

Barnard College, Fall 2005  
Department of Political Science  
Classroom: 302 Barnard Hall

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Office: 401 Lehman Hall  
Office Hours: Thurs. 4:30-6:30 PM

## **POLS BC1001 DYNAMICS OF AMERICAN POLITICS**

### **Course Description**

This course introduces the student to the fundamental workings of government and the pursuit and exercise of political power at the national level. Emphasis is placed on the dynamic interplay of politics and government, how government works and how it affects you. We will also inquire into the meaning of democracy and the current crisis of American democracy. Basic topics covered in the course include constitutional principles and politics; political processes such as voting, interest group behavior, social movements, and campaigns and elections; and government institutions – the presidency, Congress, and the courts. The classroom format combines lecture and discussion.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

You are required to read the material assigned, to come to class, and to participate in class discussions. There will be an in-class mid-term essay exam (30 percent), an in-class final exam (40 percent), and one 8-10 page term paper (30 percent) due December 1.

### **Reading Schedule**

Required reading assignments are on Reserve at the Barnard College library. I urge you to explore the recommended readings on your own. For those of you who have no background in American government I strongly recommend you review the material found in Theodore J. Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, and Kenneth A. Shepsle, *American Government: Power and Purpose* (page numbers cited in the syllabus refer to the 8th Core edition). The following books have been ordered at Labyrinth Books, 536 West 112<sup>th</sup> Street:

Peter Woll, ed., *American Government: Readings and Cases*, 16<sup>th</sup> Edition  
William E. Hudson, *American Democracy in Peril: Eight Challenges to America's Future*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition  
Linda K. Kerber, *No Constitutional Right to Be Ladies*  
Donald G. Nieman, *Promises to Keep: African-Americans and the Constitutional Order, 1776 to the Present*  
Michael Nelson, ed., *The Elections of 2004*  
Morris P. Fiorina, *Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America*

**PLEASE NOTE:** The reading schedule is *tentative* and I reserve the right to amend it, depending on the pace of the class. Unless otherwise noted by me, readings should be completed by the date indicated. Please bring the schedule to class to note any alterations.

September 6: INTRODUCTION

### **1. American constitutionalism as secular politics, from the founding to the present**

September 8 FOUNDING PRINCIPLES  
Assignment: Hudson, Introduction, "Models of Democracy," pp. 1-23  
Kerber, chapter 1, "'No Political Relation to the State:' Conflicting Obligations in the Revolutionary Era," pp. 3-46  
Nieman, chapter 1, pp. 3-29  
Declaration of Independence (See Woll, Appendix 1, pp. 466-469)

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 1, pp. 2-31

Gary Nash, *The Unknown American Revolution: The Unruly Birth of Democracy and the Struggle to Create America*, chapters 4-5  
Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, chapters 6-12

September 13,15 DEMOCRACY AND THE CONSTITUTION

Assignment: Woll, selections 1-5 (excerpts from John Locke, "Second Treatise of Civil Government;" John P. Roche, "The Founding Fathers: A Reform Caucus in Action;" Charles A. Beard, "Framing the Constitution;" James Madison, "Federalist 47, 48, 51;" and Lawrence H. Tribe and Michael C. Dorf, "How Not to Read the Constitution"), pp. 3-49  
Hudson, chapter 1, "The First Challenge: Separation of Powers," pp. 25-55  
Articles of Confederation (available at <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/artconf.htm>)  
Constitution and Bill of Rights (See Woll, pp. 458-477)

Recommended: Robert A. Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* 2nd Ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)  
Robert A. Goldwin and William A. Schambra, eds., *How Democratic is the Constitution?* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1980), pp. 1-17, 39-58, 25-55  
Lowi et al., chapter 2, pp. 34-73  
Nash, chapters 6-8, Epilogue  
Bertell Ollman and Jonathan Birnbaum, *The United States Constitution: 200 Years of Anti-federalist, Abolitionist, Feminist, Muckraking, Progressive, and Especially Socialist Criticism* (New York: New York University Press, 1990)  
Wood, chapters 13-19

