

POLITICAL GAME THEORY

POLITICAL GAME THEORY IS A CRITICAL ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK USED TO UNDERSTAND STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS AMONG POLITICAL ACTORS, INCLUDING GOVERNMENTS, POLITICIANS, VOTERS, AND INTEREST GROUPS. THIS MULTIDISCIPLINARY APPROACH COMBINES CONCEPTS FROM ECONOMICS, POLITICAL SCIENCE, AND MATHEMATICS TO MODEL AND PREDICT POLITICAL BEHAVIOR AND OUTCOMES. BY APPLYING GAME-THEORETIC PRINCIPLES, SCHOLARS AND PRACTITIONERS CAN ANALYZE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES IN ELECTIONS, LEGISLATIVE BARGAINING, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, AND POLICY FORMULATION. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY LIES IN ITS ABILITY TO REVEAL THE INCENTIVES, STRATEGIES, AND POTENTIAL COALITIONS THAT SHAPE POLITICAL DYNAMICS. THIS ARTICLE EXPLORES THE FOUNDATIONS, APPLICATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY, HIGHLIGHTING ITS ROLE IN BOTH THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL POLITICAL ANALYSIS. KEY THEMES INCLUDE STRATEGIC VOTING, COALITION FORMATION, AND THE DESIGN OF POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS WILL PROVIDE A DETAILED OVERVIEW OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY'S CORE CONCEPTS, ITS MAIN MODELS, AND REAL-WORLD APPLICATIONS IN VARIOUS POLITICAL CONTEXTS.

- FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY
- KEY MODELS AND CONCEPTS IN POLITICAL GAME THEORY
- APPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY IN ELECTORAL POLITICS
- POLITICAL GAME THEORY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
- CHALLENGES AND CRITIQUES OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY

FOUNDATIONS OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY

POLITICAL GAME THEORY IS GROUNDED IN THE BROADER DISCIPLINE OF GAME THEORY, WHICH STUDIES STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING AMONG RATIONAL ACTORS. IN POLITICAL CONTEXTS, THESE ACTORS INCLUDE INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS WITH COMPETING INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES. THE FOUNDATION RESTS ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT POLITICAL AGENTS ACT STRATEGICALLY TO MAXIMIZE THEIR UTILITY, WHETHER IT BE VOTES, POWER, POLICY INFLUENCE, OR SECURITY. BY MODELING POLITICAL INTERACTIONS AS GAMES, POLITICAL GAME THEORY CAPTURES THE INTERDEPENDENCE OF CHOICES AND THE ANTICIPATION OF OPPONENTS' MOVES. THIS FRAMEWORK ALLOWS FOR SYSTEMATIC ANALYSIS OF COOPERATION, CONFLICT, NEGOTIATION, AND COMPETITION THAT CHARACTERIZE POLITICAL ENVIRONMENTS.

RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY UNDERPINS POLITICAL GAME THEORY BY ASSUMING THAT POLITICAL ACTORS MAKE DECISIONS BASED ON A RATIONAL EVALUATION OF COSTS AND BENEFITS. THIS ASSUMPTION FACILITATES THE DEVELOPMENT OF PREDICTIVE MODELS FOR VOTING BEHAVIOR, LEGISLATIVE DECISIONS, AND ALLIANCE FORMATION. POLITICAL GAME THEORY EXTENDS RATIONAL CHOICE BY INCORPORATING STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS SUCH AS SIGNALING, BLUFFING, AND COALITION-BUILDING, REFLECTING THE COMPLEXITY OF POLITICAL INTERACTIONS.

