

Chapter 1. Introduction
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OUTLINE

I. Purposes of This E-Text

II. Some Basic Terms and Ideas

A. Republics and Democracies—The Question of Who Should Govern

B. Politics and Power—Personal and Public

C. Government

D. Ideology and Party—Differences and Similarities

E. Federalism—What Level of Government Should Have Power

III. Plan of the Text—Chapter Organization

IV. Final Introductory Comments

TEXT

I. Purposes of This E-Text

Every book has a “hook” to entice students to read it, to create interest, and to improve understanding. This text is no different, except perhaps that it has several hooks. First, you are not going to read a text if you don’t buy it because you can’t afford it. Affordability is becoming more and more of a problem for college students. This e-book is very affordable—it is practically free! If you just read it on-line or listen to it in MP3 form (*forthcoming—not available quite yet*), it costs you almost nothing. If you print it, the major cost is printing. Though people often say that “you get what you pay for,” I hope this time you get a lot more than what you paid.

Second, the text is conversational in style. I tried to avoid complicated wording and terms—as little political science jargon as possible. Sentences will usually be short and to the point. So I will use the first person, saying “I” a lot, and I will address “you” a lot as well. A conversational style also works well for the audio version of the book.

Third, if you are a typical college student, you probably know very little about government and politics in general and American government and politics in particular. You probably know that the national government has three branches. You probably can name them. You almost certainly know the name of the current president and know a two term limit exists. You probably know the first ten amendments to the Constitution are called the “Bill of Rights.” You may even know what some of them are, but not more than a few. You probably know a few more random facts. But that’s about it. You probably do not know the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court, the Speaker of the House, or the chair of the Fed (the nickname for the Federal Reserve System), or even what the Fed does. You probably erroneously think that the president has the power to declare war. You may even think that we have a national religion and an official national language. You may have a vague idea about the differences between the two major political parties, but little beyond a generalization about an issue or two on which the parties differ, such as abortion or spending on education and health care.

For over a decade I and my colleagues gave students a 63 question general knowledge test on the first day of class. The average score on the first day was under ten correct answers. That material in this text significantly improved those scores.

Do you need to know most of these facts? Yes! You can no more understand American politics without some basic factual knowledge than you can understand basketball without understanding the “screen and roll” or music without understanding the difference between treble and bass, or football without understanding what a “down” is.

Fourth, the text will not use current events to illustrate ideas. Not including current events is really unusual for a text. Authors typically add current events to illustrate basic themes, concepts, and principles, and then update them every couple of years in a new edition. These frequent new editions drive up the cost of books. Sadly these current events quickly become outdated, usually as soon as the text is published. My goal is to write a text that can stand for more than a few years without much updating.

Not including current events also keeps the text shorter. A short text is good for a couple of reasons. Most college students have a lot of demands on them and not much time. A short text also gives you some extra time to read newspapers (something that you really need to do regularly to be a good citizen) and learn about events that are really current—as opposed to events in most texts that are a year or two old. The ideas, concepts, and principles in the text should help you make sense of whatever the current events are in the news. The stories should begin to fit together in your mind as part of a broad picture of American government and politics. That understanding should last well beyond this course.

Fifth, a unifying theme—the major hook—of the text is the idea that much of the difficulty in understanding American government and politics rests on the paradoxical nature of our political system. You may not know what that means right now, but it should become clear as we proceed. For now, let's just say that a **paradox** is a kind of contradiction. Every chapter will have some paradoxes for you to consider. For example, James Madison's statement that a government governs best when it governs least is a kind of paradox.

A long time ago as a young political science professor, I had to teach an introduction to political philosophy course. The text I used was based on the idea that most important philosophical questions involved paradoxes. Half the intellectual battle was trying to understand the nature of each paradox. For example, ignorance may be bliss, but at the same time an unexamined life is not worth living. You cannot resolve that paradox until you understand what both sides of that paradox involve. So it will be in this text. For example, we can't resolve the paradox of presidential weakness and power until we understand both the nature of presidential power and the great limits on that power.

Finally, we will use principles in the Constitution, the Federalist Papers, and from the discipline of political science to help us understand American government. Let's briefly preview how each one is built into this text.

