Abstract: Acknowledging that the political scientist wanting to explore Arkansas government and politics is often frustrated by the lack of sources and data, the author presents a wideranging guide to little known materials. There are a few general reference works, such as the Historical Report of the Secretary of State, and a half-dozen bibliographies and document listings. Numerous documents of more narrow focus are noted, available from various executive, legislative, and judicial offices as well as from university groups and historical societies. The author also offers a syllabus for a course in Arkansas politics, drawing upon a number of the sources cited and focusing on the dramatic change believed to have characterized Arkansas politics in recent years.

Political scientists are supposed to write journal articles for the purpose of illuminating rather than advocating. In exceptional circumstances, however — and surely the first issue of the Arkansas Political Science Journal is a unique occasion — advocacy may be appropriate. This article is written with an admitted purpose: that of encouraging more research and teaching about Arkansas politics. At this writing, almost every aspect of Arkansas government and politics awaits our discipline’s attention, a situation which creates both discouraging problems (elusive data, haphazard collections of research materials, a dearth of good contemporary sources) and exhilarating possibilities (contribution, exploration, adventure). Perhaps a brief guide to existing materials and a suggested course syllabus will encourage others to join those of us who have been wandering in the largely untracked wilderness of Arkansas politics.
The Study of Arkansas Politics

The task of locating useful information about Arkansas government and politics has been, until recently, monumentally frustrating. There has been no true State Library; there has been no authoritative bibliographic control of state publications; and there has been little analysis of Arkansas's political institutions by political scientists. Fortunately, some very recent developments promise dramatic improvements on all fronts in the near future.

In 1979, the Arkansas Library Commission moved into a spacious new building on the Capitol Grounds in Little Rock, and was reconstituted by Act 489 of the Arkansas Legislature as the Arkansas State Library. Even more important from a research standpoint, Section 8 of that Act provides that the Arkansas State Library "shall become the official depository for State and local documents" and "shall create and maintain a State and Local Government Publications Clearinghouse." All agencies of the state and its subdivisions are required by this Act to furnish copies of each of their publications to the State Library, which will catalogue and house them, establish depository arrangements with local libraries (city, county, regional, college), and publish "at least quarterly" a list of State publications. Once these provisions are fully implemented, the researcher who now must stumble in a number of different directions will find the search for available literature enormously simplified.

Another light in the darkness is the increasing activity of the Arkansas Political Science Association. Established in 1973, its annual meetings have stimulated a number of papers dealing with Arkansas government and politics; this Journal will certainly stimulate others; and the Library of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock has agreed to serve as a clearinghouse for unpublished papers by Arkansas political scientists and/or about Arkansas politics, compiling and distributing an annual accession list.

Although for the moment, then, the researcher may still have to do some imaginative detective work and suffer the dread fear that a major source has been overlooked because nobody except its author knows that it exists, help is on the way. Furthermore, although Arkansas documents have been unusually inaccessible, government officials and employees are usually quite accessible
and cooperative. A call or note to a state agency requesting materials ordinarily produces them. If not, state legislators are glad to request desired documents for their constituents, and their requests are speedily satisfied.

With that as background, what follows is a selective guide — in outline form — to major reference materials on Arkansas government and politics. To avoid duplicate references, materials appropriate for reading assignments in an Arkansas politics course are mentioned later in this paper in that connection.

I. General Reference Works

A. Almanacs, Directories, Atlases.

The single most comprehensive and current compilation of information on Arkansas government is the **Historical Report of the Secretary of State** (Little Rock: Secretary of State, 1978). Published every ten years, the 1978 edition was issued in three data-filled volumes. Volume I contains the State Constitution with Amendments; historical rosters of elected executive officials and biographies of incumbents; brief descriptions of all state agencies, commissions, and institutions of higher education; summary election returns for major offices since their inception; legislative district maps, committees, and historical rosters; descriptions of Arkansas courts, district maps, incumbents, and historical rosters. Volume II briefly describes all counties (formation, county seat, population, principal products) and lists all past and present county officials. Volume III, a 1978 innovation, contains a chronological series of descriptive historical essays on Arkansas, as well as special articles on contributions of blacks and women, and some representative political cartoons.

