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American Politics: A Very Short Introduction

By Richard M. Valelly

Oxford University Press Inc. Paperback. Book Condition: new. BRAND NEW, American Politics: A Very Short Introduction, Richard M. Valelly, This book introduces the vital elements of American politics, emphasizing how these elements have evolved into the form they take today. By using a historical-institutional approach to the various parts of American politics, Valelly communicates that the American political system is, and always has been, a work in progress—one unfolding within, and also constantly updating, an eighteenth-century constitutional framework. Valelly begins by asking what Americans want from their politics and answers with a four-part analysis: (1) the politics of "peace and prosperity," (2) the sometimes illiberal politics of conformity and Americanization, (3) the politics of large-scale problem-solving (e.g., the abolition of slavery) and "perfection of the Union," and (4) the deep public desire for constitutional continuity. The last item provides the organizational framework/theme for the rest of the book. Additional chapters treat parties and polarization (stressing that contemporary polarization reinforces constitutional persistence because it provides for a mix of policy immobility and power-sharing between parties that bitterly disagree); a survey of the basic institutions: the Presidency, Congress, the judicial branch, the unelected bureaucracy of the independent agencies, and state and local...



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Reviews

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