

To “analyze” means to break into components and understand. But new readers find modern mathematical theories of politics so inaccessible that analysis is difficult: Where does one start? *Analytical Politics* is an introduction to analytical theories of politics, explicitly designed for undergraduate classes and for the professional interested in an overview.

Almost all existing work in analytical political theory takes a behavioral perspective, seeking to explain how people act. *Analytical Politics* tries to explain why societies take the political decisions they do and focuses on evaluating these decisions.

We cannot evaluate how well governments perform without some baseline for comparison: What should governments be doing? This book focuses on the role of the “center” in politics, drawing from the classical political theories of Aristotle, Hobbes, Rousseau, and others. The main questions in *Analytical Politics* involve the existence and stability of the center: When does it exist? When should the center guide policy? How do alternative voting rules help in discovering the center? An understanding of the work reviewed here is essential for anyone who hopes to evaluate the performance or predict the actions of democratic governments.

Analytical politics

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