Normative Political Science – How to Measure the Goodness of a Political System. "*First Draft*"

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Introduction

Easton Meets Hartman

"Normative Political Science," as I use the term, is based on David Easton's theory of the political system, and on Robert S. Hartman's philosophy of value science. Easton was concerned with establishing political science as an empirical social science that studies the political system. In his view, political science attempts to *explain* how a particular political system is able to meet the challenges in its environment and sustain itself, or "persist."[1]

But, bringing in Hartman, Normative Political Science takes Easton's great work into a new realm – from explanatory to evaluational. Thus the labor of political science is divided into these two distinct endeavors. We will see that Easton's theory of the political system, which he intended to be used as an interpretive framework, or norm, guiding research, can also be used as a standard, or norm, by which to assess or evaluate the performance of a political system.[2] Hence, the evaluation side of Normative Political Science, among other things, asks the question, "What is a good political system?" The central theme of this essay will be to explain how that question can be addressed.

Following Hartman's pioneering work, I will use the term "good" not in a moral sense, but in the scientific sense of measurement.[3] Hartman defines "good" as that which "fulfills the definition of its concept."[4] The measure of goodness, then, becomes an empirical endeavor and, in principle, quantifiable. When scientists use taxonomy, for example, they have a category in mind. Then they examine an object of interest to determine whether the thing fits, or belongs in, the category they are using. If it does, then it is a "good" such thing. They may also record in their notes how the thing lacks some properties of the category, or has some excellent examples of other properties, for example, health. A "pachyderm" with only three legs and an illness is still an elephant, but not as good an elephant as healthy four legged members of the category. Hartman shows that this process of measuring the goodness of something by the concept for it can apply in a variety of situations.

Suppose we define the concept "chair" as "a structure with a knee-high seat, a back, and four legs." This definition can be used in two ways. First, as a category by which to determine if an object is what someone claims it is. Second, to evaluate how well it fits the category's terms.

If someone presents an object with a knee-high seat and three legs, but no back, then it just does not fit the category "chair." It might be a good stool, but it is not a chair. If the thing has all the properties of a chair, but the seat has a crack splitting it in two, the back leans forward, and the legs are not of even length, then it could qualify as a "chair," but not as a *good* chair.

Additionally, the goodness of a chair can be measured quantitatively. Suppose a more extensive definition is given for the concept "chair" with numbered specifications. The specifications could

include: 1) a knee-high seat in one piece, and 2) the seat indented to accommodate a human posterior; 3) a back tilted just a few degrees backwards; 4) four legs of even length, and 5) legs linked together for added sturdiness. The details could be as numerous and precise as those of a blueprint given to a furniture factory. The blueprint defines the standards of a good chair. To the extent an object qualifying as a "chair" lacks any one or more of these specifications, its goodness is reduced. If there are several chairs, they can be ranked according to the specs as excellent, adequate, or poor, and compared as best, better, worse, or worst.

In this essay I will discuss how the measure of goodness can be practiced in political science. I will show how the goodness of a political system can be assessed as excellent, adequate, or poor. Then, as with chairs or elephants, political systems can be compared as best, better, worse, or worst. As I have noted, Normative Political Science is the result of combining Hartman and Easton.[5]

In *The Structure of Value*, Hartman introduced the fundamental principles of "value science." Of course, the term "value" has many usages. In economics it can refer to the price of something, or a bargain, etc. Information of interest to someone can be called "valuable information." A person may rank his or her favorite music, indicating how he or she "values" the various recordings. The term "value" can be used as an alternate to the word "desire." Thus, objects of desire, or want, even like or dislike, can be referred to as the way objects are valued. In ordinary usage, "values" can be a person's ethical, moral, or political principles.

In Hartman's novel use, the term "value," like the term "goodness," refers to the measurement of a thing according to how well it fulfills the definition of its concept. Taking the measurement of how well a thing actually fulfills the elements of that definition is entirely an empirical exercise; hence, a "science" of value. As we will see, Normative Political Science follows these methods using Easton's definition for the category "political system" as its norm. Other elements and implications of Hartman's value science will be discussed in the course of this essay.

