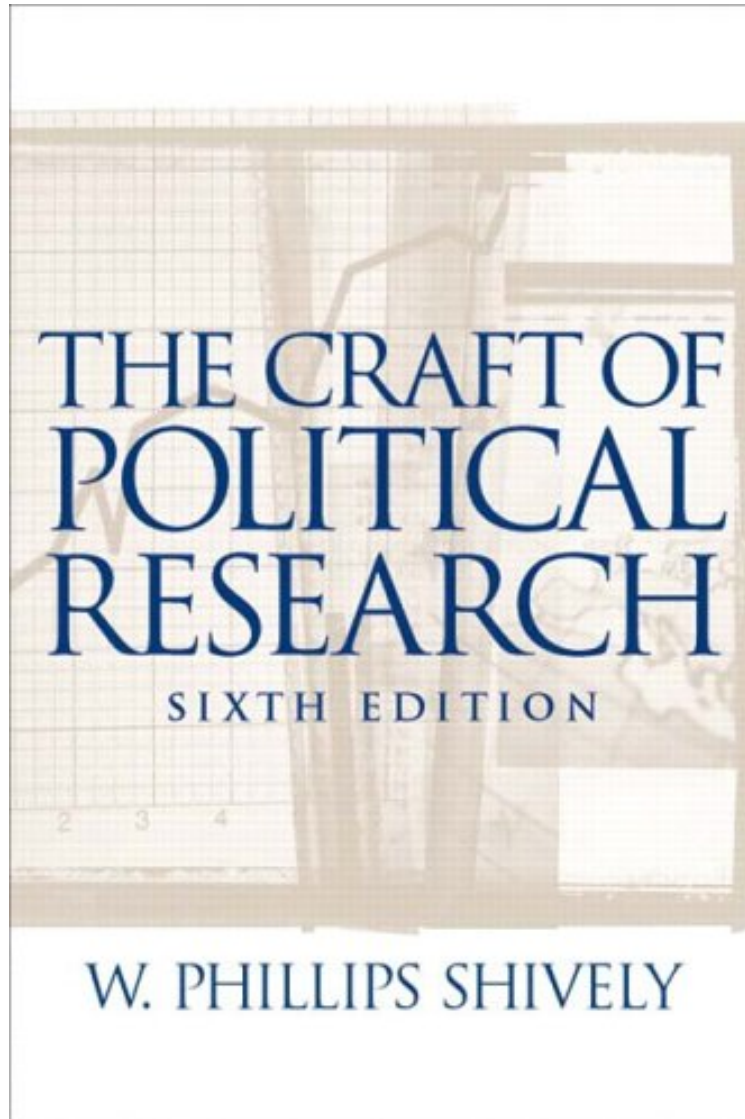


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Phillips W Shively

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the following review helpful. An Excellent Primer for Political Research, but of Limited Use for Those Working at Higher Research Levels By Matthew P. Arsenault Shively provides an excellent primer for budding social scientists beginning to conduct their own political research. Shively starts at the beginning, explaining the history of political science and the numerous theories and paradigms that characterize our field. From here he branches off into the more specific techniques of political research, i.e. formal theory, and normative philosophy, and the particular usefulness of each approach. Building upon this base, Shively emphasizes the importance of correctly operationalizing variables, namely through validity and precision. His useful examples illustrate the differences in the concepts and why such careful consideration is imperative in political research. Additionally, Shively adequately covers the importance of case selection and briefly touches on statistical methods. All though it is impossible to give a thorough explanation of quantitative methods in a primer, it would have been helpful for Shively to go into greater depth on the subject. As stated above, the work is an excellent primer for those beginning research. However, it is of limited use to those who are undertaking a more extensive research task. It would serve as an excellent text for upper level undergraduate courses, graduate students may need something with a little more meat.

The Craft of Political Research immerses readers not only in how political scientists work but also in how ideas produce research questions and guide the selection of research methods. Emphasizing the internal logic of research methods and the collaborative nature of the research process, this slender text explores the design behind interesting questions, problems in measurement and analysis, and key statistical methods. Brief and inexpensive to include in any course, The Craft of Political Research's elegant explanations inspire a big picture understanding of how political scientists explain political reality and encourage students to create their own inventive, original, and bold research work. Features include: Focuses on the big picture of how good research leads to good theories instead of just what research method to use. Provides concise and accessible coverage of key topics, including the nature of research, research design, sampling, statistical analysis, ethics, and more. Includes detailed examples of classic and contemporary political science research to give students models for their own original research.

The Craft of Political Research is just what one hopes for in an undergraduate methods course. It is more theoretically engaged than most such texts, and the conceptual discussion is non-sectarian. Marx and Duverger make an appearance; so do Mancur Olson and Anthony Downs; so do Philip Converse and Robert Putnam. Students will learn that ideas matter, not the statistical software; and they will see that theoretical narrowness is the antithesis of good science. from Christopher H. Achen's Foreword From the Publisher This introduction to the conception and pursuit of a research project emphasizes the design of interesting research questions and basic problems of measurement and data analysis. From the Back Cover This warm and accessible book makes a very basic introduction to the nature of research questions and methods of empirical research in political science. It aims to have readers understand why a particular method is chosen, beyond just what method to choose and communicates not only how to conduct research, but how interesting and exciting original research can be. Chapter topics emphasize the internal logic of empirical measurement and analysis of observations in the conception and pursuit of a research project. Emphasizing the design of interesting research questions and basic problems of measurement and data analysis, this book relies more on intuitive understanding than on formal development. For individuals interested in political science research methods.