

Political Science 8301
Thursday 1:25-3:20
Social Sciences 1314

Scott Abernathy
Department of Political Science
1378 Social Sciences Building
Phone: 612-624-3308
Email: abernath@polisci.umn.edu
Office Hours: Thursday 10:00-11:30am,
And by appointment

American Politics

Introduction

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of American politics at the graduate level. The course is a survey and, by necessity, will be unable to cover any one topic in great detail, or even all of the major topics in American politics. I have attempted to include both foundational works that every student of American politics should know, as well as works that represent more current scholarship in various topics. Taken together, the required readings in the course, the supplemental readings focusing on debates within the field, and the other suggested readings should constitute a solid *beginning* for your preliminary exam preparation.

Required books are available at the campus bookstore. Most articles are available at JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org>). Articles and readings that are more difficult to find will be placed on reserve in the 12th floor lounge. Students should be forewarned that the reading load is considerable. Unless otherwise indicated, students are expected to read assigned books in their entirety.

Seminar requirements

1. Class participation

Please come to class having completed and prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings. Regular class attendance is expected. Each student will be asked to serve as discussion leader for one or two sessions during the semester (depending on enrollment). Students will be asked to sign up to present the week's readings to the class during the first seminar session, one leader per session. The discussion leader will be asked to summarize the most important theoretical arguments of that week's readings and to initiate the class discussion for that week. The discussion leader is encouraged to use handouts or other instructional aides. **Each student must choose session(s) to lead by January 27**, on a 'first-come first served' basis.

Please notify me in advance for absences due to participation in religious observances and scheduled activities of official University student organizations. Class participation will constitute 20% of the final grade.

2. Critical Literature Review Essays

Students will be asked to write one critical literature review engaging in one of the debates/explorations listed on the syllabus. The essay should summarize the theoretical arguments presented, evaluate the arguments and their substantiation, identify theoretical or evidentiary flaws, and take a position on the arguments involved.

Each student should choose one set of readings by January 27. No more than 2 students per topic, given out on a 'first come, first served' basis. You may wish to consult the reviews in *The American Political Science Review* and *Perspectives on Politics* for some initial guidance. The review essays will be due at the beginning of the class following the session for which the readings are suggested. The topics and dates (of the relevant classes) are:

- February 10: Congress and the incumbency advantage
- March 3: Bureaucratic politics and the problem of control
- March 10: The Judiciary, the countermajoritarian difficulty, and judicial decision-making
- April 14: 'How can 59 million Americans be so stupid?'—The problem of mass publics

The second critical literature review will bring together the assigned readings from two classes. Students should critically compare and contrast the theoretical arguments in the readings, in how they fit (or do not fit) together and the implications that a collective reading raises for the study of American politics. Each review will count towards 20% of your final grade

3. Final examination

A two-hour closed book final examination will be given on Thursday, May 12. The exam is designed to help prepare you for the preliminary examination. You will be given a list of 6 questions in class on May 5. On the day of the exam, I will choose 3 of those questions and ask you choose and answer 1 of them. The exam will count towards 40% of the final grade.

Weekly Schedule

January 20: Course introduction

January 27: Political Power in American Democracy

Required readings

Dahl, Robert A. 1956. *A Preface to Democratic Theory*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (Introduction and Chapter 1).

Schattschneider, E.E. 1960. *The Semisovereign People: A Realist's View of Democracy*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. (Chapters 1-3, 8).

Bachrach, Peter and Morton Baratz. 1962. "The Two Faces of Power," *American Political Science Review*. 56:946-952.

Riker, William H. 1964. "Some Ambiguities in the Notion of Power" *APSR* 58(June):341-9

Lukes, Steven. 1974. *Power: A Radical View*. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd.

Gaventa, John. 1980. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Chapters 1-3, 5-7.

Suggested readings (Power, Creed, and Exceptionalism):

Tocqueville, Alexis de. 1840. *Democracy in America*.

Dahl, Robert A. 1961. *Who Governs? Democracy and Power in an American City*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Hartz, Louis. 1955. *The Liberal Tradition in America: An Interpretation of American Political Thought Since the Revolution*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company.

McConnell, Grant. 1966. *Private Power in American Democracy*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Carmichael, Stokely and Charles V. Hamilton. 1967. *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*. New York: Vintage Books.

Lowi, Theodore J. 1969 *The End of Liberalism: Ideology, Policy, and the Crisis of Public Authority*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.

Huntington, Samuel P. 1981. *American Politics: The Promise of Disharmony*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press.

Smith, Rogers. 1993. "Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America" *APSR* 87:549-66.