The Constitution lays out the basic framework and rules for how our government operates. You must know the rules to understand the game. But the Constitution was also a political document that left a lot undefined and papered over many conflicts with compromises and general language. How it is interpreted and applied touches virtually every aspect of American politics today. Therefore, the Constitution will touch every chapter in the text. We will organize the text by the organization of the Constitution, covering topics in the same order in which they are covered in the Constitution.

The ***Federalist Papers*** were a set of essays written by supporters of the Constitution (James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay) during the battle to ratify it in 1787-1788. Supporters circulated the essays around the states and printed them in newspapers. They were put together in a book and collectively are called the *Federalist Papers* because those who supported the Constitution were calling for a federal union of the states that was to be created by the Constitution. We will define the term federal later in this chapter and have a detailed chapter about federalism later in the text. The essays were arguments in favor of the nature of the proposed new union among the states. So today we can read the papers and see what the supporters of the Constitution had in mind. Courts still cite the papers when interpreting the Constitution. The language is hard to understand because it is highly formal with long difficult sentences using many words and phrases that we rarely use today. But the ideas are still important. We will refer to the papers and the ideas in them fairly frequently.

Hopefully you will even make an effort to read one or two of the *Federalist Papers* before the course is over.

Political science is a social science examining human behavior in the area of life we call politics, a term we will define shortly. Political science is different than **civics** you may have studied in high school. Civics focuses on rules and laws and structure. Political science goes beyond this and looks at how people actually behave. The speed limit may be 65 mph, but people actually go much closer to 75, and police rarely stop someone who is less than 10 mph over the limit. Civics would teach you the law, but political science will examine unwritten rules of behavior that both police and drivers follow. You almost certainly know the unwritten rules about speeding. We will cover a lot of other unwritten rules political scientists have found that you probably don't know. If political science is worth anything, understanding those rules will help you understand American politics as events unfold during your life. That is why these unofficial and usually unwritten rules are more important than memorizing current events. And that is why I will focus on the rules rather than current events in this text. The events change at a fast pace, but the rules remain relatively constant.

II. Some Basic Terms and Ideas

Before we get started in the details of each chapter, we need to cover a few basic terms and ideas that are common to all the chapters.

A. Republics and Democracies—The Question of Who Should Govern

The main title to this text is "*A Republic If You Can Keep It*." This is a quotation as well as a title. Using a quotation for a title is unusual. The words are those of Benjamin Franklin, the oldest delegate to the Constitutional Convention in the summer of 1787 in Philadelphia. After the convention, a woman asked him about the kind of government the convention created. The words are part of his response: "a republic, madam, if you can keep it."

I chose these words for the main title for three reasons. First, the words distinguish between the actual form of government we have—a republic—and the form you probably thought we have—a democracy. Understanding the difference is fundamental to understanding the nature of our system of government. People rule indirectly through representatives in a **republic**. A republic is a representative democracy. A direct democracy, or just **democracy**, involves direct popular rule.

Second, this difference raises the important question of who should rule. This is a major question that all governments must decide. As we shall see, those who wrote the Constitution (called the "Founding Fathers" or just the "Founders") did not trust average people enough to rule directly. So the Founders

gave average people relatively little political power. The Founders equated democracy with mob rule and feared that a democracy would endanger property and be highly unstable.

Down through American history average people have gained more power. In many states and local governments today, citizens have power to propose and pass laws without actions by any legislative body (the **initiative process**) and sometimes even the power to remove elected officials before their terms are over (through a process called **recall**). States routinely require that popular votes approve measures like amendments to the state constitution. This is called a **referendum**, which allows people to vote on something proposed by a legislative body. By today's standards, the Founders can be seen as favoring elite rule, wanting only the better people to make laws. By "better," they meant educated, relatively successful and wealthy. We can also add white and male. Of course, that's who the Founders were—relatively successful educated white males!

Third, the quote captures a central purpose for the text and most college level American Government courses. We teach American government so that young adults will have the necessary intellectual tools to be able to preserve it (and hopefully improve it) for one more generation. Old Ben Franklin had it just right. If any single generation fails in this ongoing task, our republic will be lost. His words are no less true today than they were in 1787.

