated that the "ought" and the "is" are inseparable from each other, and that the "ought" cannot be derived from the "is." Sticking strictly to the facts, a trademark of positivism raises a serious problem for the adherents of normative theory, who are interested not only in describing actions and consequences but also in prescribing policies and remedies. Seen in this light, values are at the core of political analysis. In studying Congress, for example, a values-based political science might ask: Did special interests unduly influence health care reform in 2009–2010? Or with respect to U.S. foreign policy: Was the invasion of Iraq in 2003 necessary?

Scholars and policy analysts seeking answers to such questions often resort to philosophy, history, constitutional law, court cases, treaties, declassified documents, and expert opinion. For example, in explaining why the Constitution adopted in 1787 did not abolish slavery, scholars often skip over the question of whether or why slavery is wrong. Instead, they examine the writings and speeches of the Founding Fathers, the economic interests they represented, the social class to which they all belonged, and the like. The reason they (we) do not dwell on the moral question is that today every sane and sensible person knows slavery is wrong. Slavery is an extreme case, but many political issues are at least as much about values as about facts.

In truth, it is not always easy to distinguish between a fact and a value. Moreover, in politics, values *are* facts. We all bring certain values to everything we do. At the same time, we can never get at the truth if we do not place a high value on facts.

normativism
Applying moral principles—norms—rooted in logic and reason to problems of politics and government; putting moral theory into political practice through good laws, wise legislation, and fair judges.

For example, the belief that abortion is a sin, which is held by an influential segment of the population, is a *value* based on a religious belief or moral conviction. We can argue all day long whether abortion is an American's right or is always wrong, but there is no escaping the *fact* that it is controversial and that politicians, government officials, and judges have no choice but to deal with this issue. No matter what legislation or jurisprudence is brought to bear on this question, it will have far-reaching consequences for society. This is but one simple example among many, illustrating the reality in which facts and values are entangled in the political life of every society, always have been, and always will be.

scientific method
Seeking empirical answers to questions through a rigorous process of constructing research designs, collecting data, and using the objective tools of statistical analysis to test hypotheses.

The Study of Human Behavior Political scientists tend to be wary of "subjective" value judgments that often fly in the face of objective facts. In the social sciences, so-called behaviorists use the types of quantitative methods commonly employed in the natural sciences such as biology, physics, and chemistry, asking questions that can be answered only empirically. Constructing a research design, collecting data, using the objective tools of statistical analysis to test hypotheses—these are the essential elements of the **scientific method**. In this manner, behavioral scientists develop mathematical models to try and explain voting behavior, coalition-building, decision making, even the causes of war.

In a study done nearly two decades ago but still relevant, researchers asked: Is it really true, as is widely believed, that high voter turnout favors Democrats?[9] If this supposition is true, it explains why Republicans would be tempted to suppress voter turnout—a major story in the 2018 midterm elections. It assumes: (1) people with lower socioeconomic status (SES) vote less often than people with higher SES; (2) as voter turnout rises, more people on the lower end of the SES ladder vote; and (3) lower-end voters are likely to vote for the party they trust to advance working-class interests—namely, the Democratic Party. This belief is reinforced whenever low voter turnout coincides with Republican victories. It also explains why most Democrats favored (and Republicans opposed) the 1993 National Voter Registration Act—popularly known as the Motor Voter Bill—which eased voter registration procedures.

Researchers examined 1,842 state elections going all the way back to 1928: 983 for senator and 859 for governor. Applying a mathematical test, they concluded that from 1928 to 1964 high voter turnout did aid the Democrats, as generally believed, but after 1964 there was no such correlation in either senatorial or gubernatorial races.

Why? Although this question was beyond the scope of the study, its findings were consistent with another complex theory of voting behavior. The rise in the number of independents since 1964 (and the resulting decline in party identification and partisan voting) made it difficult to calculate which party would benefit from a large voter turnout in any given race. In 2011, a Gallup poll found that 40 percent of all voters identified themselves as independents, and **ticket splitting** and **swing voting** have become common (see Chapter 11). In the 2010 midterm elections, for example, Republicans were the beneficiaries of a huge swing vote, as they were once again in 2014.

Behaviorists, like other research scientists, are typically content to take small steps on the road to knowledge. Each step points the way to future studies.

Studying human behavior can be as frustrating as it is fascinating. There are almost always multiple explanations for human behavior, and it is often difficult to isolate a single cause or distinguish it from a mere statistical correlation. For instance, several studies indicate that criminals tend to be less intelligent than law-abiding citizens. But is low intelligence a *cause* of crime? What about social factors such as poverty, drug or alcohol addiction, or a history of being abused as a child? What about free will? Many reject the idea that society—rather than the criminal—is somehow responsible for the crime.

Political scientists often disagree not only about how to study politics but also about which questions to ask. Behaviorists typically prefer to examine specific and narrowly defined questions, answering them by applying quantitative techniques—sophisticated statistical methods such as regression analysis and analysis of variance.

Many broader questions of politics, especially those raising issues of justice, lie beyond the scope of this sort of investigation. Questions such as "What is justice?" or "What is the role of the state in society?" require us to make moral choices and value judgments. Even if we cannot resolve such questions scientifically, they are worth asking. Confining the study of politics *only* to the kinds of questions we can subject to quantitative analysis risks turning political science into an academic game of Trivial Pursuit.

ticket splitting
A voter who votes for candidates from more than one party; this is the opposite of straight-ticket voting.

swing voting
An independent voter who votes for the Republican Party in one election and votes for the Democratic Party in another.

Rob Crandall/Alamy Stock Photo

Political scientists analyze patterns and trends in voting behavior to learn more about who votes, how different segments of the population vote, and why people vote the way they do. Political strategists use this information to help clients (candidates for office) win elections. If you were running for the state legislature or U.S. Congress, what would you want to know about voters in your district?

Given the complexity of human behavior, it is not surprising that experts argue over methodology, or how to do science. Although the lively debate sparked by the behavioral revolution has cooled, it divided the discipline for several decades and is likely to continue to do so for years to come.

The Political (Science) Puzzle

Political science, like politics, means different things to different people. The subject matter of politics is wide-ranging and therefore difficult to study without breaking it down into more manageable parts and pieces. Subfields include *political theory, U.S. government and politics, public administration, public policy, political economy, comparative politics,* and *international relations*.

Political Theory The origins of what we now call political science are to be found in Greek philosophy and date back to Socrates and Plato (circa 400 BCE). The Socratic method of teaching and seeking Truth was to ask a series of pithy questions—What is the good life? Is there a natural right to liberty?—while questioning every answer in an effort to expose logical fallacies.

Political theory seeks answers to such questions through reason, logic, and experience. Famous names in the history of political thought include Aristotle, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and John Stuart Mill, among others. These thinkers ranged far and wide but met at the intersection of politics and ethics.