Hochschild, Jennifer. 1995. *Facing Up to the American Dream: Race, Class, and the Soul of the Nation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

February 3: The Constitution

Required readings

The Constitution of the United States

The Federalist, (especially numbers 10, 37-52, 70, 78-83).

Selected Antifederalist writings (Reserve).

Corwin, Edward. 1936. "The Constitution as an Instrument and as Symbol," *APSR* 6:1071-1085.

McGuire, Robert. 1988. "Constitution Making: A Rational Choice Model of the Federal Convention of 1787." *American Journal of Political Science* 32(2):483-522.

North, Douglass C. and Barry R. Weingast. 1989. "Constitutions and Commitment: The Evolution of Institutions Governing Public Choice in Seventeenth-Century England," *The Journal of Economic History*, 49:803-832.

Suggested Readings (What is the Constitution, and why do we pay attention to it?)

Beard, Charles. 1913. *An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States*.

Corwin, Edward S. 1928. "The 'Higher Law' Background of American Constitutional Law. Ithaca, NY: Great Seal Books. (Esp. pp. 1-80).

Riker, William H. 1980. "Implications from the Disequilibrium of Majority Rule for the Study of Institutions" *APSR* 74:432-46.

Shepsle, Kenneth A. 1989. "Studying Institutions: Some Lessons from the Rational Choice Approach." *Journal of Theoretical Politics* 1(2):131-47.

Ackerman, Bruce. 1991. *We the People: Foundations*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap/Harvard University Press.

February 10: Congressional Representation

Required Readings

Mayhew, David. 1974. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (pp.1-77).

Fenno, Richard F., Jr. 1978. *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Harper Collins Publishers. (Be sure to read the Appendix as well).

Swain, Carol. 1993. *Black Faces, Black Interests: The Representation of African Americans in Congress*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapters 1-2, 9-11).

Cox, Gary and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *American Journal of Political Science* 40:478-497.

Congress and the incumbency advantage

Mayhew, David R. 1964. "Congressional Elections: The Case of the Vanishing Marginals." *Polity* 6:295-317.

Erikson, Robert. 1971. "The Advantage of Incumbency in Congressional Elections." *Polity* 3:395-405.

Fiorina, Morris. 1985. "The Case of the Vanishing Marginals: The Bureaucracy Did it." *APSR* 77:177-81.

Jacobson, Gary C. 1987. "The Marginals Never Vanished: Incumbency and Competition in Elections to the U.S. House of Representatives, 1952-1982." *AJPS* 31:126-41.

Ansolabehere, Stephen, David W. Brady, and Morris P. Fiorina. 1992. "The Marginals Never Vanished?" *British Journal of Political Science* 22:121-38.

Cox, Gary W., and Jonathan N. Katz. 1996. "Why Did the Incumbency Advantage in U.S. House Elections Grow?" *AJPS* 40:478-97.

February 17: Congressional Policymaking

Required readings

Arnold, R. Douglas. 1990. *The Logic of Congressional Action*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (pp.1-146).

Kingdon, John. 2003. *Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies*, 2nd Edition. New York: Longman. (pp.1-90).

Poole, Keith and Howard Rosenthal. 1991. "Patterns of Congressional Voting," *American Journal of Political Science*. 35:228-278.

Shepsle, Kenneth A. and Barry W. Weingast, "Positive Theories of Democratic Institutions," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 19:149-179.

Krehbiel, Keith. 1991. *Information and Legislative Organization*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press. (Chapters 1-2).

Suggested readings

Wilson, Woodrow. 1885. *Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics*.

Fenno, Richard F., Jr. 1987. *Congressmen in Committees: A Comparative Analysis*

Shepsle, Kenneth, and Barry Weingast. 1987. "Why are Congressional Committees So Powerful?" *APSR* (September):929-45.

Fiorina, Morris P. 1989. *Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

February 24: The Presidency

Required Readings

Neustadt, Richard E. 1990. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. New York: The Free Press. (Chapters 1-8)

Kernell, Samuel. 1997. *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, Chapters 1-4, 8.

Ragsdale, Lyn and John J. Theiss. 1997. "The Institutionalization of the American Presidency," *AJPS* 93:99-114.

Canes-Wrone, Brandice. 2001. "The President's Legislative Influence from Public Appeals," *AJPS* 45:313-329.

Suggested readings

Bartels, Larry M. 1988. *Presidential Primaries and the Dynamics of Public Choice*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cameron, Charles. 2000. *Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power*.

March 3: Bureaucratic Politics

Required readings

Simon, Herbert A. *Administrative Behavior*. 1945. New York: The Free Press. (Chapters 1-5).

Wilson, James Q. 1989. *Bureaucracy*. Basic Books. (Chapters 1-9).

