



## Basics of American Politics, The (13th Edition)

By Gary Wasserman



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**This brief, nuts-and-bolts introduction to American government has been a student favorite and a bestseller for over 30 years because of its lively, straight-forward approach to the basics, its brevity, and its always inexpensive price.**

This text uses a dynamic game metaphor to engage students in the basics of the American political system and the contact sport of politics. Beginning with a clear definition of politics, it introduces four governmental and four nongovernmental “players” who must abide by the “rules of the game” established by the Constitution and civil liberties. It ends by examining rival theories of who wins and who loses in American politics. Written to engage students and lay a flexible foundation for instructors, *The Basics of American Politics* covers all the terms and topics behind the current news, situating politics in the classroom and beyond.



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## **Basics of American Politics, The (13th Edition) By Gary Wasserman Bibliography**

- Sales Rank: #2004263 in Books
- Published on: 2007-07-12
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.14" h x .64" w x 6.36" l, 1.04 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 320 pages

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### Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

#### Features:

- The **brief and inexpensive text** is an excellent choice for instructors who want to incorporate other material—articles, readers, novels—into their course, but also ensure that their students still get the basics.
  - **Boxed stories** present engaging anecdotes and promote critical thinking on the American political system. Topics include including President Bush’s Unconservative Approach to Federalism; The Nasty Case of Jack Abramoff, TV’s Impact on Presidential Conventions; The Revival of Affirmative Action in the University of Michigan Case; The Presidential Leadership Style on Iraq; The Decline of Courtesy on the Hill; Free Speech Bake Sales on Campus, How a Chief Justice Cracked the Liberty Bell, and Federalism at 55 MPH.
  - **“Case Studies”** in each chapter allow students to apply concepts to real-life scenarios and enhance their understanding of material. These range from "The History of Separate But Equal" to "A Day in the Life of a Woman Candidate for the Senate."
  - **“Wrap Up,” “Thought Questions,”** and **“Suggested Readings”** at the end of every chapter aid discussion and promote further study for students interested in the topics discussed. New suggested books include Red Over Blue on the 2004 elections; and Bob Woodward’s 2006 blockbuster, State of Denial.
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#### New to this Edition:

- Completely updated coverage through the 2006 midterm elections, including their impact on the Republican realignment, the heated partisan divisions over policies both here and abroad, the role of national security, lobbying corruption, and religion, and the political parties’ vigorous turnout efforts.
- Discussion of the new Roberts Court sums up the Rehnquist legacy and assesses its impact on the nation. A Box on the "New Chief Umpire," John Roberts, analyzes the first term of the new court and its likely direction. Discussion also covers the recent confirmation battles of two new justices and why the Court may or may not change as much as expected.
- Analysis of the Hurricane Katrina Disaster includes a case study analyzing how all three levels of government mismanaged efforts to rescue and repair New Orleans in the days following the storm and flood.
- Expanded discussion of civil liberties and terrorism brings to life the continuing tension within the government and in American public opinion on the proper balance between prosecuting terrorism and protecting liberties. New coverage explores NSA wiretapping, the media’s use of leaks, Congress’s debate over renewing the Patriot Act, Civil Liberties and Cartoons on Campus, and Congress’ recent agreement to overlook habeas corpus. A case study shows the courts guarding these liberties in terrorist cases and offers a historian’s perspective on the place of 9/11 in American history.
- Fresh accounts of national security issues and how they have been handled by the president, congress and the media include conflicting media images of the war in Iraq, the White House spin on damaging intelligence revelations include the findings of the 9/11 Commission — and the central role of Vice President Cheney.
- Continued emphasis on lobbying looks closely at the role of lobbyists in our political system and analyzes the debate over their influence on policy-making. It traces the rise in power of this much publicized actor in our political system, the continuing importance of money in campaigning, the present Abramoff

corruption cases, and the tepid efforts at reform.

## **Users Review**

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