Because people on opposite sides of the political fence believe that they are right and the other people are wrong, understanding politics requires us, at minimum, to be open-minded and familiarize ourselves with pro and con arguments.[10] Knowledge of costs and the moral consequences in politics is essential to a clear sense of purpose and coherent policy.

Are we humans rational by nature, or are we driven by passions such as love, hate, anger, and prejudice? Advocates of **rational choice** theory emphasize the role of reason over emotion in human behavior. Political behavior, it might be argued, follows logical and even predictable patterns. The key to understanding politics is self-interest. This approach, which forms the basis for a theory of international relations known as **political realism** (see Chapter 17, World Politics: The Struggle for Power), holds that individuals and states alike act according to the iron logic of self-interest.

Other political scientists argue that rational choice theory is an oversimplification because states and groups are composed of human beings with disparate interests, perceptions, and beliefs. The key is not self-interest, pure

rational choice
The role of reason over emotion in human behavior. Political behavior, in this view, follows logical and even predictable patterns as long as we understand the key role of self-interest.

political realism
The philosophy that power is the key variable in all political relationships and should be used pragmatically and prudently to advance the national interest; policies are judged as good or bad on the basis of their effect on national interests, not on their level of morality.

and simple, but rather culture and shared values. In this view, we cannot explain political behavior by reference to logic and rationality alone. Instead, the behavior of individuals and of groups is a product of specific influences that vary from place to place—in other words, political behavior is a product of **political culture**.

political culture
The moral values, beliefs, and myths people live by and are willing to die for.

Of course, it is not necessary to adhere dogmatically to one theory or the other. Both contain important insights, and we can perhaps best see them as complementary rather than conflicting.

U.S. Government and Politics Understanding our own political institutions is vitally important. Because the United States is a federal system, our frame of reference changes depending on whether we mean national, state, or local politics. Similarly, when we study political behavior in the United States, it makes a big difference whether we are focusing on individual behavior or the behavior of groups such as interest groups, ethnic groups, age cohorts, and the like. Teaching and learning about one's own government is, in effect, an exercise in civic education.

Citizens in a democracy need to know how the government works, which rights they are guaranteed by the Constitution, and how to decide what to believe. We need to remember that the United States is home to the oldest written constitution, a behemoth economy, and the most potent military capability of all time. Prestige, power, and wealth have political and moral consequences—namely, an obligation to act responsibly as citizens of both a powerful country and an interdependent world.

Public Administration Public administration is all about how governments organize and operate, about how bureaucracies work and interact with citizens and each other. In federal systems, intergovernmental relations is a major focus of study. Students of public administration examine budgets, procedures, and processes in an attempt to improve efficiency and reduce waste and duplication. One perennial question deals with bureaucratic behavior: How and why do bureaucracies develop vested interests and special relationships (such as between the Pentagon and defense contractors, or between the Department of Commerce and trade associations) quite apart from the laws and policies they are established to implement?

Political scientists who study public administration frequently concentrate on case studies, paying attention to whether governmental power is exercised in a manner consistent with the public interest. Public administration shares this focus with policy studies and political science as a whole.

Policy Studies and Analysis Public policy places a heavy emphasis on the outputs of government. However, the politics of public policy involves inputs as well. Before any policy can be formulated and finalized, much less implemented, all sorts of ideas and interests must be brought forward, congressional hearings held, consultants hired, and studies undertaken, published, digested, and debated. Not only special interests but also institutional interests and bureaucratic politics are further complicating factors. Once a policy is put into effect, policy analysts study the effects and look for signs—evidence—that it

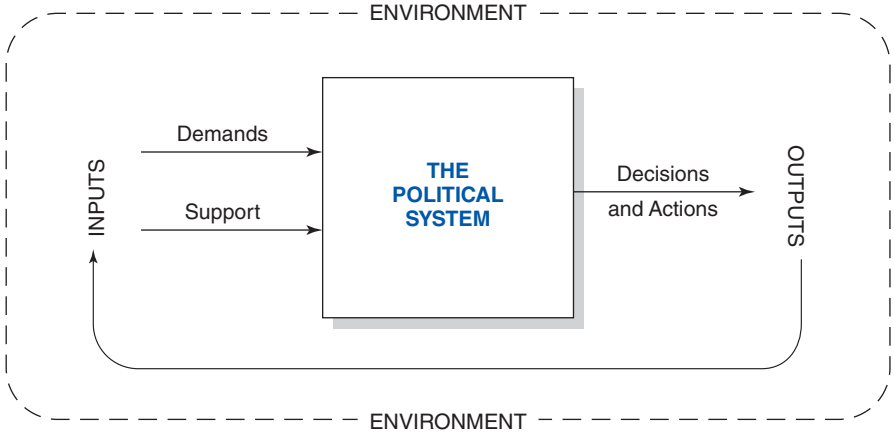
is working or not working. The whole process is highly political, both because public policy carries a price tag denominated in taxpayer dollars and, not least, because it often carries a lot of ideological freight.

Political Economy The study of political economy is a particularly well-developed discipline in the United Kingdom, but it has migrated across the Atlantic and now occupies a prominent place in the curriculum at many colleges and universities in the United States. As the name implies, this subfield resides at the intersection of politics and economics. The genius of this marriage of two disciplines arises from the fact that so much of what governments do involves monetary and fiscal policy (taxes and spending), which have a major impact on the distribution of wealth in society, inflation and interest rates, employment levels, the business cycle, the investment climate, bank regulations, and the like.

Comparative Politics Comparative politics seeks to contrast and evaluate governments and political systems. Comparing forms of government, stages of economic development, domestic and foreign policies, and political traditions enables political scientists to formulate meaningful generalizations. Some comparativists specialize in a particular region of the world or a particular nation. Others focus on a particular issue or political phenomenon, such as terrorism, political instability, or voting behavior.

All political systems share certain characteristics. Figure 1.2 depicts one famous model, developed by political scientist David Easton in 1965. This model suggests that all political systems function within the context of political cultures, which consist of traditions, values, and common knowledge. It assumes citizens have expectations of and place demands on the political system, but they also support the system in various ways: They may participate in government, vote, or simply obey the laws of the state. The demands citizens make and the supports they provide in turn influence the government's decisions, edicts, laws, and orders.

FIGURE 1.2 A Simplified Model of the Political System.



Countries and cultures differ in countless ways. Focusing on these differences makes it possible to classify or categorize political systems in ways that can aid our understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of each type. This book distinguishes among democratic, authoritarian, and totalitarian states.