The *facts* of a thing's characteristics determine how well it fulfills the definition of its concept; hence, in value science, and Normative Political Science, facts are the measure of value. A thing is a "good" such thing according to the extent to which it fulfills the concept for it. Thus, a thing's degree of goodness depends upon the degree of that fulfillment.

In order for political scientists to assess the goodness of a political system they must begin, of course, with a definition of the concept "political system." In the application of Hartman's value science there are three dimensions of goodness to be considered. Hartman calls these the systemic, the extrinsic and the intrinsic. Each of these dimensions will be discussed in succession in this essay, as I explain how to assess the goodness of a political system.[6]

The Flow Chart for Explanatory Political Science

For Easton, political science is the study of the political system.[7] In brief, he defines the political system as an emergent property of behavior undertaken in relation to the authoritative allocation of values for a society. Thus he identifies "a political system as those patterns of interaction through which values [such as desired things or principles] are allocated for a society and these

allocations are accepted as authoritative by most persons in the society most of the time."[8] Political science "would thus seek to understand that system of interactions in any society through which such binding or authoritative allocations are made and implemented."[9] While Easton may use various formulations for his conception of a political system, he presents a Flow Chart which serves as an unambiguous illustration of his idea.[10]

FLOW CHART

Inputs (as supports or demands) –> Conversion process –> Outputs (as laws, policies, implementation, etc.) –> Feedback (returning as Inputs) from the Environment –>

Easton's Flow Chart is a graphic definition of his concept of the political system. "Values," for Easton, are objects of desire, want, or interest, and are indicated in a political system primarily by the demands and supports coming from members of the system. These are inputs into the conversion process. In that process, the expressed values are turned into legislation and government policy by the authorities. Laws and policies are the primary outputs of the conversion process. Those are the authoritatively allocated values. These outputs go into the environment, which includes the system's membership, the natural environment, and foreign political systems. From the environment, further inputs are made. These may be original inputs, or feedback as responses to outputs. Thus, the system is in constant interaction with its environment.

Complexity and Flow
The lines of flow represent the decisions and actions taken in the political process as information moving through the system. The diagram here depicts the most simplified statement of how a political system carries out the authoritative allocation of values. But Easton also uses much more complex models in his written work.[11] There is probably no limit to how complex a flow chart can be made. Considering the plethora of political actors and institutions in most political systems, the only limit on how complex a model of a political system can be is how complex a researcher wants to make it.

Continuous Flow
Easton advises political scientists that his approach "enables and indeed compels us to analyze a political system in dynamic terms."[12] Each stage in the process sends information to the next one in "a continuous never-ending flow."[13] The "continuous flow of the interrelated activities through which a political system persists" models the political system in action.[14] Thus, the study of political systems entails the "need to interpret political processes as a continuous and interlinked flow of behavior."[15]

Unique v Uniform
Easton intended his definition of the political system to be a uniform interpretive framework around which to organize and define the political science profession.[16] In research practice, organizing the study of a political system according to the Flow Chart guides the researcher to the relevant aspects of the system. Easton notes that this is also a convenient way "to begin plugging in the complexities of political life."[17]

As the Chart shows, the elements, or "internal variables," of a political system are inputs, conversion, outputs, and feedback, all interacting with the system's environment. With these categories in mind, the researcher can begin her or his study of a system by looking for the behavior patterns that fit the categories. This will enable an orderly description of the system as it is in operation. For Easton, explanatory political science is "primarily concerned with understanding and explaining [how these variables] function, the stresses imposed upon them, and the behavior that occurs as a response to such stress."[18] Because in practice every political system is unique, the primary question for researchers is as to how this particular political system manages to cope with its stresses, and survive, or persist.

While every political system is different, and always changing, the scientific approach to the study of each system remains uniform. Thus the model can be used as an aid to identify and explain political behavior in all the varieties of it that the world has to offer. Because Easton's interpretive framework gives focus and structure to the study of political systems, the profession can accumulate a body of methodologically related data, insights, and principles, i.e., political science knowledge.