September 20,22 FEDERALISM: STATES RIGHTS AND THE EXPANSION OF NATIONAL POWER

Assignment: Kerber, chapter 2, "I Am Just As Free and Just as Good as You Are:' The Obligation Not to Be a Vagrant," pp. 47-80  
Woll, selections 6-14, 16 (excerpts from Alexander Hamilton, Federalist 16, 17; the Anti-Federalist Papers 17; James Madison, Federalist 44, 45, 39; James Bryce, "The Merits of the Federal System;" *McCulloch v. Maryland*; *Gibbons v. Ogden*; *United States v. Morrison*), pp. 51-104  
Constitutional Amendments 10, 16, 17

Recommended: John C. Calhoun, *A Disquisition on Government*  
Gabriel Kolko, *Railroads and Regulation, 1877-1916* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1970)  
Lowi et al., chapter 3, pp. 74-111  
David B. Walker, *The Rebirth of Federalism: Slouching Toward Washington* (Chappaqua, NY: Chatham House, 2000) (available as an eBook)

September 27 THE CONSTITUTION IS NOT ENOUGH: HOW BLACKS LOST THE VOTE AFTER IT WAS WON

Assignment: Nieman, chapters 2-5, pp. 30-147  
Constitutional Amendments 5, 13, 14, 15

Recommended: Robert M. Goldman, *Reconstruction and Black Suffrage: Losing the Vote in Reese and Cruikshank* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2001)  
C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*, A Commemorative Edition with a New Afterward by William S. McFeely (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002)

September 29 DEMOCRATIZING POLITICS: HOW WOMEN WON THE VOTE

Assignment: Kerber, chapter 3, "Wherever You Find Taxey There Votey Will Be Also:' Representation and Taxes in the Nineteenth Century," pp. 81-123  
Constitutional Amendment 19

Recommended: Ellen Carol DuBois, *Feminism and Suffrage*  
Mari Jo and Paul Buhle, eds., *The Concise History of Woman Suffrage*

October 4-13      **CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS**  
Assignment: Hudson, chapter 3, "The Third Challenge: Radical Individualism," pp. 101-136  
Kerber, chapter 4, "'Woman is the Center of Home and Family Life:' Gwendolyn Hoyt and Jury Service in the Twentieth Century," pp. 124-220  
Woll, selections 17-29 (excerpts from Anti-Federalist Paper 84; James Madison, "Speech Before the House...Proposing to Add a Bill of Rights...;" *Barron v. Mayor and City of Baltimore*; *Gideon v. Wainwright*; *Abrams v. United States*; *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan*; *Plessy v. Ferguson*; *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka*; *Engel v. Vitale*; *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris*; *Roe v. Wade*; *Adarand Constructors, Inc. v. Peña*), pp. 105-171  
Nieman, chapter 7, pp. 184-227  
Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter From Birmingham Jail" in *Why We Can't Wait*  
Bill of Rights (Constitutional Amendments 1-10), Amendments 24, 26

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 4, pp. 114-153  
Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1989)

October 18      **THE CURRENT CRISIS: SECURITY VS. RIGHTS**  
Assignment: Hudson, chapter 8, "The Eighth Challenge: The National Security State," pp. 289-335  
Kerber, chapter 5, "'A Constitutional Right to Be Treated Like American Ladies:' Helen Feeney, Robert Goldberg, and Military Obligation in Contemporary America," pp. 221-302  
Speech by President Bush, West Point Academy, June 1, 2002 (available <http://www.whitehouse.gov>)  
The National Security Strategy of the United States, September 2002 (available <http://www.whitehouse.gov>)  
Charles Doyle, "The U.S.A. Patriot Act: A Legal Analysis," *CRS Report to Congress* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, April 22, 2002) (available <http://www.fas.org/irp/crs/RL31377.pdf>)  
Constitutional Amendments 1, 4, 6