Typologies change over time, reflecting new trends and seismic shifts in world politics or the global economy. For example, after the fall of Communism, the distinction between established liberal democracies and "transitional states" gained currency (see Chapter 8, Democracy or Dictatorship?). It also became fashionable to distinguish between viable states and so-called failed states (see Chapter 9, Problems of Development). The main types of totalitarian systems—the Nazi or Fascist model on the right and the Communist model on the left—are either defunct (most notably Hitler's Germany and Stalin's Russia) or depend on foreign investment and access to global markets (China and Vietnam). As a result, there is a tendency to gloss over or ignore the totalitarian model today, even though some unreconstructed examples of this extremely repressive system still exist (North Korea and Cuba). And perhaps because many countries (including the United States and our NATO [North Atlantic Treaty Organization] allies in Europe) are now locked in an interdependent relationship with China, there is also a tendency to sweep gross human rights violations under the rug.

International Relations Specialists in international relations analyze how nations interact. Why do nations sometimes live in peace and harmony, but go to war at other times? The advent of the nuclear age, of course, brought new urgency to the study of international relations, but the threat of an all-out nuclear war now appears far less menacing than other threats, including international terrorism, global warming, energy security, and, most recently, economic meltdown.

Although war and peace are ever-present problems in international relations, they are by no means the only ones. The role of morality in foreign policy continues to be a matter of lively debate. Political realists argue that considerations of national interest have always been paramount in international politics and always will be.[11] Others argue that enlightened self-interest can lead to world peace and an end to the cycle of war. Realists often dismiss such ideas as too idealistic in a dog-eat-dog world. Idealists counter that realists are too fatalistic and that war is not inevitable but rather a self-fulfilling prophecy. Still others say the distinction between the national interest and international morality is exaggerated—that democracies, for example, derive mutual benefit from protecting one another and that in so doing they also promote world peace.[12]

The Power of Ideas

In politics, money talks—or so people say. Listening to the news, it is easy to get the impression that Congress is up for sale. As a summer intern in the U.S. Senate many years ago, one of the first things I was told is, "Son, in Washington, it isn't what you know but who you know."

Often we start out life being idealistic and then quickly run up against reality. For young students of politics, it is easy to fall into a trap, to lurch from one extreme to the other. If money is all that matters, then justice is an illusion, ideas are irrelevant, and things can never change. But is that true? Are the cynics the smart ones?

One view, recently showcased in *The Economist*, holds that intelligence, rather than money, is what really matters. According to this perspective, smart people are the inventors, innovators, and entrepreneurs who make things happen: "The strongest force shaping politics is not blood or money but ideas."[13] Big movements in world history are propelled by big ideas, and "the people who influence government the most are often those who generate compelling ideas." If that contention is true, ideas *do* matter and justice is possible.

According to this argument, intelligence is the great equalizer in a globalized and competitive world operating on market principles. The children of the poor can—and often do—have greater native intelligence than rich kids. But money is still power.

In the United States, where capitalism is akin to a secular religion, entrepreneurs who control billions of dollars in assets (Rupert Murdoch and the Koch brothers are well-known examples) do not operate only in the business world and economy—they also invest heavily in politics and government. Do ideas still have a chance to succeed in today's political marketplace? Do smart people get elected to high office in the same way as they climb the corporate ladder to become CEOs and join the ranks of the super-rich? This book will challenge you to think about such questions.

For any democratic republic to succeed, it is vital that citizens pay attention, learn to think for themselves, and vote intelligently. Political literacy is vital to a viable and sustainable political system in which free elections and the rule of law are more than a masquerade. At a minimum, the gift of citizenship in a free country requires us to have a basic understanding of the ideas, institutions, and issues that constitute the stuff of politics. This book is an attempt to foster just such an understanding.

One word of caution: Don't expect to find easy answers to these thorny questions. And don't expect the answers to be revealed suddenly in a burst of divine light. The role of education is to ask the right questions. The key to a life well lived is to search for the right answers—wherever that might take you.

Summary

Understanding politics is a matter of self-interest. By exploring politics, we gain a better appreciation of what is—and what is not—in the public interest.

This chapter focuses on three fundamental concepts: power, order, and justice. It also explores the interrelationships between power and order, order and justice, and justice and power.

Political power can be defined as the capacity to maintain order in society. Whenever governments promulgate new laws or sign treaties or go to war, they are exercising political power. Whenever we pay our taxes, put money in a parking meter, or remove our shoes prior to boarding an airplane, we, in effect, bow to the power of government.

When governments exercise power, they often do it in the name of order. Power and authority are closely related: Authority is the official exercise of power. If we accept the rules and the rulers who make and enforce them, then government also enjoys legitimacy.

Questions of justice are often embedded in political disputes. If the public interest is not advanced by a given policy or if society no longer accepts the authority of the government as legitimate, the resulting discontent can lead to political instability and even rebellion or revolution.

Political science seeks to discover the basic principles and processes at work in political life. Classical political theory points to moral and philosophical truths, political realism stresses the role of self-interest and rational action, and behaviorism attempts to find scientific answers through empirical research and data analysis. Most political scientists specialize in one or more subfields such as political theory, U.S. government and politics, comparative politics, international relations, political economy, public administration, or public policy.

Politics matters. This simple truth was tragically illustrated by the rise of Nazism in Germany. The bad news is that sometimes war is necessary to defeat a monstrous threat to world order and humanity. The good news is that there are often political or diplomatic solutions to conflict and injustice in human affairs. It is this fact that makes the study of politics forever obligatory and essential.

Key Terms

Review Questions

1. "A basic understanding of politics is vital"—true or false?
2. On what three fundamental concepts is the study of politics based?
3. How does one identify a political problem? Why are some things more political than others? What does it mean to say something is "political"?
4. Given the pervasive presence of politics in society, how can the study of politics be made manageable?
5. In what ways can individuals benefit from the study of politics and government? Is there also a benefit to society as a whole?
6. Is politics a cautionary tale about human frailty? Or is that an oversimplification?

Websites and Readings

A Google search produces millions of sites for the keyword *politics*. Fortunately, there are some cool gateways to politics on the web, but you have to know where to look.

A good place to start is at http://www.politicalinformation.com/. This website contains thousands of political and policy websites in categories such as Campaigns and Elections, Parties and Organizations, Issues, and Research Tools, which are then broken down into subcategories. You can find six of the best political fact-checking sites on the Internet at The Daily Dot.

You will find preselected Internet resources related to the material in a given chapter throughout the book— everything from suggested search terms to the uniform resource locators (URLs) for specific websites. True to its name, the web opens a vast world of information relevant to concepts, topics, and issues covered in the text, as well as research for term papers. Use the following key words to find news and opinion on current national politics and international affairs.