Brehm, John and Scott Gates. 1993. "Donut Shops and Speed Traps: Evaluating Models of Supervision on Police Behavior," *AJPS* 37:555-581.

Bureaucratic Politics: Is control possible?

Weber, Max. *Economy and Society*. (Chapter 11).

Kaufman, Herbert. 1960. *The Forest Ranger: A Study in Administrative Behavior*.

Arrow, Kenneth J. 1963. "Uncertainty and the Welfare Economics of Medical Care." *The American Economic Review* 53(5):941-73.

Akerlof, George A. 1970. "The Market for 'Lemons': Quality Uncertainty and the Market Mechanism." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 84(3):488-500.

McCubbins, Mathew D. and Thomas Schwartz. 1984. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms," *AJPS* 28:165-179.

Moe, Terry. 1984. "The New Economics of Organization." *AJPS* 28:739-77.

Moe, Terry. 1987. "Congressional Control of the Bureaucracy: An Assessment of the Positive Theory of Congressional Dominance," *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 12:475-520.

March 10: The Judiciary

Required readings

- Dahl, Robert. 1957. "Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as National Policy-Maker," *Journal of Public Law*, 6:279-95.
- Murphy, Walter. 1964. *Elements of Judicial Strategy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1-6).
- Hochschild, Jennifer. 1984. *The New American Dilemma: Liberal Democracy and School Desegregation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. (Chapters 1-3, 6).
- Rosenberg, Gerald N. 1991. *The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring About Social Change?* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Part I).
- Epstein, Lee and Jack Knight. 2000. "Field Essay: Toward a Strategic Revolution in Judicial Politics: A Look Back, A Look Ahead," *Political Research Quarterly* 53:625-662.

The Judiciary: The countermajoritarian difficulty and judicial decision-making.

- The Federalist, Number 78.
- Holmes, Oliver Wendell. 1897. "The Path of the Law." *Harvard Law Review*. 10:457-79.
- Bickel, Alexander M. 1962. *The Least Dangerous Branch: The Supreme Court at the Bar of Politics*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill Educational Publishing.
- Segal, Jeffrey A. and Albert D. Cover. 1989. "Ideological Values and the Votes of U.S. Supreme Court Justices," *APSR* 83:557-565.
- Freidman, Barry. 1998. "The History of the Countermajoritarian Difficulty, Part One: The Road to Judicial Supremacy." *Harvard Law Review* 73(2):333-433.
- Segal, Jeffrey A. and Harold J. Spaeth. 2002. *The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited*, Chapter 8.

Spring break – No class March 17

March 24: Interest Groups

Required readings

- Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapters 1-2).
- Denzau, Arthur and Michael Munger. 1986. "Legislators and Interest Groups: How Unorganized Interests Get Represented," *APSR* 86-106.

Hall, Richard L. and Frank W. Wayman. 1990. "Buying Time: Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees," *APSR* 84: 797-820.

Smith, Richard A. 1995. "Interest Group Influence in the U.S. Congress," *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 20:89-139.

Suggested Readings

The Federalist, Number 10.

Truman, David. 1951. *The Governmental Process*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Salisbury, Robert. 1969. "An Exchange Theory of Interest Groups." *Midwest Journal of Political Science* 13(1):1-32.

Schlozman, Kay Lehman. 1984. "What Accent the Heavenly Chorus? Political Equality and the American Pressure System." *Journal of Politics* 46(4):1006-32.

Mitchell, William C. and Michael C. Munger. 1991. "Economic Models of Interest Groups." *AJPS* 35(2):512-46.

March 31: Parties, Campaigns, and Elections

Required readings

Hotelling, Harold. 1929. "Stability in Competition." *The Economic Journal* 39(153):41-57.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Harper Collins Publishers. Chapter 8.

Key, V.O., Jr. 1955. "A Theory of Critical Elections," *Journal of Politics* 17:3-18.

Cox, Gary and Mathew McCubbins. 1993. *Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (Introduction, Chapters 4-5, 10).

Aldrich, John. 1995. *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1-2, 6-9).

Suggested Readings

Key, V.O., Jr. 1949. *Southern Politics in State and Nation*. New York: A.A. Knopf.

Schattschneider, E.E. 1942. *Party Government*. New York: Reinhart and Winston.

Schlesinger, Joseph A. 1985. "The New American Political Party." *APSR* 79:1152-69.

Schickler, Eric, and Andrew Rich. 1997. "Controlling the Floor: Parties as Procedural Coalitions in the House." *AJPS* 41:1340-75.

Cox, Gary, and Mathew McCubbins. 1997. "Toward a Theory of Legislative Rules Changes: Assessing Schickler and Rich's Evidence." *AJPS* 41:376-86.