TYPES OF GAMES IN POLITICAL CONTEXTS

SEVERAL TYPES OF GAMES ARE COMMONLY USED IN POLITICAL GAME THEORY TO MODEL DIFFERENT SCENARIOS:

- **COOPERATIVE GAMES:** FOCUS ON COALITION FORMATION AND COLLECTIVE ACTION AMONG POLITICAL ACTORS.
- **NON-COOPERATIVE GAMES:** ANALYZE COMPETITION AND CONFLICT WHERE BINDING AGREEMENTS ARE NOT ENFORCEABLE.
- **SEQUENTIAL GAMES:** CONSIDER MOVES MADE IN ORDER, ALLOWING FOR STRATEGIC ANTICIPATION.
- **SIMULTANEOUS GAMES:** ASSUME ACTORS CHOOSE STRATEGIES SIMULTANEOUSLY WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF OTHERS' CHOICES.

KEY MODELS AND CONCEPTS IN POLITICAL GAME THEORY

POLITICAL GAME THEORY EMPLOYS A VARIETY OF MODELS AND CONCEPTS TO CAPTURE THE STRATEGIC NATURE OF POLITICAL INTERACTIONS. THESE MODELS PROVIDE INSIGHTS INTO HOW POLITICAL ACTORS FORMULATE STRATEGIES UNDER UNCERTAINTY AND COMPETITION. KEY CONCEPTS SUCH AS NASH EQUILIBRIUM, CREDIBLE COMMITMENTS, AND SIGNALING ARE CENTRAL TO UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL STRATEGIES AND OUTCOMES.

NASH EQUILIBRIUM IN POLITICAL STRATEGY

THE NASH EQUILIBRIUM REPRESENTS A SET OF STRATEGIES IN WHICH NO PLAYER CAN IMPROVE THEIR OUTCOME BY UNILATERALLY CHANGING THEIR STRATEGY, GIVEN THE STRATEGIES OF OTHERS. IN POLITICAL GAME THEORY, THIS CONCEPT HELPS EXPLAIN STABLE POLITICAL OUTCOMES WHERE ACTORS' STRATEGIES ARE MUTUALLY BEST RESPONSES. FOR EXAMPLE, IN LEGISLATIVE BARGAINING, A NASH EQUILIBRIUM MAY REPRESENT A POLICY AGREEMENT WHERE NO PARTY BENEFITS FROM DEVIATION.

SIGNALING AND CREDIBLE COMMITMENTS

SIGNALING INVOLVES CONVEYING INFORMATION TO OTHER POLITICAL ACTORS TO INFLUENCE THEIR BELIEFS AND ACTIONS. POLITICAL ACTORS OFTEN USE SIGNALS TO DEMONSTRATE STRENGTH, RESOLVE, OR INTENTIONS. CREDIBLE COMMITMENTS REFER TO PROMISES OR THREATS THAT ARE BELIEVABLE AND ENFORCEABLE WITHIN THE POLITICAL CONTEXT. THESE CONCEPTS ARE ESSENTIAL IN NEGOTIATIONS, DETERRENCE, AND COALITION FORMATION.

SPATIAL MODELS AND VOTING GAMES

SPATIAL MODELS IN POLITICAL GAME THEORY REPRESENT POLITICAL PREFERENCES ALONG ONE OR MORE IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS. VOTING GAMES ANALYZE HOW INDIVIDUAL PREFERENCES AND STRATEGIC VOTING BEHAVIOR INFLUENCE ELECTORAL OUTCOMES. THESE MODELS HELP EXPLAIN PHENOMENA SUCH AS MEDIAN VOTER THEOREM, STRATEGIC CANDIDACY, AND VOTE SPLITTING.

APPLICATIONS OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY IN ELECTORAL POLITICS

POLITICAL GAME THEORY PROVIDES VALUABLE INSIGHTS INTO ELECTORAL COMPETITION, CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES, AND VOTER BEHAVIOR. BY MODELING ELECTIONS AS STRATEGIC GAMES, ANALYSTS CAN PREDICT CANDIDATE POSITIONING, COALITION BUILDING, AND VOTER TURNOUT DYNAMICS. THIS APPLICATION IS VITAL FOR UNDERSTANDING DEMOCRATIC PROCESSES AND ELECTORAL SYSTEM DESIGN.