Atlantic	Political Wire
Drudge Report	Politico
FiveThirtyEight	ProPublica
Governing.com	RealClearPolitics
Guardian	Townhall
Huffpost	Wall Street Journal
New York Times	Washington Post

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Chapter 2

Mario Tama/Getty Images News/Getty Images

The Idea of the Public Good

Ideologies and Isms

Learning Objectives

- LO2-1 Define the public good.
- LO2-2 Identify the three kinds of political ideologies.
- LO2-3 Identify the five core values.
- LO2-4 Describe the difference between a liberal and a conservative, and explain how these terms have changed over time.
- LO2-5 Determine whether one ideology or political persuasion better guarantees freedom, justice, and democracy.

In Lewis Carroll's classic tale *Alice in Wonderland*, Alice loses her way in a dense forest and encounters the Cheshire Cat, who is sitting on a tree branch. "Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?" asks Alice. "That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," replies the Cat. "I don't much care where," says Alice. "Then it doesn't matter which way you go," muses the Cat.

Like Alice lost in the forest, we occasionally find ourselves adrift when trying to make sense of complex issues, controversies, and crises. Governments and societies are no different. Political leadership can be woefully deficient or hopelessly divided over the economy or the environment or health care or a new threat to national security. Intelligent decisions, as Alice's encounter with the Cheshire Cat illustrates, can be made only after we have set clear aims and goals. Before politics can effectively convert mass energy (society) into collective effort (government), which is the essence of public policy, we need a consensus on where we want to go or what we want to be as a society a year from now or perhaps ten years down the road. Otherwise, our leaders, like the rest of us, cannot possibly know how to get there. There are plenty of people eager to tell us *what* to think. Our purpose is to learn *how* to think about politics.

LO2-1 Political Ends and Means

In politics, ends and means are inextricably intertwined. Implicit in debates over public policy is a belief in the idea of the **public good**—that it is the government's role to identify and pursue aims of benefit to society as a whole rather than to favored individuals. Even so, policy debates often explicitly focus on means rather than ends. For example, politicians may disagree over whether a tax cut at a particular time will help promote the common good (prosperity) by encouraging saving and investment, balancing the national budget, reducing the rate of inflation, and so on. Although they may disagree about the best monetary and fiscal strategies, both sides would agree that economic growth and stability are proper aims of government.

In political systems with no curbs on executive authority, where the leader has unlimited power, government may have little to do with the public interest.[1] In constitutional democracies, by contrast, the public good is associated with core values such as security, prosperity, equality, liberty, and justice (see Chapter 13, Issues in Public Policy). These goals serve as the navigational guides for keeping the ship of state on course. Arguments about whether to tack this way or that, given the prevailing political currents and crosswinds, are the essence of public policy debates.

public good
The shared beliefs of a political community as to which goals government ought to attain (for example, to achieve the fullest possible measure of security, prosperity, equality, liberty, or justice for all citizens).

LO2-2 Ideologies and the Public Good

The concept of Left and Right originated in the European parliamentary practice of seating parties that favor social and political change to the left of the presiding officer; those opposing change (or favoring a return to a previous form of government) are seated to the right. "You are where you sit," in other words.

Today, people may have only vague ideas about government or how it works or what it is actually doing at any given time.[2] Even so, many lean one way or another, toward conservative or liberal views. When people go beyond merely

leaning and adopt a rigid, closed system of political ideas, however, they cross a line and enter the realm of **ideology**. Ideologies act as filters that true believers (or adherents) use to interpret events, explain human behavior, and justify political action.

ideology
Any set of fixed, predictable ideas held by politicians and citizens on how to serve the public good.

The use of labels—or "isms" as they are often called—is a kind of shorthand that, ideally, facilitates political thought and debate rather than becoming a way to discredit one's political opponents. One note of caution: These labels do not have precisely the same meaning everywhere. Thus, what is considered "liberal" in the United Kingdom might be considered "conservative" in the United States (see Figure 2.1).

Conservatives in the United States traditionally favor a strong national defense, deregulation of business and industry, and tax cuts on capital gains (income from stocks, real estate, and other investments) and inheritances. They often staunchly oppose social spending ("welfare") on the grounds that giveaway programs reward sloth and indolence. By contrast, liberals tend to favor public assistance programs, cuts in military spending, a progressive tax system (one that levies higher taxes on higher incomes), and governmental regulation in such areas as the food and drug industries, occupational safety and health, housing, transportation, and energy.

Prior to the Reagan Revolution of the 1980s, Republicans championed balanced budgets and limited government. In 2012–14, Tea Party Republicans in Congress led the fight for deficit reduction, but insisted that it be done without raising taxes on the wealthy. Democrats countered by demanding that budget cuts be offset with targeted tax increases, in particular on individual earnings in excess of $400,000 and capital gains.

Compared to Europe's parliamentary democracies, the political spectrum in the United States is shifted to the right. Ideas and policies widely viewed as "socialist" in the United States—national health care, for example—are mainstream positions in European countries. Any attempts to tamper with social programs in so-called welfare states are likely to provoke a public outcry, as the anti-austerity protests that have swept across Europe (notably, in Greece, Spain, Ireland, Italy, and France) in recent years attest.

Figure 2.1 Focus Conservative or Liberal?

	U.S. Conservatives*	British Liberals§
Constitutionalism	Yes	Yes
Religious tolerance	Yes	Yes
Market economy	Yes	Yes
Protectionism	No	No
Pacifism	No	No

*Values historically associated with the Republican Party in the United States, though not necessarily with the policies of any given administration or president.
§Values historically associated with the Whig Party in the United Kingdom, often called classical liberalism.

The word "liberal" is frequently associated with leftist views in the United States, where, for example, talking heads on Fox News routinely called President Barack Obama's policy initiatives such as the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act "socialist." But "liberal" has always meant something quite different in the United Kingdom, where this label originated. There, the term still denotes a desire to maximize individual liberty as the first principle of good government.

Leftists in Europe often belong to socialist parties, but there is no viable Socialist Party in the United States and never has been. Thus, in the 2012 presidential election, voters in France handed Socialist Party leader Francois Hollande a sweeping victory, and gave the Socialists an absolute majority of 300 seats in the National Assembly. (What if that were to happen in the United States? You can't imagine it? That's because such an outcome cannot happen in the United States under the current system, which begs the question: Why?)

We'll learn more about European politics in general, and France in particular, in Chapter 7, Parliamentary Democracy; for now, think of Socialists winning elections as a measure of the vast differences in the way Americans and Europeans define the public good. Of course, how people view politics and define "the good" can and does change over time—and the United States is no exception. Imagine a novel (a work of pure fiction) in which the protagonist is the celebrity host of a reality TV show called *The Apprentice* who lands in the White House—almost no one would have believed that sequence of events was possible prior to November 8, 2016.

In this chapter, we group ideologies under three headings: antigovernment ideologies, right-wing ideologies, and left-wing ideologies. Left and Right are very broad categories, however, and there are many shades of gray. Only when the political system becomes severely polarized—as it did in Germany between the two world wars—are people forced to choose between black and white.