Since the **Historical Report** is published decennially, the best current guides to “who’s who” in Arkansas government are the following biennial publications:

“Directory of Elected Officials,” a wall-poster published by the Secretary of State listing names of all state, district and county officials;

**Arkansas State Directory** (North Little Rock: Heritage Pbg. Co.), listing major departments, their functions, personnel, and phone numbers;
Directory of the —th Legislature (Little Rock: Southwestern Bell Telephone Co.), listing legislative incumbents, brief biographies, districts, committee assignments.


The Atlas of Arkansas (Little Rock: Department of Planning, August, 1973) is still fairly current and very valuable. It describes (with numerous maps and charts as well as narration) important physical, social and economic characteristics of the state. Contents include land, water and forest regions; mineral and agricultural resources; population and employment patterns; health, education, transportation and financial data.

B. Bibliographies and Document Listings.

Until an official and comprehensive clearinghouse is operational, the most authoritative guide to published state documents is the “Checklist of Arkansas State Publications Received by the University of Arkansas Library,” compiled by the State Documents Librarian at the University Library in Fayetteville. Arranged alphabetically by issuing agency (e.g. Agricultural Experiment Station, Archeological Survey, Attorney General’s Office), it has been published semi-annually since 1943. Its coverage, however, depends upon the reliability of state agencies in supplying the Library with all of their publications.

Several bibliographies relating to Arkansas government and politics have been previously published. Ways in which they supplement this bibliography are noted:


Norman L. Hodges, Jr., Thirty Years on Arkansas Government 1945-1975, A Bibliographic Essay on the Political Science Literature on Arkansas State Government and Politics (North Little Rock: Heritage Press, 1976). An exhaustive and excellent 56-page survey of both original and secondary sources, including references to Arkansas in general political science literature. Hodges evaluates as well as lists, and is limited only by the paucity of worthwhile materials in the time covered.


II. State Documents, By Source

A. Legislature

The Arkansas Legislature (officially the General Assembly) is woefully under-documented. No verbatim transcript of legislative proceedings is maintained, committee meetings are not transcribed, nor are committee reports published. One copy of the Legislative Journal (dating from 1836) is kept in the Secretary of State's Office in the Capitol, where one may peruse its brief synopsis of daily events. On highly controversial issues, the state's newspapers of the day may print roll-call votes. Otherwise, one must consult the original Journal.

The most essential guide to the legislature is the semi-official Arkansas Legislative Digest (Little Rock: General Pbg. Co.), published daily when the legislature is in session. A loose-leaf publication, thoroughly indexed by bill number, subject, and author, it summarizes daily actions, lists new introductions with a descriptive
digest, and prints verbatim those bills finally enacted. Because the Acts of Arkansas (published by the Secretary of State after each regular session) is not indexed, the Digest is an invaluable reference to legislative activity. It also includes rosters, seniority rankings, biographical data, committee assignments and seating arrangements.

The only noteworthy publications of the legislature itself are the research reports prepared for individual state legislators by the Legislative Council staff. A List of Research Reports, Informational Memos and Staff Reports, 1949-1977, by Topic (Little Rock: Research Department, Arkansas Legislative Council) is periodically updated. Although many of these topics are of dubious interest to the general researcher (e.g. mandatory motorcycle helmets, mosquito abatement), the topics also include general governmental issues (e.g. a comparative study of methods of selecting attorneys general, grand juries in Arkansas, the budget process).

B. Executive

The Secretary of State is the official custodian of the state's legal records and also publishes many of the most important state documents. In addition to the decennial Historical Report and the biennial "Directory of State Officials," these publications include:

Acts of Arkansas, printed and sold after each regular session of the legislature, contains all laws enacted therein. Note: Arkansas Statutes Annotated (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1947-) is the only reliable guide as to whether a law is still in effect.

Arkansas Election Laws, updated after each regular legislative session. The newest version will include court cases and decisions pertaining to elections in addition to the actual laws.

Arkansas Register, published monthly since August, 1977. This most welcome publication contains all new rules, regulations and orders issued by most of the state's departments, agencies and commissions; all Attorney General's opinions in their entirety; gubernatorial appointments, proclamations and executive orders; a calendar of upcoming official events.