STRATEGIC VOTING AND ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

STRATEGIC VOTING OCCURS WHEN VOTERS CAST BALLOTS NOT SOLELY BASED ON PREFERENCE BUT TO INFLUENCE THE ELECTION OUTCOME. POLITICAL GAME THEORY EXPLAINS HOW DIFFERENT ELECTORAL SYSTEMS, SUCH AS PLURALITY OR PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION, AFFECT INCENTIVES FOR STRATEGIC VOTING. UNDERSTANDING THESE INCENTIVES HELPS CLARIFY VOTER BEHAVIOR AND THE STABILITY OF ELECTORAL OUTCOMES.

CANDIDATE COMPETITION AND POLICY PLATFORMS

CANDIDATES IN ELECTIONS STRATEGICALLY CHOOSE POLICY PLATFORMS TO MAXIMIZE VOTER SUPPORT. GAME-THEORETIC MODELS ANALYZE HOW CANDIDATES POSITION THEMSELVES RELATIVE TO OPPONENTS, OFTEN CONVERGING TOWARD THE MEDIAN VOTER OR DIFFERENTIATING TO MOBILIZE SPECIFIC CONSTITUENCIES. THESE DYNAMICS ILLUSTRATE THE ROLE OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY IN SHAPING CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES.

COALITION FORMATION IN MULTI-PARTY SYSTEMS

IN POLITICAL SYSTEMS WITH MULTIPLE PARTIES, COALITION FORMATION BECOMES A CRITICAL STRATEGIC PROCESS. POLITICAL GAME THEORY MODELS THE BARGAINING AND ALLIANCE-BUILDING EFFORTS PARTIES UNDERTAKE TO ACHIEVE GOVERNING MAJORITIES. THESE MODELS IDENTIFY FACTORS INFLUENCING COALITION STABILITY AND POLICY COMPROMISES.

POLITICAL GAME THEORY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

POLITICAL GAME THEORY EXTENDS BEYOND DOMESTIC POLITICS INTO THE REALM OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, WHERE STATES AND NON-STATE ACTORS ENGAGE IN STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS INVOLVING CONFLICT, COOPERATION, AND NEGOTIATION. THIS APPLICATION HELPS EXPLAIN PHENOMENA SUCH AS ALLIANCES, DETERRENCE, AND BARGAINING IN GLOBAL POLITICS.

DETERRENCE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

DETERRENCE THEORY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS UTILIZES GAME THEORY TO UNDERSTAND HOW STATES PREVENT CONFLICTS THROUGH CREDIBLE THREATS OF RETALIATION. POLITICAL GAME THEORY MODELS SUCH INTERACTIONS AS STRATEGIC GAMES WHERE THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF WAR AND PEACE ARE CAREFULLY WEIGHED. THESE MODELS PROVIDE INSIGHT INTO NUCLEAR DETERRENCE, ARMS RACES, AND CRISIS MANAGEMENT.

NEGOTIATION AND TREATY FORMATION

INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS OVER TREATIES, TRADE AGREEMENTS, AND SECURITY PACTS ARE MODELED USING GAME THEORY TO IDENTIFY OPTIMAL STRATEGIES AND POSSIBLE OUTCOMES. POLITICAL GAME THEORY SHEDS LIGHT ON HOW STATES MAKE CREDIBLE COMMITMENTS, SIGNAL INTENTIONS, AND OVERCOME COLLECTIVE ACTION PROBLEMS IN THE GLOBAL ARENA.

ALLIANCE DYNAMICS AND BALANCE OF POWER

ALLIANCES BETWEEN STATES ARE STRATEGIC TOOLS TO BALANCE POWER AND SECURE INTERESTS. POLITICAL GAME THEORY ANALYZES HOW ALLIANCES FORM, PERSIST, OR DISSOLVE BASED ON SHIFTING INCENTIVES AND THREATS. THESE MODELS

HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF TRUST, REPUTATION, AND STRATEGIC CALCULATION IN MAINTAINING INTERNATIONAL STABILITY.