In the two-party system of the United States, the choice is limited to red (Republican) and blue (Democrat). After September 11, 2001, the political climate became more polarized and partisan, as reflected in the charged rhetoric of media figures such as Rush Limbaugh, Glenn Beck, and Sean Hannity on the right and Keith Olbermann and Rachel Maddow on the left. In the second decade of the new century, the most extreme partisanship since World War II gave rise to governmental paralysis and gridlock in Congress. History tells us what can happen when dysfunctional governments do nothing while the rich keep getting richer.

The causes of growing public discontent in the West became the focus of scholarly and media attention in the twenty-first century, as did the corresponding surge of support for populist parties and politicians in France, Germany, Italy, Poland, and Hungary. In the United States, this phenomenon assumed the form of the Tea Party movement; in 2016, it produced Donald Trump's quixotic, successful bid to become the nation's forty-fifth president.

Antigovernment Ideologies

Opposition to government *in principle* is called **anarchism**. The Russian revolutionary Mikhail Bakunin (1814–76), who reveled in the "joy of destruction" and called for violent uprisings by society's beggars and criminals, is often considered the father of modern anarchism. A close relative of anarchism is **nihilism**, which glorifies destruction as an end in itself rather than as a means to overthrow the existing system or rebuilding society. In Russia during the last half of the nineteenth century, anarchists helped to precipitate the discontent that led to the 1905 Revolution, sometimes called a dress rehearsal for the 1917 October Revolution.

anarchism
A system that opposes in principle the existence of any form of government, often through violence and lawlessness.

nihilism
A philosophy that holds that the total destruction of all existing social and political institutions is a desirable end in itself.

Ideologies of the Right

Monarchism is at the opposite end of the political spectrum. Until the twentieth century, monarchy was the prevalent form of government throughout the world. Whether they were called kings or emperors, czars or sultans, or sheiks or shahs, monarchs once ruled the world. Aristotle regarded monarchy—rule by a wise king—as the best form of government (although he recognized that wise kings, as opposed to tyrants, were very rare).

However archaic it may look to modern eyes, monarchism is not dead. Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and the oil-rich Persian Gulf minis-tates, as well as Bhutan, Brunei, and Swaziland, are still monarchies. Jordan and Morocco are limited monarchies; in both countries, the chief executive (or king) rules for life by virtue of royal birth rather than by merit, mandate, or popular election. Most other countries that still pay lip service to monarchism are, in fact, *constitutional* monarchies in which the king or queen is a figure-head. The United Kingdom is the example we know best in the United States, but Belgium, the Netherlands, Spain, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden all have monarchs as titular rulers.

monarchism
A system based on the belief that political power should be concentrated in one person (for example, a king) who rules by decree.

After World War I, **fascism** supplanted monarchism as the principal ideology of the extreme Right. In Germany, National Socialism—more commonly known as **Nazism**—was a particularly virulent form of this ideology (see Chapter 6, The Totalitarian Model). Predicated on the "superiority" of one race or nation and demanding abject obedience to authority, fascism exerted a powerful influence in Europe and South America from the 1920s to the 1940s. The prime examples in history are the Axis powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) in World War II, but other instances of authoritarian regimes bearing a close resemblance to fascism—including Spain (Francisco Franco), Portugal (Oliveira Salazar), and Hungary (Miklos Horthy)—existed in this period as well.

Argentina under Juan Perón (1946–55) closely resembled the fascist model after World War II, as did military dictatorships in Brazil, Paraguay, and several other Latin American countries. However, Perón never engaged in the kind of violence and mass repression associated with General Augusto Pinochet in Chile (1974–90) or General Rafael Jorge Videla in Argentina (1976–81). More recent examples include Kim Jong-Il of North Korea (who died in December 2011), Hosni Mubarak of Egypt (overthrown in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution),

fascism
A totalitarian political system that is headed by a popular charismatic leader and in which a single political party and carefully controlled violence form the bases of complete social and political control. Fascism differs from communism in that the economic structure, although controlled by the state, is privately owned.

Nazism
Officially called National Socialism; a form of fascism based on extreme nationalism, militarism, and racism; the ideology associated with Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust.

Muammar Qaddafi of Libya (also overthrown in 2011 as part of the wider "Arab Spring"), Omar al-Bashir of Sudan, and Bashar al-Assad of Syria (see Chapter 5, The Authoritarian Model).

Fascism enjoyed mass support in many countries largely because of its appeal to nationalism, ethnicity, and (in the case of Nazi Germany) race. Other ideological roots of fascism can be found in romanticism, xenophobia, populism, and even a form of hierarchical socialism (discussed later in this chapter).

One of the universal features of many extreme right-wing ideologies is a blatant appeal to popular prejudices and hatred.[3] Such an appeal often strikes a responsive chord when large numbers of people who, despite being part of the racial or ethnic majority, either have not shared fully in the benefits of society or have individually and collectively suffered severe financial reversals. In turbulent times, people are prone to follow a demagogue, to believe in conspiracy theories, and to seek scapegoats, such as a racial, ethnic, or religious minority group; an opposing political party; a foreign country; and the like.

Xenophobia and antipathy toward foreigners, immigrants, and even tourists have been on the rise in many European countries (including France, Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom) since the 1990s. The United States has also witnessed a resurgence in racially tinged nationalism, populism, and what some observers see as a kind of new tribalism.[4]

In 2016, Donald Trump made it all the way to the U.S. presidency by promising to build a wall to keep illegal immigrants, whom he often portrayed as violent criminals and terrorists, from crossing the U.S.–Mexican border. White supremacist groups—including members of the American Nazi Party and the Ku Klux Klan (KKK)—also made headlines in 2017–19, staging protests in various American cities, most notably (but not only) in the Deep South, after dozens of cities around the region removed Confederate monuments from public display.[5] When the city council in Charlottesville, Virginia, voted to remove a statue of Confederate General Robert E. Lee in the city's central square in 2017, white supremacists responded by organizing a "Unite the Right" rally that turned deadly. It was in the wake of that violent event that President Trump declared there was "blame on both sides."

More recently, extreme right-wing politicians have made political gains in several former Communist states in Eastern Europe. In Hungary, Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's government sought to weaken and discredit judges, independent courts, journalists, and the public media; in December 2018, a new "slave law"—allowing firms to impose up to 400 hours of overtime each year on workers and delay paying them for three years—led to street protests and threatened union strikes. Orbán came to power in 2010 by "stoking fear of foreigners after the 2015 surge in migration via the Balkans."[6] Thereafter, the Western media characterized Hungary a "rogue state."