B. Politics and Power—Personal and Public

Politics is a word that we all use, and usually we mean something negative. When we say that someone is being "political," we usually are thinking about selfish and insincere actions by unethical manipulative power hungry people. Not a pretty picture.

I am reminded of the old story about the country sage who had a simple test to see what a child would grow up to be. The test was to put a Bible and glass of whiskey on a table. If the child picked up the Bible, the future was as a preacher. If the child chose the whiskey, the future was as a drunk. And if the child picked up both, waved the Bible and then drank the whiskey, the child would be a politician.

While this negative stereotype certainly contains some truth, it oversimplifies reality, as do all stereotypes. Politics and power, like many things in life, can be used for good and/or ill. Perhaps we should define both politics and power before going any further.

Political scientists have many definitions of **politics**. Some come from politicians, like President Lyndon Johnson, who said that politics is the "art of the possible." Not a bad definition, because politics does involve creatively figuring out how you can get the most of something done. This suggests compromise

between what you may want ideally and what is possible practically. It suggests a process in which you work with others and try to influence them in some way using a wide range of tools. It also suggests that to be successful you have to be creative. Johnson was quite good at this, but more so when he was Majority Leader in the Senate than when he was President.

Another standard definition from a text I once used is that politics is the process of influencing government policy. People do many things to influence what government does and does not do. We shall certainly talk about many of these things throughout this text.

Both of these definitions imply that people employ tools and techniques to accomplish goals. Those tools and techniques can be thought of as power. A third definition links politics and power directly, that politics is the use of power and what the powerful do.

If you think about this simple broad definition of politics as the use of power, you may see that politics is not just what people do with respect to government--the public realm. People also engage in politics privately in dealing with each other in personal relationships and in business. Certainly power relationships exist among friends, in families, in religious institutions, and in job situations. In fact, politics in this sense is universal. That is why **Aristotle**, the ancient political philosopher, observed that "man is by nature a political animal."

So if politics, both public and private, involves power, what exactly is **power**? Political scientists sometimes say that power has two faces. The first face is the most obvious, getting someone to do something that they would not otherwise ordinarily do. This kind of behavior is easy to observe and study as a social scientist, because people actually do things that can then be observed and measured.

The second face is less obvious. Power can also be preventing people from doing things that they might otherwise ordinarily do. This is harder to study because nothing exists to directly observe. This kind of power can only be indirectly studied by carefully evaluating social and cultural surroundings, looking for pressures that restrain people. In a classroom pressure might come from a teacher whose body language intimidates students from speaking out. In the workplace it could be fear of losing ones job or being given unpleasant tasks. In a society, it could be negative stereotypes of some group that prevents them from fully participating in public life or even admitting membership in some group. Note that these examples move from the interpersonal and private to groups in the public realm.

You might consider how power affects you in the private and public groups in which you are a member. Do you feel empowered or restrained? What exactly about the culture and values and actions in the group makes you feel this way?

Americans are ambivalent about power. By ambivalent, I mean that we respect power and have a great deal of interest in those who have power, but also say that we do not want power and that we fear power and what it can do. One favorite quotation that most Americans believe is that “power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely.”

This discussion of power takes us to our first paradox, the **paradox of power**. Power is both good and bad. That much is certainly true. But because of our ambivalent feelings about power, we have a closely related paradox about getting power: you can only get power by saying that you do not want power. We usually distrust anyone who says they want power. Yet people must get power to accomplish goals.

You can see how these cultural attitudes about power make life difficult for politicians seeking power. Politicians seeking power must pretend they do not want power, and so they often seem insincere. They must pretend not to be politicians. Think about this the next time you hear someone accusing a politician of being political or power-hungry.

C. Government

Government is a little easier to define. It is an institution that makes decisions about the policies. Policies come in two broad varieties, domestic and foreign. Foreign policies entail how we will relate to other nations economically, culturally and in terms of security.

