



# The American Anomaly: U.S. Politics and Government in Comparative Perspective

By Raymond A. Smith

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## The American Anomaly: U.S. Politics and Government in Comparative Perspective By Raymond A. Smith

Seymour Martin Lipset pronounced over a decade ago, "Someone who knows only one country knows no country." It is well established that students learn the intricacies of American politics better when they are presented in a comparative context. In today's globalized society and workforce, it is all the more important for students to understand that the American political system is in many ways the exception and not the rule. Introductory textbooks on American government, however, rarely emphasize in sufficient depth how the United States compares to other political systems. And introductions to comparative politics infrequently situate the United States in their analysis.

*The American Anomaly* systematically analyzes the U.S. political system by way of comparison with other countries, especially other industrialized democracies. It is organized into four sections, respectively covering the constitutional order, governmental institutions, political participation, and public policy. Extended case studies in each chapter draw on all the major regions of the world.

Thoroughly revised throughout, the third edition includes:

- Updates throughout to reflect recent developments, including battles for control of Congress and the White House in 2010 and 2012, the challenges and successes of the Obama presidency, and political developments including the rise of the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street.
- The addition of a ready-reference glossary defining key terms, along with a key terms list at the end of each chapter.
- Updates to examples from other countries, such as changes to the European Union in light of the Eurozone crisis, the weakening of the Mexican state due to surges in drug-related crime, and the growth of China's global role.
- A substantive update to the domestic policy and foreign policy chapters.
- A significant update on online/web-based activism, with particular regard to the expanding role of social media.
- New tables and charts in each chapter.
- A companion website also offers overview slides, links, and other supporting

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#### Review

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?Robert Y. Shapiro, *Columbia University*

#### About the Author

**Raymond A. Smith, Ph.D.** is an adjunct assistant professor of political science at Columbia University and New York University and a Senior Fellow with the Progressive Policy Institute. He is author of *Importing Democracy: Ideas from around the World to Reform and Revitalize U.S. Politics and Government*.

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