Arkansas Reports, published at approximately 4-month intervals, contains the decisions of the Arkansas Supreme Court. Note: the Southwestern Reporter, Arkansas Cases (St. Paul, Minn.: West Pbg. Co.) prints the same opinions, sometimes fol-
lowed by concurring and/or dissenting opinions. The cases are preceded by headnotes, and unlike Arkansas Reports, the Southwestern Reporter is indexed.

Constitution of the State of Arkansas With All Amendments, updated biennially, and free upon request.

Additionally, a general governmental information bureau is operated by telephone through the Secretary of State’s office.


C. Agencies and Commissions

All of the major state departments (Commerce, Corrections, Education, etc.) make annual or biennial reports to the governor, which can be obtained by contacting the department of interest; and these departments as well as their subdivisions also issue special reports and studies from time to time. The following brief and highly selective list is only suggestive of the kinds of information obtainable from these reports.

Department of Education, Annual Statistical Report of the Public Schools of Arkansas. Contains data on each school district such as average daily attendance, number and average salary of teachers, local receipts, federal aids, etc.

Department of Finance and Administration, Interdepartmental Relations Committee, Information Directory of State Services, 1974. Which agency specifically does what.

Highway Commission, Statistical Record, 1977-78. Biennial compilation of recent highway legislation, historical data, highway construction expenditures by district and county.

Department of Natural and Cultural Heritage, Arkansas Arts, 1977. A special inventory of cultural programs, organizations and facilities in Arkansas.

Department of Planning, Catalogue of Services to Local Governments. Annual reference guide to resources and programs provided by state agencies for use at the local level.

D. Judiciary.

The only notable publications of the judicial branch are:

Judicial Department, Annual Report. Published since 1964, describes jurisdictions of minor courts and duties of court officials,
includes statistics, maps and graphs relevant to court administration.

Supreme Court of Arkansas, Manual of Rules and Committees, Looseleaf publication, updated annually.

III. Secondary Source Materials
A. Newspapers, Newspaper Indexes and Journals
The state's major newspaper, the Arkansas Gazette, has been publishing since 1819, and microfilm copies exist in major libraries of the first issue to date. Most fortunately for researchers, the Gazette has been indexed since 1964 in The Arkansas Gazette Index (Russellville: Arkansas Polytechnic College, Sept. 1964/1965-), and these indexes have steadily improved in quality. Microfilm copies of the Arkansas Democrat go back to 1876, but are broken in series until recent decades, and have never been indexed.


Because newspapers are such an invaluable reference to contemporary state politics, those expecting to linger long in this field quickly learn to keep (and sometimes they will share) massive clippings files. They also learn to consult Margaret Ross, the Arkansas Gazette Librarian, who has extensive subject files and an encyclopedic memory; and to eagerly await the analytical attention which Ernest Dumas and Doug Smith of the Gazette, Robert McCord and Richard Yates of the Democrat, Brenda Blagg of the Springdale News and others often give to the Arkansas political system. Good political pieces are also beginning to appear in the monthly Arkansan and Arkansas Times.

The Arkansas Historical Quarterly frequently contains articles on political topics. Published quarterly since 1942 by the Arkansas Historical Association, an index of the first 35 volumes is
nearing completion and will be an excellent reference.

Several of the state's major interest groups publish monthly or periodic newsletters, which often have interesting political information, e.g., The AFL-CIO Newsletter, Arkansas Consumer Research Newsletter, and Arkansas Educator.

B. University Research Bureaus and Institutes

There is no governmental research bureau as such in Arkansas. Assistance is often available, however, from:

Industrial Research and Extension Center (IREC), University of Arkansas Technology Campus, Little Rock. Since 1955 the major research and public service arm of the University's College of Business Administration, the IREC conducts research and advisory programs for both public and private sectors. Its Population and Employment Studies Section frequently analyzes and interprets Arkansas population and employment statistics, and issues numerous publications on demographics, employment, fiscal, and economic issues.

Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BBER), University of Arkansas at Fayetteville. The BBER has two major objectives: to develop and report measures of state and regional business economic activity, and to facilitate faculty and student research and publication in business and economics. Its publication, the Arkansas Business and Economic Review, has been published quarterly since 1968, is indexed biennially, and often contains useful social-economic data.