Domestic policy refers to actions that reward some people and/or deprive others through social and economic policy. Governments provide services to some and impose taxes to pay for these services. We pass laws that treat certain behaviors as criminal and deprive people of their freedom or even lives for breaking these laws. Governments pass regulations that allow and disallow actions by people in how they use their property (for example, building a fence of a certain height in front of your house or opening a home business with a sign) or how businesses and professionals operate (for example fair lending laws or licensing doctors and lawyers). Government attempts to influence the economy through fiscal policy (taxing and spending) and monetary policy (interest rates, bank regulations and money supply), and even sometimes direct subsidies to private institutions like banks or major corporations in times of financial crises.

D. Ideology and Party

Ideology and political parties are two different concepts that are different but related to each other. Students almost always confuse them with each other. We will define each of them to see how they are different and briefly discuss how

they are related. We will go into much more detail on political parties later in the text. Ideology will arise in many places throughout the text.

Ideology generally refers to the beliefs people have to what government should do. We will start with a broad generalization involving two kinds of ideology and then move to a more complicated set of beliefs that involve four kinds of ideology.

Most broadly, ideology refers to how active government should be. Liberals generally want a more active government because they have a greater faith in the ability of people to come together and collectively decide how to improve society. So liberals are generally associated with a willingness to change and try new things.

Most broadly, conservatives have less trust in human beings to bring about positive change. They feel that social institutions developed as they did for reasons beyond the understanding of people and any effort to change very much will usually make things worse. Thus conservatives generally want less government action to change society and want to rely more on private initiative and voluntary action and to leave traditional ways of doing things alone.

Now let's be a little more precise. Neither of these broad generalizations is universally true. Sometimes we see the opposite of what we would expect. In some areas of life, those who call themselves conservatives advocate more government action. And in other areas of life those who call themselves liberal want less government action.

This observation suggest that we can improve the way we define ideology by dividing life into two realms, the economic realm and the private moral realm. This gives us four possibilities: government action in both, action in neither, action in economic but not the private, and action in the private but not the economic.

Let's look at each possibility. Each has its own label. (Though these terms are universally used in political science, I should give credit for this four part typology to the authors of a text I once used, Gitelson, Alan R., Robert L. Dudley, and Melvin J. Dubnick, *American Government*, New York: Houghton-Mifflin.)

1. **Populists**: Action in Both the Economic and Private Areas

Of the four categories, the label populist is a bit confusing because it is a label that is used in different ways. Populists generally appeal to popular mass sentiments for widespread government action. In the late 1800s a political party used the name Populist, and what that party stood for does fit this ideological category. The most well known Populist Party candidate, William Jennings Bryan, supported government action to enforce codes of personal morality and

government action in the economic realm to help struggling small farmers of that time.

Today, African-Americans are the largest group who generally holds views that might be called populist. They tend to want government to enforce religiously based standards of morality and at the same time help those who face economic hardship. But few African-Americans would recognize or adopt the populist label.

In the media, journalists use the populist label in a more general way. They apply it to any politicians who try to generate mass appeal, regardless of the role advocated for government. This common practice confuses the meaning of the term. So politicians with rather opposite beliefs get called populists. For example, sometimes President Reagan and President Clinton were both called populists because of their popular appeal. In fact, using the definitions of ideology in this section, Reagan was really a conservative and Clinton a liberal.

2. Libertarians: Action in Neither Area

Libertarians are much easier to find today. We have had and continue to have a political party by that name which almost perfectly fits the ideological framework. The Libertarian Party is active in all states and always runs a candidate for president.

What do libertarians believe? They believe in minimal government action in all areas of life. They prefer private certification to government licensing in the professions and in the areas of safety. So foods and meats would not be government inspected. Instead, they might be certified by private entities. Those who sold these goods could use that certification as part of their advertising. Whether any of this happens is up to the private market. The same would be true of doctors and lawyers and so on. Libertarians want minimal government regulation of business and enterprise, wanting little more from government than enforcement of contracts through the courts. Many would even oppose public education, believing that people should provide that for themselves. Others might support vouchers for education with parents choosing among competing private school systems for their children's education. Libertarians would oppose all drug laws except those that keep people safe from those under the influence. Many even oppose prohibitions on prostitution, believing that what takes place among consenting adults is their own business.