CHALLENGES AND CRITIQUES OF POLITICAL GAME THEORY

DESPITE ITS UTILITY, POLITICAL GAME THEORY FACES SEVERAL CHALLENGES AND CRITICISMS REGARDING ITS ASSUMPTIONS AND APPLICABILITY. UNDERSTANDING THESE LIMITATIONS IS ESSENTIAL FOR A NUANCED USE OF THE THEORY IN POLITICAL ANALYSIS.

ASSUMPTIONS OF RATIONALITY AND INFORMATION

ONE MAJOR CRITIQUE IS THE ASSUMPTION OF PERFECT RATIONALITY AND COMPLETE INFORMATION, WHICH MAY NOT HOLD IN COMPLEX POLITICAL ENVIRONMENTS. POLITICAL ACTORS OFTEN FACE COGNITIVE BIASES, INCOMPLETE KNOWLEDGE, AND UNPREDICTABLE BEHAVIOR, COMPLICATING THE PREDICTIVE POWER OF GAME-THEORETIC MODELS.

COMPLEXITY AND MODEL LIMITATIONS

POLITICAL INTERACTIONS CAN INVOLVE NUMEROUS ACTORS, DIVERSE PREFERENCES, AND DYNAMIC CONTEXTS, MAKING MODELS OVERLY SIMPLISTIC OR COMPUTATIONALLY INTRACTABLE. THE CHALLENGE LIES IN BALANCING MODEL TRACTABILITY WITH REAL-WORLD COMPLEXITY TO PRODUCE MEANINGFUL INSIGHTS.

NORMATIVE CONCERNS AND ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS

POLITICAL GAME THEORY PRIMARILY FOCUSES ON STRATEGIC CALCULATION, SOMETIMES NEGLECTING NORMATIVE CONSIDERATIONS SUCH AS JUSTICE, FAIRNESS, OR DEMOCRATIC VALUES. CRITICS ARGUE THAT AN EXCLUSIVE FOCUS ON STRATEGY MAY OVERLOOK ETHICAL DIMENSIONS CRUCIAL TO POLITICAL DECISION-MAKING.

SUMMARY OF KEY CRITIQUES

- OVERRELIANCE ON RATIONAL ACTOR MODELS
- DIFFICULTY IN CAPTURING INCOMPLETE OR ASYMMETRIC INFORMATION
- CHALLENGES IN MODELING MULTI-DIMENSIONAL AND DYNAMIC POLITICAL ENVIRONMENTS
- LIMITED ATTENTION TO NORMATIVE AND ETHICAL FACTORS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHAT IS POLITICAL GAME THEORY?

POLITICAL GAME THEORY IS THE APPLICATION OF GAME THEORY PRINCIPLES TO ANALYZE AND PREDICT THE STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS BETWEEN POLITICAL ACTORS, SUCH AS GOVERNMENTS, PARTIES, AND VOTERS, IN VARIOUS POLITICAL

SITUATIONS.

How Does Political Game Theory Help in Understanding Elections?

POLITICAL GAME THEORY HELPS IN UNDERSTANDING ELECTIONS BY MODELING THE STRATEGIC BEHAVIOR OF CANDIDATES AND VOTERS, INCLUDING CAMPAIGN STRATEGIES, COALITION FORMATION, AND VOTING BEHAVIOR, TO PREDICT ELECTION OUTCOMES AND STRATEGIC MOVES.

What Are Common Game Theory Models Used in Political Science?

COMMON GAME THEORY MODELS USED IN POLITICAL SCIENCE INCLUDE THE PRISONER'S DILEMMA, THE CHICKEN GAME, COORDINATION GAMES, AND BARGAINING MODELS, WHICH HELP ANALYZE COOPERATION, CONFLICT, NEGOTIATION, AND STRATEGIC DECISION-MAKING AMONG POLITICAL ACTORS.

Can Political Game Theory Explain International Relations?

YES, POLITICAL GAME THEORY CAN EXPLAIN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BY MODELING THE STRATEGIC INTERACTIONS BETWEEN COUNTRIES, SUCH AS ALLIANCE FORMATION, CONFLICT, TRADE NEGOTIATIONS, AND DETERRENCE STRATEGIES, PROVIDING INSIGHTS INTO COOPERATION AND COMPETITION ON THE GLOBAL STAGE.