Political Life and Biology
Easton envisions the political system as the central form of "political life." By "life," he means the biological process of living, "what we may call the fundamental life processes of a political system."[19] However, he understands the political system not as an organism, but as an organization by which humans live. Thus, he conceives of "political life as a system of behavior."[20]

As a system for sustaining the orderly authoritative allocation of values in a society, the political system tends to respond to challenges, whether internal or external, by producing laws and policies, or taking other actions, that will favor its own survival, or persistence, in its environment. But the actors, whose behavior constitutes the political system, act with considerable agency and responsibility, and are not like particles or other lifeless objects which behave more in accordance with mechanical principles. The "politically relevant actors" tend to act with the shared intention, or set of meanings, to keep their system a going concern. Thus a system's persistence depends, in large part, on "the capacity of a system to take constructive actions [which] seek to adapt or to cope with possible stress."[21]

Flow and the Form of Government
What matters most for explanatory political science, in Easton's view, is not what form of government a system takes, but to understand how the input/output process enables a system to meet the challenges in its environment. That is why, for Easton, asking how a system is able to maintain its "persistence through change … [and] over time … has seemed to be the most inclusive kind of question that one might ask about a political system."[22] Indeed, "the primary goal of [explanatory] political analysis is to understand how political systems manage to persist through time."[23] The institutions and the form of government in a society are only the means by which that process operates. Easton intends his Flow Chart to be a model for all types of governmental organizations, including democracy, autocracy, etc. "The existence of extreme variations in political structures in political systems, ranging from the most democratic to the

most totalitarian, does not prevent the operation of this [input/output] process."[24] The Flow Chart highlights "the processes that all types of political systems share and that make it possible for them to cope, however successfully, with stresses that threaten to destroy the capacity of a society to sustain any political system at all."[25]

Conflict and Scarcity
In Easton's view, the "fundamental fact confronting all societies is that scarcity of some valued things prevails. It leads inevitably to disputes over their allocation."[26] One important function for the political system is to authoritatively manage "the conflicting demands over scarce values."[27] Also, "every society provides" ways to deal with behavior "perceived to be excessively disruptive of the prevailing ideas of order and justice."[28] In Easton's view, "no society could survive without providing for some processes through which authoritative allocations could be made, if and when differences arise with regard to valued things."[29] Generally, then, a political system will deal with "the major problems of a shared existence."[30]

Stress and the Fear of Death
The survival of a system is not, of course, a certainty. It "will depend upon the ability of the members of the system to deal with the conditions creating … stress."[31] Significant stress can result from events "that threaten to prevent a system from functioning."[32] Persistence, then, is *a human achievement* resulting from the energy and political talent of a political leadership and their people. One of the hazards confronting political life is that aberrant, or self-destructive, behavior is also possible. Hence, the risk of failure, or the death of a system, can add an element of drama to political science narratives. Easton comments that the "ability of some kind of political system to endure in a society might be something to gaze at with wonder had we not come to take it so much for granted as the normal course of things."[33]

The Two Kinds of Political System

Easton notes that he uses the concept of the political system "in two different but related senses."[34] One usage is in reference to the actual "empirical behavior which we observe and characterize as political life [and that] as students of politics, we wish to understand and explain. We can speak of this phenomenal reality as the empirical or behaving system."[35] This behavioral political system is political life in action, struggling for survival, or persistence, in its environment.

Easton writes that his other usage of the term is in reference to the symbolic construct, theoretical framework, or definition of "the political system" as patterns of interaction undertaken in relation to the authoritative allocation of values for a society. As I have suggested, this concept of the political system is most clearly represented by the Flow Chart. As a heuristic model, this conceptual political system "corresponds to the behaving system which it is designed to explain."[36] Easton insists that it "is of the utmost importance to keep these two kinds of systems distinct."[37]

Therefore, in the following discussion I will closely adhere to Easton's edict to keep the two definitions distinct. However, I will use the conceptual political system as *a standard* by which to measure the goodness of any behavioral political system. This is an innovation in the use of

Easton's political theory because it was his intention only to shape the explanatory methods of political science. That is why he also noted that "Ethical evaluation and empirical explanation involve two different kinds of propositions that, for the sake of clarity, should be kept distinct."[38] He was unaware of Hartman's definition of "goodness" as scientific, rather than ethical or moral. As we will now see, using the conceptual political system to assess the goodness of a behavioral political system is not at all a venture into "ethical" speculation because it is wholly non-prescriptive, and strictly descriptive.