Recommended: David Cole and James X. Dempsey, *Terrorism and the Constitution: Sacrificing Civil Liberties in the Name of Terrorism* (New York: The New Press, 2002)  
William H. Rehnquist, *All The Laws But One: Civil Liberties in Wartime* (New York: Vintage, 2000)

October 20      **MID-TERM EXAM**

## **2. Institutions of national government: how they work and what they do**

October 25, 27      **CONGRESS AND THE POLICY PROCESS**  
Assignment: Hudson, chapters 6, 7, "The Sixth Challenge: The 'Privileged Position' of Business," and "The Seventh Challenge: Inequality," pp. 211-287  
Cindy Simon Rosenthal, ed., *Women Transforming Congress* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003), chapters TBA  
Woll, selections 64-72 (excerpts include James Madison, Federalist 53, 56, 57, 58, 62, 63; Woodrow Wilson, "Congressional Government;" Morris P. Fiorina "The Rise of the Washington Establishment;" Lawrence C. Dodd, "Congress and the Quest for Power;" Edmund Burke, "Speech to the Electors of Bristol;" Richard F. Fenno, Jr. "If...Congress is 'The Broken Branch,'...;" Nelson W. Polsby, "Congress-Bashing for Beginners;" David R. Mayhew, "Congress: The Electoral Connection;" Richard F. Fenno, Jr., "Home Style and Washington Career"), pp. 364-425

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 5, pp. 158-217

*Term paper topics handed out*

November 1, 10 THE GROWTH OF PRESIDENTIAL POWER AND THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH  
Assignment: Woll, selections 50-53, 55, 57-63 (excerpts include Alexander Hamilton, Federalist 70; Clinton Rossiter, "The Presidency – Focus of Leadership;" Richard E. Neustadt, "Presidential Power;" Thomas E. Cronin and Michael A. Genovese, "Presidential Paradoxes;" Sidney Milkis, "The Presidency and Political Parties;" *Ex Parte Merryman*; *Ex Parte Milligan*; Tony Mauro, "A Mixed Precedent for Military Tribunals;" *Ex Parte Quirin*; *Hamdi v. Rumsfeld*; Peter Woll, "Constitutional Democracy and Bureaucratic Power;" James Q. Wilson, "The Rise of the Bureaucratic State"), pp. 287-302, 313-326, 331-363  
Memorandum for Alberto R. Gonzales, Counsel to the President from U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Legal Counsel, August 1, 2002 (available at <http://www2.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB127/02.08.01.pdf>)

Recommended: Alan Dershowitz, *Why Terrorism Works: Understanding the Threat, Responding to the Challenge* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)  
Lowi et al., chapters 6-7, pp. 220-309  
Rachel Meeropol, ed., *America's Disappeared: Secret Imprisonment, Detainees, and the 'War on Terror'* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2005)  
Richard Neustadt, *Presidential Power and the Modern President* 6th Ed.

November 15 TO 'MAKE' OR 'INTERPRET' LAW?: THE FEDERAL JUDICIARY  
Assignment: Hudson, chapter 2, "The Second Challenge: The Imperial Judiciary," pp. 63-99  
Woll, selections 68-72 (excerpts from Alexander Hamilton, Federalist 78; *Marbury v. Madison*; John P. Roche, "Judicial Self-Restraint;" William J. Brennan, "How the Supreme Court Arrives at Decisions;" Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, "Constitutional Liberty and the Right to Abortion;" Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, "Liberty, Privacy, and the Right to Abortion;" Justice Antonin Scalia, "Liberty and Abortion: A Strict Constructionist's View"), pp. 417-444  
David J. Garrow, "The Rehnquist Reins," *The New York Times Magazine* (October 6, 1996)

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 8, pp. 312-359  
Cornell Clayton and Howard Gillman, eds., *Supreme Court Decision-Making: New Institutional Approaches* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999)  
David M. O'Brien, *Storm Center: The Supreme Court in American Politics* 6th Ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2002)