Belief in racial superiority supplies an underlying rationale for a whole range of radical policies dealing with immigration ("foreigners must be kept out"), civil rights ("African Americans, Jews, and other minorities are genetically inferior and do not deserve the same constitutional protections as whites"), and foreign policy ("threats to white America must be met with deadly force"). At the far-right extreme, these groups are organized along paramilitary lines, engage

in various survivalist practices, and preach violence.

Although the KKK has largely faded from view, it still has die-hard followers, including some members of the law enforcement community. In February 2009, the Nebraska Supreme Court upheld the firing of State Highway Patrol trooper Robert Henderson for his ties to the KKK. The KKK's long history of violence toward African Americans—symbolized by the white sheets worn by its members and the crosses set ablaze at rallies—has made it synonymous with bigotry and racial intolerance.

Kim Kelley-Wagner/Shutterstock.com

Hate groups like the Ku Klux Klan feed on ignorance, prejudice, and fear and often use racial or religious differences to create a scapegoat. As human beings, we want simple answers, quick fixes, and someone to blame when things go wrong.

The Religious Right The religious right in the United States emerged as an important nationwide political force in 1980. The election of a conservative Republican, Ronald Reagan, to the presidency both coincided with and accelerated efforts to create a new version of the Grand Old Party (GOP)—one that combined modern political techniques of mass mailings, extensive political fundraising, and the repeated use of the mass media (especially television) with a call for the restoration of traditional values, including an end to abortion, the reinstatement of prayer in public schools, a campaign against pornography, the recognition of the family as the basis of U.S. life, and a drive to oppose communism relentlessly on every front.

This movement contained a core of fundamentalist or evangelical Christians, called the New Right, who saw politics as an outgrowth of their core religious values. Beginning in the 1980s, television evangelists such as the late Jerry Falwell (who spearheaded a movement called the Moral Majority) and Pat Robertson (who ran unsuccessfully for president in 1988) gained a mass following. The far right suffered a setback in 1992 when Pat Buchanan's presidential bid also fizzled.

The election of President George W. Bush, who openly courted the fundamentalist Christian vote, was widely viewed as victory for the religious right. Roman Catholics and Southern Baptists, along with other evangelical groups, joined forces in a new kind of coalition against what many regular churchgoers saw as an alarming upsurge in immorality and sinful behavior, including abortion, gay marriage, and the teaching of evolution in public schools. The last issue, along with stem cell research, pitted religion against science.

The Christian Coalition, another conservative group, has roots in the Pentecostal church. Boasting as many as 1 million members, it produces and distributes a kind of morality scorecard, evaluating political candidates' positions on key issues from the perspective of religious dogma. Members of the group

Petr Kratochvil/PublicDomainPictures.net

Evangelical Christians who embrace a strict interpretation of the Bible often vote on the basis of moral issues such as opposition to abortion and gay marriage rather than on economic issues like income inequality, tax reform, or job creation.

focus on getting elected to local school boards so that they can advocate for patriotism (as opposed to multiculturalism), religion, and a return to the basics in education.

The Christian Coalition's success in past years raises two serious questions. First, was this group best understood as a well-meaning effort by decent citizens to participate in the political arena or as a dangerously divisive blurring by religious bigots of the separation between church and state? Second, was the Christian Coalition an interest group or a political party?

Some critics have suggested revoking the tax-exempt status of religious establishments that cross the line and transform themselves into political movements.[7] But the strength of religious fundamentalists, particularly in the South and Midwest, combined with an antiquated scheme of representation that gives small, sparsely populated states disproportionate voting power in Congress, makes it likely that religion will continue to play a huge role in American politics at all levels in the years to come. The 2016 elections demonstrated anew that Roman Catholics and evangelical Protestants continue to be a potent force in U.S. politics.

Capitalism The dominant ideology in the United States, Europe, and Asia today is **capitalism**. Even in Communist China, where Maoism remains the official ideology, capitalism is the engine driving the amazing revitalization of the economy since the death of Mao Zedong in 1976. The collapse of communism and its explicit rejection of private property, the profit motive, and social inequality was a triumphant moment for proponents of free enterprise and the free-market economy. Indeed, the Cold War was in no small measure an ideological contest between the United States and the Soviet Union over this very issue.

Today, capitalism is the ideology of conservatives and business elites, but it is also closely associated with classical liberalism. In the United States, it is the Republican Party that most enthusiastically embraces capitalism, although few Democrats in Congress ever dare to denounce Big Business. However disappointing or frustrating this fact may be to some rank-and-file voters, it is not difficult to discern the reasons for it.

Capitalism is the ideology of Big Business, as well as of powerful Washington lobbies, including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and the National Association of Manufacturers. It also provides the moral and philosophical justification for the often cutthroat profit-maximizing practices of multinational corporations (MNCs) and pillars of state capitalism—notably in the so-called BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India, and China)—that are playing a dominant role in the new global economy.

In today's marketplace, traditional U.S. businesses like Walmart and McDonald's and banks like JPMorgan Chase, Bank of America, and Wells Fargo are being joined by Internet-based behemoths like Amazon, Facebook, and Google.

In the new global economy, China is home to the four biggest banks in the world, while Japan's Mitsubishi UFJ Financial is the fifth largest. In all, four of the fifteen biggest banks on a global scale are American, three are Japanese, and two are French; the United Kingdom and Germany each have one entry on this list.

What is true of international finance is also true of world trade. The era when any single nation-state could use its supreme or unmatched economic power to strong-arm other countries or shape geopolitics in its own national interest has ended, with all countries desiring to participate in the prosperity globalization, especially open and equal access to major markets, has made possible.

What is capitalism? It means different things to different people. It can refer to an economic theory based on the principles found in Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* (discussed later in this chapter). Or it can mean an ideology that elevates the virtues of freedom and independence, individualism and initiative, invention and innovation, risk-taking and reward for success. Followers of Karl Marx view capitalism as an elaborate myth system used to justify the class privileges of a wealthy elite and the exploitation of the workers who produce society's wealth (see the later section, "Ideologies of the Left").

As an economic theory, capitalism stresses the role of market forces—mainly supply and demand—in regulating economic activity; determining prices, values, and costs; and allocating scarce resources. It idealizes the "free market"; opposes state interference, social welfare, and bureaucratic regulation; and embraces the notion that "the business of America is business."*

Capitalism's proponents, however, often *assume* we have a free market operating solely on the principles of supply and demand; they seldom consider whether it *really* exists. In fact, the free market is a myth, useful for public relations or propaganda but not for understanding how modern economies actually work. No modern economy can function without all sorts of rules and regulations. The question is not whether rules are necessary, but rather who makes the rules and whose interests those rules favor. The key to the success of a market economy is competition, not deregulation.