Institute of Politics and Government, 308 East 8th Street, Little Rock. Affiliated with Arkansas College in Batesville, this nonpartisan, nonprofit organization is committed to "upgrading the political climate in Arkansas by improving the quality of political leadership." Its emphasis in on training seminars and civic projects, but it has periodically published useful materials, listed herein under bibliographies, special projects, and voting returns.

C. Historical Societies

In addition to the Arkansas Historical Association (Dr. Walter Brown, President, History Department, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville) and its publication the Arkansas Historical Quarterly, many counties have well-established historical societies, some of which issue a regular publication.
The Arkansas History Commission has a fairly large collection for public use, including the papers of former Governors Harvey Parnell and Sidney McMath. An extensive collection of manuscript sources for the study of Arkansas, including the papers of Congressman Brooks Hays, Senators Joseph T. Robinson and J. William Fulbright, and Governors Orval E. Faubus and David H. Pryor, are in the Special Collections Section of the University of Arkansas Library at Fayetteville. Congressman Wilbur D. Mills' papers are at Hendrix College in Conway, and Senator John L. McClellan's papers are at Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia.

For other historical references see Tom Dillard and Valerie Thwing, Researching Arkansas History: A Beginner's Guide (Little Rock: Rose Pbg. Co., 1979) and Ted R. Worley, Books and Pamphlets Relating to Arkansas History and Biography (Little Rock: Arkansas History Commission, 1956) which indicates the location of listed materials in six Arkansas libraries.

D. Special Projects


The present revision effort was preceded by eight brief brochures prepared in 1978 by the Institute of Politics and Gov-
The 1979 summer sessions of the Eighth Constitutional Convention have been documented in the *Constitutional Convention Digest* (Little Rock: General Pbg. Co.). Prepared like the *Legislative Digest*, it contains a roster of delegates (with biographical data, committee assignments, etc.), an index of proposals by subject, author, and number, and convention actions thereon, together with synopses of daily proceedings. The Convention’s preliminary draft is now in wide circulation, as are additional brochures from the Institute comparing this draft with the 1874 document. Revisions may well be made when the Convention reconvenes in June, 1980.

IV. Statistical Information

A. Fiscal

The most current and useful fiscal data are in:

"Arkansas Progress," issued monthly by the Department of Finance and Administration. Includes general revenue receipts (from individual and corporate income taxes, sales and use taxes, etc.) and a comparison with what had been forecast and with comparable receipts the preceding year.

*Arkansas Personal Income Handbook* (IREC, October, 1978). Total and per capita income estimates, 1969-76, for the state, planning and development districts, SMSA’s and counties; and personal income by major sources, 1971-76.

*A Summary of Taxes in Arkansas* (IREC, Rev. 1977). Identifies and briefly describes the major taxes levied by state and local governments, with special attention to those applying to businesses.

*Biennial Report of the Assessment Coordination Division*. Lists total property assessments by years, 1874-date; comparisons of assessments by state and counties, 1968-date; average millage rates.

*County Revenues, 1977* and *Municipal Revenues, 1977*. Both issued by the Department of Local Services, describe each source of county and municipal revenues excepting state and federal categorical grants.

B. Demographic

After consulting U.S. Census Bureau publications for Arkansas specifics, one may find additional useful information in numero-
ous publications of the Industrial Research and Extension Center, most notably:

**State and County Economic Data for Arkansas.** Biennial. Packages information from a number of other sources for state and county data on resident population (actual, estimated, percent change), components of population change (birth, death, migration), per capita income estimates, labor force data (wages and salaries, percent non-agricultural, unemployment), motor vehicle registrations, retail sales, bank deposits, school enrollments.


**Arkansas 1960-1970 Net Migration Patterns, By Age, Sex and Color for the Manpower Planning Areas.** December, 1975.

Several state agencies also publish useful demographic data, for example:

- Department of Health, Division of Health Statistics. **Arkansas Vital Statistics.** Monthly and annual summaries of births, deaths (number, cause, location), marriages.
- Department of Local Services. **County Profiles.** Summaries of social, economic, physical and governmental features of each of Arkansas' counties.

In addition, several recent publications contain extensive data on some specific sub-groups:

- Governor’s Commission on the Status of Women, **The Status of Women in Arkansas** (Little Rock: Governor’s Commission of the Status of Women, 1973).