What Role Does Signaling Play in Political Game Theory?

SIGNALING IN POLITICAL GAME THEORY INVOLVES POLITICAL ACTORS CONVEYING INFORMATION OR INTENTIONS THROUGH ACTIONS OR STATEMENTS TO INFLUENCE THE BELIEFS AND BEHAVIORS OF OTHER ACTORS, WHICH IS CRUCIAL IN NEGOTIATIONS, ELECTIONS, AND POLICY-MAKING TO GAIN STRATEGIC ADVANTAGES.

Additional Resources

1. *Game Theory and Political Theory: An Introduction*

THIS BOOK OFFERS A COMPREHENSIVE INTRODUCTION TO THE APPLICATION OF GAME THEORY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE. IT COVERS KEY CONCEPTS SUCH AS STRATEGIC VOTING, COALITION FORMATION, AND BARGAINING, MAKING COMPLEX IDEAS ACCESSIBLE TO NEWCOMERS. THE AUTHOR PROVIDES NUMEROUS REAL-WORLD EXAMPLES TO ILLUSTRATE HOW POLITICAL ACTORS USE STRATEGIC THINKING TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS.

2. *Strategic Interaction and Political Behavior*

FOCUSING ON THE STRATEGIC DIMENSIONS OF POLITICAL BEHAVIOR, THIS TEXT EXAMINES HOW POLITICIANS, VOTERS, AND INTEREST GROUPS INTERACT WITHIN COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENTS. IT EXPLORES VARIOUS GAME-THEORETIC MODELS TO ANALYZE DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND OUTCOMES IN ELECTIONS, NEGOTIATIONS, AND LEGISLATIVE BARGAINING. THE BOOK IS VALUABLE FOR READERS INTERESTED IN THE DYNAMIC INTERPLAY OF POLITICAL STRATEGIES.

3. *The Logic of Political Survival*

WRITTEN BY BRUCE BUENO DE MESQUITA AND COLLEAGUES, THIS INFLUENTIAL BOOK APPLIES GAME THEORY TO UNDERSTAND WHY POLITICAL LEADERS STAY IN POWER OR FALL FROM GRACE. IT INTRODUCES THE CONCEPT OF THE "SELECTORATE" AND USES FORMAL MODELS TO EXPLAIN THE INCENTIVES BEHIND POLITICAL DECISIONS. THE WORK BRIDGES THEORY AND EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS, PROVIDING INSIGHT INTO AUTOCRACIES, DEMOCRACIES, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

4. *Game Theory for Political Scientists*

THIS TEXT SERVES AS A PRACTICAL GUIDE TO APPLYING GAME THEORY CONCEPTS WITHIN POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH. IT COVERS FOUNDATIONAL TOPICS SUCH AS NASH EQUILIBRIUM, REPEATED GAMES, AND SIGNALING, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON POLITICAL APPLICATIONS LIKE ELECTORAL COMPETITION AND LEGISLATIVE BARGAINING. THE CLEAR EXPLANATIONS AND EXAMPLES MAKE IT SUITABLE FOR BOTH STUDENTS AND PRACTITIONERS.

5. *Political Game Theory: An Introduction*

OFFERING A DETAILED INTRODUCTION TO THE FIELD, THIS BOOK PRESENTS THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF GAME THEORY TAILORED TO POLITICAL ANALYSIS. IT DISCUSSES STRATEGIC VOTING, COALITION FORMATION, AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION,

SUPPORTED BY MATHEMATICAL MODELS AND CASE STUDIES. THE AUTHOR BALANCES THEORETICAL RIGOR WITH ACCESSIBILITY, MAKING IT A USEFUL RESOURCE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS.