As an ideology, capitalism opposes high taxes (especially on business), social welfare, and government giveaways. Conservatives tend to believe wealth is a sign of success and a reward for virtue. Rich people deserve to be rich, they say, whereas poverty is the fault of poor people themselves, because the latter are lazy, indolent, and irresponsible. Relieving poverty is the job of charity and the church, not government. Capitalists also tend (or pretend) to believe in the trickle-down theory: If the most enterprising members of society are permitted to succeed and to reinvest wealth, rather than handing it all over to the tax collector, the economy will grow, prosperity will trickle down to the lower levels, and everybody will be better off.

Critics of unbridled capitalism argue that not only is the free market a fiction, but also that Big Business only pretends to support deregulation and competitive markets. In fact, such companies are wannabe monopolies—oligopolistic

capitalism
An economic system in which individuals own the means of production and can legally amass unlimited personal wealth. Capitalist theory holds that governments should not impose any unnecessary restrictions on economic activity and that the laws of supply and demand can best regulate the economy. In a capitalist system, the private sector (mainly business and consumers), rather than government, makes most of the key decisions about production, employment, savings, investment, and the like; this approach is the opposite of a centrally planned economy such as existed in the Soviet Union under Stalin and Stalin's successors.

*This quote is attributed to President Calvin Coolidge in a January 1925 speech to newspaper editors. In fact, what he actually said was, "the chief business of the American people is business."

enterprises that routinely seek tax favors, subsidies, and regulatory concessions and fight antitrust legislation at every turn. Revelations of large-scale fraud and corruption, such as that demonstrated by Enron and WorldCom, had badly stained the image of U.S. business even before the financial meltdown in the fall of 2008. But then came the failure of major investment firms like Lehman Brothers, Wachovia, and Merrill Lynch in 2008, followed by bailouts of banks, automakers, and insurance giant AIG teetering on the brink of bankruptcy. In the public's eyes, such scandals and failures suggested that rampant capitalism carried a high price—that business was incapable of "policing itself."

One measure of how far the corporate sector had fallen in the public esteem in the early twenty-first century: The insurance giant AIG (American International Group) saw the price of its stock plunge from a 52-week high of $52.25 to a low of $0.38 in February 2009. Sensational front-page stories of fraud, misfeasance, and self-aggrandizement associated with such prominent financiers such as Bernie Madoff, Robert Allen Stanford, and Jamie Dimon (the CEO of JPMorgan Chase & Company, who was blamed for a $2 billion trading loss in 2012) further undermined public trust in business, banks, and Wall Street. Prominent pundits with national audiences—writers like Bill Moyers, Matt Taibbi, Paul Krugman, Joseph Stiglitz, and William Black—kept these stories from fading and furnished a steady stream of evidence about collusion between Washington and Wall Street, corruption in Congress, and crime in the suites. One sign of the times: In 2018, former students of Trump University, who claimed they were victims of fraud, won a highly publicized class action suit against its founder. By that time, Trump's "University" (Spoiler alert: The "University" was never licensed!) had ceased to exist.

Proponents of **libertarianism** generally agree with the axiom, "That government is best, which governs least." Like classical liberals, libertarians stress the value of individual liberty; at the same time, an obsession with fighting all forms of government regulation—even measures aimed at public safety or income security for the elderly—often leads them to embrace policies at odds with logic or common sense. Thus, according to libertarian Senator Rand Paul, "a free society will abide unofficial, private discrimination, even when that means allowing hate-filled groups to exclude people based on the color of their skin."[8] Paul has also opposed gun control, called for the United States to withdraw from the United Nations Human Rights Commission, and advocated abolishing the Federal Reserve System.

A particular brand of libertarianism associated with David and Charles Koch has become a potent political force in U.S. politics. In the early years of the twenty-first century, the billionaire Koch Brothers created "a vast network of organizations that pool hundreds of millions of dollars from their own pockets and other wealthy donors each year" in support of libertarian free-market ideas, as well as "leadership training, election campaigning and policy advocacy."[9] The lodestar in this new constellation is called the Americans for Prosperity (AFP).

libertarianism
The belief that the state is a necessary evil best kept small and weak relative to society; libertarians typically value individual liberty above social services and security.

Ideologies of the Left

Left-wing ideologies promote the ideal of human beings living together harmoniously without great disparities in wealth or social classes. In contrast to capitalism, public goods take priority over private possessions. If equality is the

end, state control is the means—control of everything from banking, transportation, and heavy industry to the mass media, education, and health care.

Socialism is fundamentally opposed to capitalism, which contends that private ownership and enterprise in the context of a competitive free-market economy is the best and only way to bring about prosperity. Socialism is "an ideology that rejects individualism, private ownership, and private profits in favor of a system based on economic collectivism, governmental, societal, or industrial-group ownership of the means of production and distribution of goods, and social responsibility."[10]

Turbulent times often create a new political climate and give rise to upstart political parties, movements, and candidates. Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders made a historic run for the presidency in 2016—as a social democrat who did not object to being called a "socialist."[11] Hillary Clinton won the nomination despite mounting evidence (both polls and primaries) showing the avuncular "Bernie," the popular insurgent candidate, had the most momentum going into the convention—and the most enthusiastic supporters.

Communism is a term sometimes used interchangeably with **Marxism**, an ideology named after its founder Karl Marx (1818–83). Marx and his associate Friedrich Engels (1820–95) envisioned a radical transformation of society attainable only by open class conflict aimed at the overthrow of "monopoly capitalism."

socialism
A public philosophy favoring social welfare and general prosperity over individual self-reliance and private wealth.

communism
An ideology based on radical equality; the antithesis of capitalism.

Marxism
An ideology based on the writings of Karl Marx (1818–83), who theorized that the future belonged to a rising underclass of urban-industrial workers he called "the proletariat."

POLITICS AND POP CULTURE

The Russians Are Coming! "007" to the Rescue

During the Cold War (1945–91), Hollywood produced dozens of films aimed at addressing and sometimes exploiting movie-goers' fear of communism. Among the most famous films of this genre are *Conspirator* (1949) starring Elizabeth Taylor; *Trial* (1955); *Rio Bravo* (1956), starring John Wayne; *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962); *Dr. Strangelove* (1964); *Seven Days in May* (1964); *The Spy Who Came in from the Cold* (1965), based on John le Carré's eponymous best-seller; *The Russians Are Coming, the Russians Are Coming* (1966); and *Three Days of the Condor* (1975).

Perhaps the most famous hero of this genre is "007"—James Bond. Ian Fleming created this fictional character in 1953 as the Cold War was building and a hot war (in Korea) was raging. The Bond character has since been adapted for all manner of popular culture uses, especially film. Starting with *Dr. No* in 1962, James Bond movies (23 so far!) are now the longest-running and the second-highest-grossing film series in history. *Skyfall* (2012) and *Spectre* (2015) are the most recent installments.