The Four Steps for Assessing the Goodness of a Political System

Going beyond the strictly explanatory purpose he intended for it, let us consider how Easton's interpretive framework can be used as a standard for assessing the goodness of a behavioral political system. As I have said, in Hartman's approach to assessing a thing's goodness there are three basic elements to be considered: the systemic, the extrinsic, and the intrinsic. These three dimensions constitute the whole body, or Gestalt, of evaluative political science. This wholeness will become apparent once the evaluative process has been laid out, looking back upon it. After considering these three dimensions, the political scientist will be in a position to take a fourth step; that is, to render an over-all, or general, rating of a political system as a whole. The special problems concerning the fourth step will be discussed towards the end of this essay.

The Systemic Dimension
In the first step of evaluation, the political scientist identifies the set of behaviors that he or she wants to study *as a political system*. The question is, can this set of social interactions reasonably be said to constitute an actual political system, and not something else, such as a mere collection of people milling about. As Easton notes, "the identification of a political system is a way of referring to those processes through which authoritative allocations are provided for … the society."[39] This is a problem of categorizing. We have seen some examples of classifying things according to their appropriate category. For instance, the chair. If the *facts* show that the thing only has a seat and three legs, then it is not a chair but perhaps a stool. Having been properly classified, the object can then be more closely examined to assess its goodness as such a thing – chair or stool, elephant, or political system.

In most cases identifying a behavioral political system will be a routine matter. But sometimes the behavior on the ground may not be easily identified as having all the elements required to fit the category "political system." In some cases, as Easton notes, the question may be whether one or more of the essential variables, or functions, "has dropped below some critical point."[40] Suppose, for example, that the allocation of values, by legislation or through the courts, etc., are not accepted as authoritative or binding by a critical mass of the population. "Beyond that point the system disappears since it is no longer minimally effective."[41] What that "critical point" is will vary, and can only be identified by the study of a particular set of social interactions.

The identification of a political system does not require the full compliance of the entire population with the directives of the authorities. Easton notes that "compliance will vary on a continuum."[42] Even where there is dissent, if it is more likely than not that most members of a system will respect and obey the authorities, then a minimally functioning system can be classified as a "political system," the object of study for political science. In Easton's words,

"The operation of essential variables need not be an all or nothing matter. … The behavior involved varies on a range of effectiveness, and within that range a system may be able to persist."[43] If a society breaks down, and there is no central organization to allocate values, then there is no political system.

Suppose that the patterns of behavior in a location show extreme political disorder. Maybe armed gangs are fighting over the control of the government. Rather than values being allocated in an orderly and authoritative fashion, gang members might be grabbing what they can, forcing captives to work, and killing anyone who protests. Such conditions might qualify as being a kind of pre-political system, or in a state of civil war, or of descending into a failed state, but not as a "political system."[44] Warring gangs cannot be classified as allocating values for a society in an orderly and authoritative fashion.

One question that might be of interest in the classifying process is whether this prospective "political system" is coming or going? That is, is the collective behavior under study a possible political organization emerging from a pre-political system condition, or is it descending towards a failed state? Also, a political system can vanish if it is conquered or colonized.

What persists?

Generally, what "persists" is some form of the orderly allocation of values by authorities. Easton remarks that "a system can be said to persist even if it changes."[45] He means that institutional alterations may be necessary for a system to adapt to environmental changes. FDR's New Deal resulted in the establishment of several new institutions in the process of adapting to the system-threatening conditions of the Great Depression. Considering the historical record, Easton observes that "surprisingly few societies have succumbed because of their inability to provide some kind of structures and processes for the authoritative allocation of values."[46] Thus, the form of government may not persist, but the orderly allocation of values for the society can persist through changes in the form of government.[47]

A study as to why a given performance, or set of political behaviors, fails to qualify as a political system could make an interesting paper in itself. But once the patterns of interaction under study have been categorized as a "political system," then, in the next two steps, the system can be examined more closely to assess its goodness.