In addition to an organized Libertarian Party, the Republican Party has a faction that is libertarian in nature. They generally oppose government action, but not as much as pure libertarians. This faction of the Republican Party often has conflicts with the social conservatives in the party, whom we shall describe below.

3. Liberals: Action in the Economic Area but Not in the Private

Liberals generally support government action to help the disadvantaged in such areas as education, health care, job training, and discrimination. Their support for action almost always extends to business regulation to combat environmental dangers and global warming.

On the other hand, like libertarians, liberals oppose government action to enforce codes of morality that do not involve behavior that clearly harms others. So while liberals would restrict smoking in public places because of concern for second hand smoke, they would probably oppose restrictions on the private use of marijuana and almost certainly oppose restrictions on its private medical use. They see abortion as a private matter of choice for the woman in consultation with her doctor, not as an action that involves harm to another human being. Of course all this rests on when the fetus begins to have separate rights as a human being. While some liberals might privately oppose abortion for themselves, they do not want government forcing that standard of morality on others. As you can see, this is far more complicated and nuanced (look up this word if you do not know it!) than pro-abortion versus pro-life.

Liberals generally gravitate to the Democratic Party. However, a few northern and western Republicans still agree with some liberal values. This would be especially true in such issue areas as environmental protection, gay rights, and abortion. A California Republican who is seen as conservative there might be far more liberal than a Democrat in Georgia or South Carolina.

4. **Conservatives:** Action in the Private Area But Not the Economic

These people are often called “social conservatives,” which is perhaps a more accurate term. These conservatives wish to have an activist government in defining marriage, in prohibiting abortion, in prohibiting the use of drugs, in outlawing gambling, having “blue laws” prohibiting Sunday sales, and a range of other areas of life that could be seen as involving private moral behavior. Of course, they would dispute the claim that these behaviors are purely private. They see most of these actions as harming other people. Many of these beliefs are based on religious values.

Most conservatives find their home in the Republican Party. However, some Democrats, especially African-American Democrats and Hispanics, hold most of these values and are also members of evangelical and fundamentalist religious institutions.

As you can see in reviewing these labels and value positions, these four ideological groups are related to the two major parties. However, enough overlap exists so that one would be wrong to say, as many people do, that all Democrats are liberals and all Republicans are conservatives. Many Republicans are

libertarian, a few are liberal, and some even populist. Many Democrats, especially religious minorities, are more populist than liberal. About the best generalization one can make is that Republicans tend to be conservative or libertarian while Democrats tend to be liberal or populist.

Because many more people are familiar with party labels than with ideological labels and because many people have a broad collection of issue positions along with a party label that ideology cannot explain, we should be very careful in using ideology to distinguish who supports which political party. In addition, about a fourth to a third of the population claims to be independent, or at most have a very weak party attachment. Their positions are even less understandable in terms of ideology.

Political scientists have studied ideology quite a bit. They have found that while most people use the terms liberal or conservative and even put themselves into one group or another, many are confused about what the terms mean and hold issue positions that are only roughly consistent with the terms.

You might consider your own understanding of ideology. How do you define it? Do you use ideology to help you sort out where and when government should act? Do you fit into one of these four categories? Or do you have some unique collection of views with no obvious principles to explain or connect them? Perhaps you just collected views handed you by parents and others who have had an influence on your life. Thinking about how you think about political positions might be a useful writing exercise.

E. Federalism--What Level of Government Should Have Power

Almost every nation-state has different levels of government. Only very tiny nations can operate with just one level of government. A central national government almost always exists and below that are some kind of regional governments and then usually some kind of local governments. The regional governments go by a variety of names. Sometimes the regional governments are called provinces, like in Canada. In the U.S. we call them states. The relationships among all these different levels are critical to how a nation-state operates. Three general options exist.

The **unitary system** centers all power in the central government. It stresses uniformity and works best where people have similar views and customs throughout the country. Many European countries employ this option. The central government can, however, grant powers to regional governments and allow them to make a lot of decisions for themselves. But at the same time the central government can also take away those powers. For example, in Great Britain the British Parliament has granted significant powers to a regional Scottish Parliament.