MPSA meeting – No class April 7

April 14: Public Opinion

Required Readings

Campbell, Angus, Phillip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes. 1960. *The American Voter*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 8-10).

Converse, Phillip E. 1964. "The Nature of Belief Systems in Mass Publics," in David Apter, ED, *Ideology and Discontent*.

Bartels, Larry M. 1998. "Democracy with Attitudes," (manuscript).

Zaller, John, and Stanley Feldman. 1992. "A Simple Theory of the Survey Response: Answering Questions versus Revealing Preferences." *AJPS* 36(3): 579-616.

Bartels, Larry M. 1996. "Uninformed Votes: Information Effects in Presidential Elections," *AJPS* 40:194-230.

Erikson, Robert S., Michael B. Mackuen, and James A. Stimson. 2002. *The Macro Polity*. Abridge University Press. (Chapter 1).

'How can 59 million Americans be so stupid?'—The problem of mass publics

Lippman, Walter. 1961. *Public Opinion*. New York: The Macmillan Company.

Achen, Christopher H. 1975. "Mass Political Attitudes and Survey Response." *APSR* 69(4):1218-31.

Brady, Henry E. & Paul M. Sniderman. 1985. "Attitude Attribution: A Group Basis for Political Reasoning." *APSR* 79.

Page, Benjamin I., and Robert Y. Shapiro. 1992. *The Rational Public: Fifty Years of Trends in Americans' Policy Preferences*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lau, Richard R., and David P. Redlawsk. 2001. "Advantages and Disadvantages of Cognitive Heuristics in Political Decision Making." *AJPS* 45:951-71.

April 21: Political Participation

Required readings

Verba, Sidney, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry E. Brady. 1995. *Voice and Equality: Civic Volunteerism in American Politics*, Introduction, Chapters 9-13, 16-17.

Burns, Nancy, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Sidney Verba. 2001. *The Private Roots of Public Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. (Chapters 2, 11).

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Chapter 14.

Rosenstone, Steven J. and John Mark Hansen. 1993. *Mobilization, Participation, and American Democracy*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company. (Chapters 1-2, 8).

April 28: Voting Behavior

Required readings

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*, Chapters 1-3, 8, 11-13.

Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes, Chapters 1-7, 19-20.

Berelson, Bernard, Paul Lazarsfeld, and William N McPhee. 1954. *Voting*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press. (Chapters 1, 6-7, 11-12, 14).

Bartels, Larry M.. 1993. "Messages Received: The Political Impact of Media Exposure," *APSR* 87:267-285.

Lupia, Arthur and Mathew D. McCubbins. 1998. *The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?* Cambridge University Press. (Chapters 1-2, 9).

Suggested readings

Riker, William, and Peter Ordeshook. 1968. "A Theory of the Calculus of Voting." *APSR* 62:25-41.

Kramer, Gerald H. 1971. "Short-Term Fluctuations in U.S. Voting Behavior, 1896-1964." *APSR* 65:131-43.

Tufte, Edward. 1975. "Determinants of the Outcomes of Midterm Elections," *APSR*.

Markus, Gregory B. 1988. "The Impact of Personal and National Economic Conditions on the Presidential Vote: A Pooled Cross-Sectional Analysis." *AJPS* 32:137-54.

Jackman, Robert W. 1993. "Rationality and Political Participation." *AJPS* 37:279-90.

Brehm, John, and Wendy Rahn. 1997. "Individual-Level Evidence for the Causes and Consequences of Social Capital." *American Journal of Political Science* 41 (3): 999-1023.

Niemi, Richard G., and Herbert F. Weisberg. 2001. *Controversies in Voting Behavior, 4th Edition*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

May 6: Public Policy and Feedback Loops

Final exam questions handed out

Required readings

Campbell, Andrea Louise. 2003. *How Policies Make Citizens: Senior Political Activism and the American Welfare State*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mettler, Suzanne, and Joe Soss. 2004. "The Consequences of Public Policy for Democratic Citizenship: Bridging Policy Studies and Mass Politics." *Perspectives on Politics*. 2(1):55-73.

Abernathy, Scott Franklin. (Forthcoming, 2005). *School Choice and the Future of American Democracy*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.

Suggested readings

Skowronek, Stephen. 1982. *Building a New American State: The Expansion of National Administrative Capacities, 1877-1920*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Skocpol, Theda. 1992. *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Jacobs, Lawrence. 1993. *The Health of Nations: Public Opinion and the Making of Health Policy in the U.S. and Britain*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Skocpol, Theda . 2003. *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life*. Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press.

Final Exam Thursday, May 12 (Time TBA)