6. *GAMES OF STRATEGY IN POLITICS*

THIS BOOK EXPLORES THE STRATEGIC UNDERPINNINGS OF POLITICAL CONFLICTS AND COOPERATION THROUGH THE LENS OF GAME THEORY. IT DELVES INTO TOPICS LIKE INTERNATIONAL NEGOTIATIONS, LEGISLATIVE BARGAINING, AND VOTING SYSTEMS, ILLUSTRATING HOW STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS SHAPE POLITICAL OUTCOMES. THE TEXT IS ENRICHED WITH EXAMPLES FROM CONTEMPORARY AND HISTORICAL POLITICAL EVENTS.

7. *POLITICAL GAMES: THE USE OF GAME THEORY IN POLITICAL SCIENCE*

A COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF HOW GAME THEORY HAS TRANSFORMED POLITICAL SCIENCE, THIS WORK TRACES THE DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIC MODELS IN THE FIELD. IT DISCUSSES VARIOUS APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING ELECTORAL COMPETITION, POLICY-MAKING, AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. THE BOOK ALSO ADDRESSES METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH.

8. *STRATEGIC POLITICAL COMMUNICATION: GAME THEORY IN PRACTICE*

THIS BOOK EXAMINES THE ROLE OF GAME THEORY IN UNDERSTANDING POLITICAL COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES. IT ANALYZES HOW POLITICIANS AND INTEREST GROUPS USE MESSAGING TO INFLUENCE PUBLIC OPINION AND OPPONENT BEHAVIOR. THROUGH GAME-THEORETIC FRAMEWORKS, THE AUTHOR SHEDS LIGHT ON MEDIA STRATEGIES, SIGNALING, AND INFORMATION MANIPULATION IN POLITICS.

9. *COALITION POLITICS AND GAME THEORY*

FOCUSING ON THE FORMATION AND STABILITY OF POLITICAL COALITIONS, THIS TEXT APPLIES GAME-THEORETIC MODELS TO UNDERSTAND COALITION DYNAMICS. IT COVERS BARGAINING, POWER DISTRIBUTION, AND THE STRATEGIC BEHAVIOR OF COALITION MEMBERS IN PARLIAMENTS AND GOVERNMENTS. THE BOOK COMBINES THEORETICAL INSIGHTS WITH EMPIRICAL DATA TO EXPLAIN COALITION SUCCESSES AND FAILURES.

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Political Game Theory is a self-contained introduction to game theory and its applications to political science. The book presents choice theory, social choice theory, static and dynamic games of complete information, static and dynamic games of incomplete information, repeated games, bargaining theory, mechanism design and a mathematical appendix covering, logic, real analysis, calculus and probability theory. The methods employed have many applications in various disciplines including comparative politics, international relations and American politics. Political Game Theory is tailored to students without extensive backgrounds in mathematics, and traditional economics, however there are also many special sections that present technical material that will appeal to more advanced students. A large number of exercises are also provided to practice the skills and techniques discussed.

political game theory: Game Theory for Political Scientists James D. Morrow, 2020-05-05
Game theory is the mathematical analysis of strategic interaction. In the fifty years since the appearance of von Neumann and Morgenstern's classic Theory of Games and Economic Behavior (Princeton, 1944), game theory has been widely applied to problems in economics. Until recently, however, its usefulness in political science has been underappreciated, in part because of the

technical difficulty of the methods developed by economists. James Morrow's book is the first to provide a standard text adapting contemporary game theory to political analysis. It uses a minimum of mathematics to teach the essentials of game theory and contains problems and their solutions suitable for advanced undergraduate and graduate students in all branches of political science. Morrow begins with classical utility and game theory and ends with current research on repeated games and games of incomplete information. The book focuses on noncooperative game theory and its application to international relations, political economy, and American and comparative politics. Special attention is given to models of four topics: bargaining, legislative voting rules, voting in mass elections, and deterrence. An appendix reviews relevant mathematical techniques. Brief bibliographic essays at the end of each chapter suggest further readings, graded according to difficulty. This rigorous but accessible introduction to game theory will be of use not only to political scientists but also to psychologists, sociologists, and others in the social sciences.

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