The University of Washington Library has compiled a selective list of Cold War films ("The Red Scare: A Filmography"), which can be viewed online. Here is its brief introduction to this list:

> The films produced in Hollywood before, during and after the Cold War Red Scare make for an interesting study in the response of a popular medium caught in a political firestorm. . . . [Some] motion pictures played a role in fueling the Red Scare, in propagandizing the threat of Communism and in a few rare and rather veiled cases, in standing up

(Continued)

POLITICS AND POP CULTURE, Continued

to the charges of the House Committee on Un-American Activities (HUAC). . . .

HUAC interrogated many film industry people. In the end, countless careers were destroyed but only ten individuals actually went to jail. This group came to be known as "The Hollywood Ten." . . . An exhaustive analysis . . . indicated that none of the 159 films credited . . . to The Hollywood Ten contained Communist propaganda.

Similarly, since 9/11, countless films and TV series have pandered to the American public's fascination with terrorism—and sought to profit from it (see Chapter 16).

Spy-thrillers in book form and in films remain extremely popular and are often hugely profitable. They have the power to entertain us and also to shape our views of the world. Do films like the ones about communism and the Cold War serve a useful purpose in society beyond entertainment? Is there a sharp distinction between art and propaganda? Think about it.

(Hint: It has been said that "propaganda is direct while art is reflective." In this view, art doesn't change us but rather makes us more aware of what we already know or think we know, and it can either intensify or challenge our preconceptions.)

Marx and Engels opened the famous *Communist Manifesto* (1848) with the bold assertion, "All history is the history of class struggle." All societies, Marx contended, evolve through the same historical stages, each of which represents a dominant economic pattern (the thesis) that contains the seeds of a new and conflicting pattern (the antithesis). Out of the inexorable clash between thesis and antithesis—a process Marx called **dialectical materialism**—comes a synthesis, or a new stage in socioeconomic development. Thus, the Industrial Revolution was the capitalist stage of history, which succeeded the feudal stage when the **bourgeoisie** (urban artisans and merchants) wrested political and economic power from the feudal landlords. The laws of history (or dialectic), which made the rise of capitalism inevitable, also make "class struggle" between capitalists (the owning class) and the proletariat (the working class) inevitable—and guarantee the outcome.

dialectical materialism
Karl Marx's theory of historical progression, according to which economic classes struggle with one another, producing an evolving series of economic systems that will lead, ultimately, to a classless society.

bourgeoisie
In Marxist ideology, the capitalist class.

proletariat
In Marxist theory, a member of the working class.

surplus value
Excessive profits created through workers' labor and pocketed by the capitalist or owning class.

Marxist theory holds that the main feature of the modern industrial era is the emergence of two antagonistic classes: wealthy capitalists, who own the means of production, and impoverished workers, the **proletariat**, who are paid subsistence wages. The difference between those wages and the value of the products created through the workers' labor is **surplus value**, or excessive profits, which the capitalists pocket. In this way, owners systematically exploit the workers and unwittingly lay the groundwork for a proletarian revolution.

How? According to Marx's **law of capitalist accumulation**, the rule is get big or get out. Bigger is always better. Small companies lose out or are gobbled up by big ones. In today's world of mergers and hostile takeovers, Marx appears nothing less than prescient here. Eventually, the most successful competitors in this dog-eat-dog contest force all the others out, thus ushering in the era of **monopoly capitalism**, the last stage before the downfall of the whole capitalist system.

The widening gap between rich and poor is the capitalist system's undoing. As human labor is replaced by more cost-effective machine labor, unemployment grows, purchasing power dwindles, and domestic markets shrink. The result is a built-in tendency toward business recession and depression. Marx's prediction sounded all too eerily familiar in the midst of the 2008–2009 global recession.

In the monopoly capitalism system, countless human beings become surplus labor—jobless, penniless, and hopeless. According to the **law of pauperization**, this result is inescapable. For orthodox Marxists, the "crisis of capitalism" and the resulting proletarian revolution are equally inevitable. Because capitalists will not relinquish their power, privilege, or property without a struggle, the overthrow of capitalism can occur only through violent revolution.

The belief that violent mass action is necessary to bring about radical change was central to the theories of Marx's follower Vladimir Lenin (1870–1924), the founder of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the foremost leader of the Russian Revolution of 1917. Lenin argued that parliamentary democracy and "bourgeois legality" were mere superstructures designed to mask the underlying reality of capitalist exploitation. As a result, these revolutionaries disdained the kind of representative institutions prevalent in the United States and Western Europe.

With the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, **Marxism–Leninism** has lost a great deal of its luster. Even so, the doctrine retains some appeal among the poor and downtrodden, primarily because of its crusading spirit and its promise of deliverance from the injustices of "monopoly capitalism."[12] (See Ideas and Politics, Figure 2.2.) After World War II, advocates of communism spearheaded or sponsored "national wars of liberation" aimed at the overthrow of existing governments, especially in the developing world. Since the collapse of communism in Europe, however, the revolutionary role played by the Soviet state and Marxist ideology on the world stage has given way to Islamism—not Islam, the religion, but Islamism, an anti-Western ideological offshoot that seeks to restore the moral purity of Islamic societies (see Chapter 15, War: Politics by Other Means).

Democratic socialism, the other main branch of socialist ideology, embraces collectivist ends but is committed to democratic means. Unlike orthodox Marxists, democratic socialists believe in **gradualism**, or reform, rather than revolution, but they hold to the view that social justice cannot be achieved without substantial economic equality. They also tend to favor a greatly expanded role for government and a tightly regulated economy. Socialist parties typically advocate nationalization of key parts of the economy—transportation, communications, public utilities, banking and finance, insurance, and such basic industries as automobile manufacturing, iron and steel processing, mining, and energy. The modern-day **welfare state**, in which government assumes broad responsibility for the health, education, and welfare of its citizens, is the brainchild of European social democracy.

The goal of the welfare state is to alleviate poverty and inequality through large-scale income redistribution. Essentially a cradle-to-grave system, the welfare state model features free or subsidized university education and medical care,

law of capitalist accumulation
According to Karl Marx, the invariable rule that stronger capitalists, motivated solely by greed, will gradually eliminate weaker competitors and gain increasing control of the market.

monopoly capitalism
The last stage before the downfall of the whole capitalist system.

law of pauperization
In Karl Marx's view, the rule that capitalism has a built-in tendency toward recession and unemployment, such that workers inevitably become surplus labor.

Marxism–Leninism
In the history of the Russian Revolution, Lenin's anticapitalist rationale for the overthrow of the czar (absolute monarch) and the establishment of a new political order based on communist principles set forth in the writings of Karl Marx.

democratic socialism
A form of government based on popular elections, public ownership and control of the main sectors of the economy, and broad welfare programs in health and education to benefit citizens.

gradualism
The belief that major changes in society should take place slowly through reform rather than suddenly through revolution.