### 3. Political processes and linkages between government and politics

November 17 WHITHER POLITICAL PARTIES?  
Assignment: Woll, selections 30-35 (excerpts include James Madison, Federalist 10; E. E. Schattschneider, "Party Government;" *California Democratic Party et al. v. Jones, Secretary of State of California, et al.*; APSA Report "Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System;" Martin P. Wattenberg, "Perspectives on American Political Parties"), pp. 175-192  
Nelson, chapters 1, 2, 8 (Michael Nelson, "The Setting: George W. Bush, Majority President; Barry C. Burden, "The Nominations: Technology, Money, and Transferable Momentum;" Gary Jacobson, "The Congress: The Structural Basis of Republican Success,"), pp. 1-68

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 11, pp. 462-501  
John Aldrich, *Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Political Parties in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995)

November 22 VOTING: DOES IT MATTER?  
Assignment: Hudson, chapter 4, "The Fourth Challenge: Citizen Participation," pp. 137-168  
Nelson, chapters 3, 4 (Gerald M. Pomper, "The Presidential Election: The Ills of American Politics After 9/11;" Nicole Mellow, "Voting Behavior: The 2004 Election and the Roots of Republican Success"), pp. 42-87

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 10, pp. 412-459

November 29 THE CAMPAIGN PROCESS

Assignment: Nelson, chapter 7 (Paul J. Quirk and Sean C. Matheson, "The Presidency: The 2004 Elections and the Prospects for Leadership"), pp. 133-162

Recommended: Joe McGuiness, *The Selling of the Presidency*  
Hunter S. Thompson, *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*

December 1 HOW THE MEDIA SHAPES POLITICS

Assignment: Noam Chomsky, *Media Control: The Spectacular Achievements of Propaganda* (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2002)  
Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Paul Waldman, *The Press Effect: Politicians, Journalists, and the Stories That Shape the Political World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), chapters TBA  
Nelson, chapter 5 (Matthew Robert Kerbel, "The Media: The Challenge and Promise of Internet Politics"), pp. 88-107

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 13, pp. 542-569  
Robert W. McChesney, *The Problem of the Media: U.S. Communication Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2004)

### ***Term paper due***

December 6 INTEREST GROUPS, PACS, MONEY AND CORRUPTION

Assignment: Nelson, chapters 6 (Marian Currinder, "Campaign Finance: Funding the Presidential and Congressional Elections"), pp. 108-132  
Woll, selections, 40-49 (excerpts include *Buckley v. Valeo*; *McConnell v. Federal Elections Commission*; Bradley A. Smith, "Unfree Speech: The Future of Regulatory 'Reform'"; Thomas E. Mann and Norman J. Ornstein, "Myths and Realities About the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002"; Jeffrey M. Berry, "Madison's Dilemma"; David B. Truman, "The Governmental Process"; John Kenneth Galbraith, "The Theory of Countervailing Power"; Theodore J. Lowi, "The End of Liberalism: The Indictment"; Mark J. Rozell and Clyde Wilcox, "Interest Groups and the American Political System" Larry J. Sabato, "The Misplaced Obsession with PACS;"), pp. 230-284

Recommended: Lowi et al., chapter 12, pp. 504-539

December 8 WHAT DO ELECTIONS TELL US ABOUT AMERICAN POLITICS?

Assignment: Fiorina, entire book  
Hudson, chapter 5, "The Fifth Challenge: Trivialized Elections," pp. 169-210  
Nelson, chapter 9 (Wilson Carey McWilliams, "The Meaning of the Election: Ownership and Citizenship in American Life"), pp. 187-213

Recommended: Thomas Frank, *What's the Matter With Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America* (Owl Books, 2005)  
Lowi et al., chapter 10, pp. 412-459  
David R. Mayhew, *Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)

**Date TBA FINAL EXAM**

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