The opposite extreme is a **confederal system**. In this system the power is centered in the regional governments and the central government can only do those things that the regional governments allow it to do. Because this arrangement makes national actions slow and difficult, it is relatively rare in the modern world. It was the system we had under the Articles of Confederation, which operated between the end of the Revolutionary War and the adoption of the existing Constitution in 1788. We will have more to say about the Articles of Confederation in the chapter on the Constitution. A confederal system is also the system that the Confederate States had in the American South during the Civil War in the early 1860s. The United Nations can be seen as a kind of confederal system. The U.N. can only do those things that the member states, in particular, the members of the Security Council and the “perm five” member states in the Council, agree to allow it to do. A confederal system is about the best one can do when member states do not want to give up much power and do not want some central authority dictating things.

What we have in the United States, created under the Constitution written in 1787, is a compromise between these two polar opposites, a **federal system**. In this system the regional governments, or states, have reserved some powers for themselves, the central or national government has some powers, and both share some powers.

Sadly for you as a student, a federal system is the most complex kind of system to understand. But understand it you must, if you are to play an active role in it. As we shall see in the chapter on federalism, this complex relationship has created a lot of confusion and conflict throughout our history. Levels of government struggle over the question of which level is responsible to do what on virtually every political question we have faced: racial and gender equality, marriage, environmental protection, workplace safety, standards for drivers’ licenses, immigration enforcement, drug laws, health insurance, and even the deployment and support of National Guard troops. That is just a start. The list is almost endless.

III. Plan of the Text—Chapter Organization

The organization of the Constitution serves as the major organizing principle for this text. So we will start with a chapter on the Constitution, focusing on why and how it was written, and looking at the long list of compromises that were necessary to get it adopted.

Then we shall turn to the legislative branch, because that is the subject of Article I in the Constitution. That is the longest article in the Constitution, the one that gives the most detail on how a branch is organized and what it can and cannot do.

Article II is about the executive branch, which might be seen as having two parts, the office of the president and the executive bureaucracy. So we will have two chapters on this article, Chapter 4 on the executive and Chapter 5 on the bureaucracy.

Chapter 6 focuses on the judicial branch, which is created in bare bones form in Article III. This is one of the shortest articles in the Constitution.

Article IV covers relationships among states and between the states and the national government. This complex and evolving set of relationships is what we call federalism, which we just defined a few paragraphs ago. So Chapter 7 will cover federalism.

Constitutional Articles V (the amendment process), VI (a very short miscellaneous kind of article covering debts, the supremacy of the national government, oaths of office and prohibiting any religious test for office), and VII (specifying what was necessary for ratification to put the Constitution into effect) are covered elsewhere in the text because they do not have enough material in them to merit a separate chapter.

Many of the amendments, certainly including the Bill of Rights, are about expanding civil liberties and rights. Therefore Chapter 8 is about civil rights and liberties.

Having covered the major articles and the amendments, we have run out of Constitution. Nevertheless, several subjects remain that need to be covered in order to understand how American government actually works. These include groups and processes and then the policies that government produces. So in Chapter 9 we will look at interest groups, what the Founders called “factions.” The Founders did not like factions any more than Americans today like interest groups. The problem they faced was what to do to control them without reducing freedom of people to create groups so that they can pursue political goals. We continue to struggle with that problem. Interest groups are so central to the operation of American government today that one cannot understand how American politics operates without understanding how interest groups operate.

Chapter 10 examines another kind of group that Americans also generally dislike, political parties, and also the process that most concerns political parties, elections. The Founders hoped we could operate without political parties, which they also lumped in with the idea of factions. But parties proved necessary in the organization of elections then. They still do today. So we will also examine elections in this chapter. We will pay particular attention to election rules and to the question of citizen participation in elections. Rules are very important, and they vary a great deal across different kinds of elections and across the states. This variation reflects our federal system. Voting is central to elections. Voting can be seen as a question—to vote or not to vote. On the one hand, voting

participation is critical to our keeping our democratic republic. But on the other hand, voting is an irrational act in terms of the time and trouble required. This poses another paradox: the survival of a democratic republic requires citizens to act irrationally.