Assessing Operational and Intrinsic Goodness

Interactions rising to the level of a political system are a collective achievement; a performance of human initiative and cooperation that history shows can fail. However, for evaluative political science, as we have seen, at the first step, the problem is not to try to understand how the essential functions are carried out, nor to try to assess how well they are being done, but only to check whether some semblance of each function can be observed so as to justify the classification of the behavior as a "political system."

An evaluative political science study would begin, then, with the political scientist making a case for his or her classification of a given set of behavior as in or out of the category "political system." Following Hartman's lead, once certified, a behavioral political system can be either

"operationally good," "intrinsically good," neither, both, or have some combination of the two standards. A political system is *operationally good* when it functions according to the specifications set for it in Easton's definition, exemplified by the Flow Chart. The more it fulfills those expectations, the better it is. The *intrinsic goodness* of a behavioral political system is assessed by what Easton calls the "political contentment" of its members. Intrinsic goodness will be explained further after the discussion of operational goodness.

The Importance of Persistence in Evaluation

As we know, for Easton, one of the core tasks of explanatory political science is to try to understand and explain how a particular behavioral political system is able to persist in its environment. However, for *evaluative* political science, persistence, in itself, is not a significant measure of a behavioral political system's goodness. Persistence can proceed whether a given system is assessed as operationally excellent, normal, or subpar. Even an inept system can persist by luck. An oppressive dictatorship may be able to persist just as long as a liberal democracy, perhaps longer. Indeed, while an operationally good political system will likely persist, as with people, bad things can happen to good political systems.

For example, the Mount Vesuvius volcano destroyed the political system in the ancient Roman city of Pompeii when it erupted in 79 AD and buried the city under a thick carpet of volcanic ash. The political system of the ancient Maya civilization in Mesoamerica existed between 2600 BC and 1200 AD when it collapsed, perhaps due to a prolonged draught. Conquest and occupation by an invading army can result in the destruction and replacement of a once operational political system. So, operational goodness is no guarantee of persistence, just as persistence is no guarantee of operational goodness.

Thus, persistence is a given in evaluative political science. Persistence is *prima facie* established when the initial determination is made that the set of behaviors of interest actually rise to the level of a political system. By definition, an existing political system is a persisting political system. While persistence is a core conception for explanatory political science, it can be given very little consideration after the first step of evaluative political science – the identification of an existing political system.

The Starting Point for Evaluation

To start the study of a political system, one must select a point at which to begin. However, all functions are part of a dynamic process, and will likely have overlap and intermingling. There is no starting point in an actual political system. As the Ancient Greek philosopher, Heraclitus, has reportedly observed, one cannot step into the same river twice.

Not only are the parts of the political system always on the go, no one can observe all of the infinite variables at work. Only gross features can be isolated for analysis. For instance, every person along the path of policy making has a unique set of understandings and motivations. Neither a god, nor a La Placean Mind, nor a supercomputer could take all the factors into account in an effort to explain an election, a piece of legislation, or other political event. Judgment with both talent and training is required to cut into the moving, indeed, creatively unfolding, jumble of factors that is politics. Political science is not for the mind that seeks simplicity.[48]

So, as the collective behavior carries on, the political scientist selects the relevant parts according to the type of evaluative study he or she has planned. Suppose the process of "allocation" is the subject of study. How well is allocation being carried out? Allocation can be seen as an output following the decision making done during the conversion phase. That phase can be seen as following upon particular inputs, such as demands for legislation favoring some group in the society. Allocation is also the subject upon which feedback may be given as subsequent input. Presumably, if allocating is being done well, the authorities will receive approving and supportive feedback.

Suppose the "authoritative" aspect is to be studied. In brief, authority is a type of social status, or legitimacy, given officials by the members of a political system. The meaning of "authority" within a system is contained in the political culture, or "regime," within the system's environment. Thus, it can be seen as a supportive input from the political environment. Authority can be acknowledged in feedback based on a prior output. If feedback is given with the due respect and recognition of an official's legitimacy, then the granting of authority is continued. If feedback is given with anger and resentment, or forms of rebellion and disruption, then authority could be eroding, and the process of maintaining authority is not being done well.

An evaluative study can also begin by selecting a particular function of the system – inputs, conversion, outputs, or feedback. The operational goodness of each function in the system can be assessed by the following four step method.

