Ln 1: How Can We Study Politics Scientifically?

• Politics
  ◦ A process where public values are debated,
  ◦ political actors cooperate and struggle for power
  ◦ Policy judgements are made and implemented (outcome)
  ◦ Harold Lasswell: politics = Who gets what, when, and how
  ◦ Distribution of resources (money, land), rights and power

• Science
  ◦ Systematic search for knowledge
  ◦ Theory -> hypothesis -> data

• Poli Sci = systematic study of politics
• Study politics systematically
  ◦ Core concepts
  ◦ Sub-disciplines
  ◦ Normative vs. empirical approaches

• Primary goal of Poli Sci
  ◦ To produce knowledge about politics

n 2: Core Concepts in Political Science

• 3 core concepts
  ◦ Power
    ◦ Political, legal, economic, military, social or moral ability of one political actor to get another political actor to do or not to do something
      ◦ Law enforcement
• Gov over citizens
• Citizens over gov (democracy)
• States against other states
  ○ Sovereignty
    • A national gov's being boss on its own turf; the last word in law in that country
    • Sovereignty = ruler
      • Queen or King (Monarchy)
      • People (democracy)
    • Legislation in a democracy
    • International territorial disputes
  ○ Legitimacy
    • The general acceptance by political actors and citizens that gov actions are appropriate and fully accepted
    • Who has a right to power, when, and how?
      ▪ Decisions are made fair and properly (election)
      ▪ Boston Tea Party (Not fair, not legitimate)
      ▪ Arab Spring (Power was used in an illegitimate way, material needs not met, then uprising)
    • Sovereignty is about who rules in a country and legitimacy is about whether that rule is accepted by the people

Ln 3: Sub-disciplines of Political Science
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• 4 major subdisciplines
Political theory (philosophy) (oldest discipline in poli sci, ask "should" questions)
- How should society and gov be organized?
- How did people answer this question in the past? (historical perspective)

American politics (one case within comparative politics)
- How do Political Institutions affect decision-making by gov officials? (institutional)
- What factors affect the Political Behavior or ordinary Americans? (behavioral)
- What is the role of interest groups and civil society in politics? (elites)

Comparative politics (compart countries to each other)
- How do institutional and cultural differences across countries affect the practice of politics?
- What factors lead dictatorships to transition to democracy and vice versa?

International politics (relations)
• How do states (countries) relate to each other?
• How does politics work across national borders?
• What are the causes and consequences of war/treaties/ alliances?
• Discipline: a broad area of study, usually defined by a common topic or methodology
  ○ University departments
• Subdiscipline (subfield): a division within a discipline that examines a particular set of topics and/or uses a particular set of methodologies
  ○ Political philosophy
  ○ Social psychology
  ○ Behavioral economics

Ln 4: Political Philosophy and Empirical Political Science
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• Normative political science (What are we aiming towards, what are we trying to achieve)
  ○ Ask should questions
    • Who should have power?
    • What limits should there be on power?
    • Prescriptive
  ○ Political theory/philosophy
• Empirical political science (how do we get there)
• Ask **how/why** questions
  • Based on observable evidence
  • **How** is power distributed?
  • **Why** is power distributed this way?
  • Descriptive and explanatory
• American, comparative and international politics

• Scientific vocab
  • Research cycle
    • Theory -> hypothesis -> data (repeat)
    • Theory: a set of systematic claims that attempt to generalize about a process or phenomenon
    • Hypothesis: a testable implication of a researcher's theory
    • Data: observable evidence (typically used to test a hypothesis)

• Complementary perspectives
  • E.g., power
    • Is there a problem? (fair or unfair?)
      • Need to know what the normative ideal is
      • Need to know what the current reality is (not what
the constitution says, we gotta test ephemeral things)

- Then we can judge how well they align
- What is the goal?
- what is the solution?
  - What we want to accomplish
  - How to achieve what we want to accomplish (set a goal and know how to get there)
  - Then put together a plan of how to get there
• 5 groups of thinkers
  i. Ancient (classical): Plato, Aristotle (4th 5th century BCE, Athens), St Augustine (late antiquity, 4th century Common Era)
  ii. Medieval: St Thomas Aquinas (the Middle Ages, 13th century)
  iii. Renaissance: Niccolo Machiavelli (Renaissance Florence, 16th century)
  iv. Social contract theorists: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau
  v. Modern: Edmund Burke, John Stuart Mill (18-19th century)

• 2 common questions:
  1. Why does govt exist?
     ▪ To guarantee justice in society
       □ Plato, Aristotle, Augustine all care about JUSTICE (Find from the readings what they 3 say about JUSTICE)
     ▪ To guarantee peace in society
       □ Augustine and Hobbes
         ◆ Conceptions: Human nature is war prone, evil and mean to each other. Human beings by nature in constant conflict, so we govt to maintain peace.
     ▪ To guarantee individual rights
       □ Aquinas (natural rights people have by nature), Locke (gov as essentially an agent as a set of institutions that guarantee rights), Burke (same as Locke)
     ▪ To represent individuals
       □ Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Burke and Mill
         ◆ Mill: representative gov that makes decision on behalf of everyone in the society
  2. What is the ideal political regime? (Identify the political regime, identify the work of the author where that regime is outlined)
     ▪ Relationship b/w gov and society (monarch or democratic?)