Chapter 11 examines public opinion, political socialization, and the media. Political socialization refers to the process by which we get our political opinions and identifications. The media have a great influence on what we know about the world, and the computer age is bringing about a revolution in how we get information and the amount of information and misinformation that are available. In a democratic republic politicians must pay attention to what the public wants, or else they will not stay in office for long. But the public is ill-informed on most issues. So the paradox that political leaders face every day involves respecting and honoring a public that is usually ignorant on most issues. This involves some delicate balancing.

Almost all American government texts end with several chapters on the product of government activity, public policy. Often they have a chapter on economic policy, a chapter on social welfare policy, and then often a chapter on foreign policy. Longer texts may have additional chapters on education policy or environmental policy. This text will cover public policy differently. Rather than put policy off until the end of the text in separate chapters, we will cover various policies both in the other chapters to illustrate points and at the ends of several of the other chapters in sections called “policy implications.”

I am integrating policy into the other chapters for several reasons. I want to encourage you to think about what government does as you are considering the various parts and processes of our government. Moreover, because keeping up with current events is a central part of what we will be doing every day and because many news stories are about government policies, thinking about policy throughout the course fits the goal of daily news consumption. Finally, because policies are changing all the time, relying on the news rather than the text to cover the latest wrinkles in policies helps prevent the text from going out of date so quickly. So our focus in the policy implications sections will be more about long term historical changes and forces that shape policies than current policy content. Of course, we cannot avoid talking about some content. For example, the struggle to provide universal health insurance has been a major long term story in social welfare policy. As of this writing, it has not happened. When it does happen, I will have to do some updating. Almost nothing lasts forever.

IV. Final Introductory Comments

Each chapter begins with a detailed outline that provides an overview of the chapter. The body of the text is the outline again with the text filled in. Students tell me that this organization helps them in their reading and

understanding. In the text I have **bold faced** key terms and ideas, which I repeat following the text. Quite often I will underline simple definitions. You should have already noticed the bold faced terms and ideas in this introduction. Some ideas are repeated in more than one chapter, which is okay because they relate to more than one topic. In addition, reinforcement and repetition helps people learn.

I want to thank the University of South Carolina Aiken for providing me with a one semester sabbatical to get a first draft of this text written. It would not have been possible without that help. I also want to thank my students for giving me feedback on previous on-line texts I have written for other courses (Introduction to Politics, Southern Studies, and Research Methods). Their feedback has helped me understand what works and does not work. I also should thank my colleagues in political science at USC Aiken, Professors Steven Millies and Carol Botsch for making suggestions. In particular, I want to thank Carol Botsch, my colleague/spouse, who suggested the way to integrate policy into the other chapters, suggested ways to combine some chapters that are usually separate chapters in other texts, and finally for a massive editing job that spotted numerous errors of all kinds, ranging from simple typos to factual mistakes to ideas not clearly expressed.

Despite all this excellent help, the text will have errors and shortcomings. These are mine and mine alone. If you find errors, please let me know by email at bobb@usca.edu. Suggestions are also welcome, though I make no promises to follow them. One of the very nice things about an on-line text is that unlike paper texts, errors can be quickly corrected.

KEY TERMS AND IDEAS

paradox
Federalist Papers
political science
civics
republic
democracy
initiative process
recall
referendum
politics
Aristotle
power
paradox of power
government
ideology
populists

libertarians
liberals
conservatives
unitary system
confederal system
federal system

Possible Web Exercises

1. Find the names of your member of Congress and your two United States Senators, if you do not already know them. Find the names of your state legislator and your state senator (using your home address). Students often confuse state legislators with national legislators, just like they confuse their state legislature with the Congress.
2. Political scientists have developed much more complex ideological schemes than the one presented in this chapter. You can find one at the Pew Research Center that allows you to take a test to see where you fit in with other Americans by clustering nine groups together who have similar opinions on a range of issues. Take the test and see where you fit in and what the groups are at:
<http://typology.people-press.org/typology/>