The Good Input Process
1) In making the determination that a set of social interactions can be classified as a "political system," minimal behavior constituting an input function will have been observed. Now, a fuller description of its operation is required prior to assessing the function's operational goodness. The roles and behavior of both authorities and political actors will be included in the description of the input process. The literature from explanatory political science can be used as a source of facts.

2) Based on the description of how it operates, an assessment can be made of the degree to which this input behavior fulfills the Flow Chart's standard of goodness for it. How well is this function performing? Does information flow smoothly through it? Are there stresses on the process causing snags, or disruptions? If so, what are they?

But such flow is not, of itself, an indicator of fairness or justice. An input process can flow as an operation, even if people are oppressed and kept out, provided they remain passive rather than rebel or otherwise interfere with the flow of the process. This is why a realistic assessment of the input function requires the third step – a look at the intrinsic dimension.

3) How do the members involved in, or excluded from, this input function feel about their experience with it? Are they supportive? For example, do all, some, or none of them feel that the input process is efficient, or fair, or easy to use? What percent of respondents, or interviewees, feel that the process is inefficient, or full of waste, fraud, and abuse, or is otherwise unjust, biased, etc.? Ideally, a function would elicit support, and not generate opposition. While no

guarantee, fully supported functions can facilitate a system's persistence. Thus, to the extent that an input function sparks opposition, its rating will decrease. A system's full potential for operational goodness cannot be achieved while it engages in self-harming behavior.

Suppose there are laws suppressing some forms of speech, such as in Thailand, where a person can be put in prison for "insulting the king." Speech suppressing laws can restrict the kind of input that the members of a system might want to send to the conversion process. Likewise, allowing corporations unlimited independent expenditures in US campaigns give them an input advantage over the common citizen who lacks the wealth of the superrich. Such speech restrictions could cause resentment or protest putting stress on the system, and thus reducing the goodness rating of the input function. But if the people do nothing, then the process can flow well.

If there are members of the system whose desire to make inputs is frustrated, what are the conditions of this situation? In other words, why do they feel this way? Such feelings among the members of a behavioral political system are a part of its political reality. So they are a necessary element in the evaluation of how well a given function in the system is operating.

4) A summary assessment of the goodness of the input process under study can be made by combining the findings in steps two and three.[49]

The Good Conversion Process
1) As with the input function, a detailed description of how inputs are turned into outputs is necessary for evaluating a system's operational goodness. The processes of policy making and legislating are often extremely complex. An evaluative political scientist can draw from the existing explanatory literature to show how the function operates. Once the facts have been presented about how the conversion process works in a particular behavioral political system, then assessments of its operational goodness can be formulated and justified.

2) Easton's systems theory does not proscribe how the conversion process ought to be conducted in a behavioral political system. He understood that every system will have a unique set of behaviors for carrying out this function. Because every system will have a novel set of governing institutions, there is no one size fits all for this process.

However, since the process is a performance of converting inputs into outputs, there are some generally applicable operational standards. For example, upon describing the process, the political scientist can make estimates of its operational efficiency (the prudent use of resources) and efficacy (achieving its aims). Is there waste, fraud, and abuse? If so, these can be discussed. Are important matters handled expeditiously, or is there undue delay? Is the flow of the process hampered by corruption, dissension, or other interfering factors? Does the process earn supportive behavior from politically attentive members, or does it attract vocal criticism or active protest? If there are aggrieved or neglected members of the system, and they do nothing to disrupt the conversion process, then it will appear to be doing well operationally.

3) As to the intrinsic dimension, one indicator of the conversion function's operational goodness is how the political actors involved with it feel about it. For example, do all, some, or none of the

legislators feel that the conversion process is efficient, or fair, or easy to use? The same can be asked of citizen petitioners, or of lobbyists. What percent of respondents, or interviewees, feel that the process is inefficient, or full of waste, fraud, and abuse; or is otherwise unjust, etc.? Why do they feel this way?

For instance, are there people who petition the authorities to have inputs converted into outputs and are frustrated by the process? If so, why do they feel this way? Perhaps the process favors the few and frustrates the many. This is a rich area for detailed research.