• Common threads
  ○ Constitutional gov (first comes up in the work of Aristotle)
    ▪ Aristotle, Aquinas, Machiavelli (social contract theorists), Burke (more modern thinker talking about constitutional gov, also a conservative)
  ○ Individual rights
    ▪ Aquinas, Locke, Burke, Mill
  ○ State of nature, social contract
    ▪ Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau (social contract theorists)
  ○ Representation: Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Mill
    ▪ Each one has idea about how everyone should be represented in a society
    ▪ Plato talks about diff classes of individuals, each one has a role to play
    ▪ Mill talks about majorities that need to be formed before a decision is made
• Ideal regimes
  o Plato: aristocracy
    ▪ Aristocracy modern: European nobility
    ▪ Aristocracy Plato: the rule of the BEST, BEST = Wisest
    ▪ Plato thinks the wisest people in the society should rule, wisdom is no.1, not money or honor
  o Aristotle: polity
    ▪ Polity is a mixed regime, is composed of two "bad" regimes: democracy and oligarchy (the rule of the few)
    ▪ Aristotle thinks democracy is BAD
    ▪ Polity is IDEAL bc there's checks and balances between the rule of the many and the rule of the few
  o Augustine: city of God
    ▪ He was a saint, also a theologian, his ideal regime is the city of God which is a utopia that people will never be able to live in, everyone is fair and just to each other, harmony.
  o St Aquinas: rule of law
    ▪ He was also a saint of Catholic church, he thought rules were very important, Basic rules were necessary for people and gov.
  o Machiavelli: virtuous republic
    ▪ Big theme: ideal of a virtuous republic of civic virtue, both the elites and the people are virtuous, they do things for the common good instead of their own individual gain
  o Hobbes: government that guarantees collective security
    ▪ Gov exists to make sure people are civil to each other, not afraid of each other.
    ▪ The gov guarantees security and social peace
  o Locke: gov that safeguards individual rights
    ▪ Make sure everyone's rights are guaranteed
  o Rousseau: gov that serves the general will
    ▪ Every political community has a will, a collective will, that is the purpose of the gov to serve that will
    ▪ Rousseau is much more concerned with basic and fundamental and homogeneous things than Locke
  o Burke: a regime that changes slowly
    ▪ There should be rules and rights that change gradually
  o Mill: representative constitutional gov
    ▪ An ideal gov is where majority people make decisions, that guarantee the greatest happiness in the society
    ▪ His idea reflects practical necessity that it's not possible for everyone to be involved in decision making all the time
• Social contract theorists
  ○ Social contract theory dominated political thinking during the 17th and 18th centuries

• 3 social contract theorists
  a. Thomas Hobbs (British)
  b. John Locke (British)
  c. Jean Jacques Rousseau (Swiss)

• Common threads
  ○ State of nature
    ■ The natural state of human beings before gov exists
  ○ Social contract
    ■ Agreement bw society (people) and the gov
    ■ Society agrees to accept the authority of the gov, bc gov serves a higher purpose
    ■ People think they can get benefit out of it by obeying the gov
  ○ The 3 theorists all believe these 2 common threads but they interpret them differently
    ■ Hobbes
      □ State of nature: a state of war of "every man against every man"
        ◆ Human beings are very hostile to each other
      □ Social contract: creates a sovereign that imposes order in society
        ◆ Create social order bc humans are by nature evil and mean
    ■ Locke
      □ State of nature: people have natural inalienable rights to life, liberty and property
      □ Social contract: people give gov the right to protect their individual rights
    ■ Rousseau
      □ State of nature: people live completely free from physical repression and needs of modern society
        ◆ In the state of freedom, the people as a collective entity to form the "general will", the constant long-term will of the people
        ◆ Some countries may favor security more, some favor democracy more. They all have certain cultural characteristics, certain attitudes towards political systems. Gov needs to listen what the political community wants and serve the interests of those people.
        ◆ He treats the people of the sovereign as the sovereign, gov is the servant of people bc people is the sovereign, opposite from Hobbes' theory