**C. Voting Returns**

Voting returns are officially maintained by the Secretary of State, and can be inspected in that Office in the Capitol, or in libraries where microfilm copies exist. Election results for major
offices go back to 1836; detailed voting returns for statewide offices go back to 1924; and for state legislative positions to the early 1940's. Totals are tabulated by both county and precinct. The county totals are on printed sheets (which can be photocopied and mailed), but precinct returns are in large books which must be handcopied. Voting returns for county and city offices are kept by the county and city clerks.

If the years are relevant to your research, also see:


Arkansas Votes 1972 and Arkansas Votes 1974. Also by the Institute, election data on every race above the county level for those years.


Some recent state and federal legislation on campaign contributions and conflicts of interest have provided new sources of possibly useful information: campaign contribution reports and code of ethics filings. Since 1976, all candidates for statewide and district office have filed reports with the Secretary of State on any contribution over $250. (Federal candidates, since 1972, have had to report contributions over $100.) Candidates for local office file their reports with the County Clerk. These reports contain name and occupation of donor, and the amount given. Since 1972, all public officials and candidates for public office have had to disclose any possible conflicts of interest (businesses in which they have financial interest, firms from which $1500 or more was received). These reports are filed with the Secretary of State, County Clerk or City Clerk according to the office held or sought.

Teaching Arkansas Politics

As emphasized at the outset, almost every aspect of Arkansas politics remains to be systematically explored. In teaching Arkansas Politics, an honest acknowledgment of this situation — along with a stern charge to students that they will be responsible for
making an original contribution of their own through a serious research paper — seems to elicit an unusual degree of student intellectual engagement. Students also respond enthusiastically to (and learn important lessons from) political practitioners who can sometimes be persuaded to give a guest lecture. Brooks Hays' descriptions of precisely how the special congressional election of 1933 was stolen from him, or Bradley Jesson's treatment of Gov. Bumpers' methods for eliciting legislative cooperation, or Bill Becker's analysis of organized labor's influence etc. illuminate the political system far more vividly than most of what has been written to date.

A variety of approaches to Arkansas politics is possible. For example, the subject might be approached as a "community power" study on a grand scale. Textbooks on the politics of other states (Texas and California texts abound) provide some possible organizational formats. Certainly other courses might deal much more extensively than the one outlined below with Arkansas' congressional delegation, and/or with local government and politics in Arkansas.

The following syllabus was built around what seemed to be the single most significant feature of Arkansas politics: dramatic recent change. Surely there are political light years between Orval Faubus of Greasy Creek, exploiting fear and racial prejudice into unprecedented political control, and racially tolerant, intellectually sophisticated incumbent governor Bill Clinton. It is apparent to the most casual observer that change has occurred; but are those changes profound and permanent, or superficial and temporary? Are they changes of substance or of style? What has caused change, and what factors will shape Arkansas' political future?

Arkansas Politics: A Syllabus

Required purchase: Government in Arkansas 1978 (Little Rock: League of Women Voters, 1978; and Update). Assigned readings in text are abbreviated to Government. All other readings, both required and suggested, are placed on reserve in the library. Several of these are in Walter Nunn, ed., Readings in Arkansas Government (Little Rock: Rose Publishing Co., 1973), abbreviated to Readings.
I. The Environment of Arkansas Politics
   A. Historical background
   B. Socioeconomic factors
   C. Cultural patterns
   D. Opinions and attitudes


II. The Politics of Public Choice
   A. Party Organization and Strength
   B. Campaigns and Candidates
   C. Voting Procedures and Patterns
   D. Constitutional Change


III. The Politics of Policy-Making

A. Interest Groups


B. Executive Branch

Required: Chapter III in *Government;*


C. Legislative Branch


D. Judicial Branch


IV. Arkansas Politics: Present Patterns and Future Possibilities


Conclusion

There are risks in writing an article such as this, not least of which is the danger of overlooking a favorite source of (or by!) a
colleague. If this article does nothing more than provoke a barrage of strongly suggested supplements, at least it will have been instrumental in providing the stimulus for a more comprehensive future bibliography. Hopefully, however, it will not only stimulate a broader bibliography, but tempt other political scientists to become pioneers, exploring more thoroughly and systematically the waiting wilderness of Arkansas politics.

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