4) As with inputs, a summary assessment of the goodness of the conversion process under study can be made by combining the findings in steps two and three.

The Good Output Process
1) Having initially observed at least minimal behavior of an output function, a closer study can be made to assess its operational goodness. This will require, of course, an expanded description of how the function is performed.

2) Outputs are actions taken by authorities in the governing process. They are "the authoritative allocation of values." Broadly construed, the output process can include the implementation of law and policy, the administration of programs by agencies, and the judicial function of applying law to particular cases. The operational goodness of each of these complex governing functions in a behavioral political system can be measured.

There are several things to consider when assessing the operational goodness of the output process. These depend on what is factually happening in the particular political system under study. Is there waste, fraud, and abuse interfering with the flow of the operation? Another consideration is the responsiveness of the outputs to particular inputs. If the outputs are responses to prior demands, how responsive are they? To what degree do the outputs meet each item in the demands to which they are responses? Thus, one way the political scientist can assess the responsiveness of outputs is by comparing the product to the prior demand for it.

3) One consideration in the intrinsic dimension is as to how the outputs are received by the groups and individuals who have an interest in those productions. In other words, how satisfied with the outputs are the relevant parties? For example, how do small farmers feel about the new law granting corn subsidies, but terminating tobacco subsidies? Easton thoroughly examines how the effectiveness of outputs can be assessed by the kind and amount of support the recipients put back into the system. This could include the continued support for the function by a political party, special interests, or public interest groups. He also observes that "output failure" could result in a withdrawal of support, or a more hostile action, causing stress on the system.[50]

Another consideration is whether the outputs are being received as "authoritative" by the groups and individuals who have an interest in them. A crises of legitimacy could threaten the persistence of the system. Are there groups and individuals who feel neglected or unheard and therefore resentful toward the authorities? If outputs are causing stress among the membership, to what degree, if any, does this stress threaten the system? Outputs that generate so much

frustration and resentment that the system is threatened can significantly detract from the function's operational goodness rating.

A behavioral political system courting self-destruction is clearly not functioning up to par. Thus, outputs are a key function for the persistence of a system in its environment.[51] Concerning the behavioral political system, Easton observes that "through its outputs it may find a way to persist in a potentially stressful environment."[52] Outputs, for example, can be used to appease the aggrieved, or to shore up support.

4) Like the other functions, a summary assessment of the goodness of the output process under study can be made by combining the findings in steps two and three.

The Good Feedback Process
1) Having already observed at least minimal feedback behavior, a closer study can be made to assess its operational goodness. This will require, of course, an expanded description of how the function operates.

2) Feedback is generally communication from members to the authorities concerning actions they have taken in the governing process. It can take any or all of the forms that provide inputs into a system, such as emailing, contributing to election campaigns, etc. Unobstructed and freely flowing feedback can present an opportunity for the members to participate in the governing process, and an opportunity for the authorities to correct mistakes, to appease critics, or to defuse hostility in the system's membership. Supportive feedback is more likely to facilitate system persistence than is negative feedback.

3) When groups or individuals give feedback to the authorities, they of course want to be heard. To the extent they feel unheard, or heard and neglected or rejected, or the feedback process is constrained by oppressive laws, resentment may result. A system will do well to pay special attention to the attitudes of the politically relevant members, such as civic leaders, powerful lobbyists, public intellectuals, popular opinion makers, etc. An unresponsive political system could be acting against its own interest in self-preservation, or persistence, and is surely performing in a subpar manner. Marie Antoinette's reply, when told the poor of Paris were starving, "let them eat cake," symbolizes a fatally wrong way to receive feedback. An inquiry into how members feel about the feedback process can reveal much about how well the system is performing.

4) Like the other functions, a summary assessment of the goodness of the feedback process under study can be made by combining the findings in steps two and three.

Synergy and the Quality of "Flow" as a Standard of Operational Goodness
When the performance of each function is analyzed in isolation from the other functions, the operation of the system as a whole is not considered. Estimating, or assessing, the general operational goodness of a political system will involve more than just adding up the sum of its parts. How the parts work together to generate a continuous flow of information throughout the system is a matter that *transcends* the mere examination of individual parts. Here, the quality of

the flow is not a matter of the parallel operation of adjacent parts, but of the synergy created by all the parts working together.

Because such a rating cannot be reduced to an arithmetic calculation, this evaluation will require a degree of informed judgment, or connoisseurship, cultivated within the political science profession. Whether a system is awarded a Blue Ribbon, a Dunce Cap, or something in between, is an evaluation a political scientist can suggest in the conclusion of her or his study of the particular system's operational goodness. Indeed, such estimations will surely stimulate debate among the relevant experts within the profession. These disputes may reach consensus, even if not closure. This learning process will result in a refinement of understanding for political scientists, and may raise the quality of political science knowledge.

Yet there is still one other dimension of a behavioral political system to be assessed before a fully inclusive rating of the performance of the system can be given. That is the intrinsic dimension of the system *as a whole*. So far, the feelings of members have been discussed in relation to a specific function, input, output, etc. But there is a much broader dimension to political life – the way members experience it, and feel about life within it.

__Assessing the Intrinsic Dimension of a Behavioral Political System__

We have seen that, following Hartman's value science, there are three dimensions in which action is required to evaluate the goodness of a behavioral political system. In the systemic dimension the confirmation is made that the object of study qualifies as a "political system." In the extrinsic dimension the operational goodness of the system is assessed by comparing it to Easton's Flow Chart, which defines his concept of a "political system" and implies the standards for assessment. To complete the evaluation of the system as a whole requires an examination of the intrinsic dimension of the system. What that entails will now be explained.

From the point of view of evaluation, the intrinsic dimension of a behavioral political system consists of the feelings, as distinct from the behavior, of a system's membership. Not just any and all feelings are of interest. Instead, the focus encompasses what I will call the "politically relevant feelings." Without using the term "intrinsic dimension," Easton extensively discusses some of the politically relevant feelings of the membership of the behavioral political system. However, his focus is mainly on those positive and negative feelings related to "support." After a short summary of Easton's discussion of politically relevant feelings, I will show how that notion is expanded in the practice of evaluation.

__Supportive Feelings as Potential__
Supportive feelings can be expressed in such actions as voting for a party or candidate, volunteering for a campaign, or contributing to a party or a campaign. Writing letters, calling, emailing, or lobbying authorities are just a few of the many possible forms of support as an input into a system. As we have seen, for Easton support plays an important part in explaining how a particular behavioral political system manages to persist in its environment.

Easton notes that support can be "transactional." That is, groups of people can behave in supportive ways because the outputs they receive satisfy the demands they had put into the

system. But support can also be "diffuse." That is, non-transactional support given out of such motivations as identifying oneself with the myths and symbols of one's country, i.e., patriotism.[53]

The withdrawal of support by influential political elites, or a critical mass of the system's membership, can cause considerable stress for a system, threatening its persistence. Such withdrawal is often a part of the explanation of how a government falls out of power.

Members of a system can have supportive feelings without expressing them in overt behavior. Easton notes that covert supportive feelings are important for both political scientists and system authorities to understand because they have the potential to be called into action if needed.[54] While supportive behavior is vital to sustain political life, it need not be freely given. Support can be compelled by an authoritarian government, such as the Dictator receiving over 90% of the vote in every "election." Presumably, some of these voters will have engaged in supportive behavior, but without actually feeling supportive of the Dictator. Whether a system can persist for a longer time on voluntary support than it can on coerced support is an open question.

Contentment Index
Easton's concern with the intrinsic dimension of the behavioral political system was exclusively within the context of explanatory political science. Those feelings of the system's membership that are relevant to the persistence interest of the system define the intrinsic dimension for Easton. Indeed, Easton has proposed "an index of political contentment."[55] This index "would measure the probable degree of support" the members might give the system. Membership feeling could range from supportive, to indifference, to hostility. The latter feelings could be examined for their potential as a threat to a system. In other words, the index would provide a way to warn authorities about possible sources of stress, or threats to persistence. Like a thermometer, it could be used to test whether public hostility was nearing the boiling point. If that happens, then the authorities could produce outputs designed to raise satisfaction, and put out the fire.

Satisfaction *As Such*
Understanding the feelings, or meanings, that give rise to supportive behavior is one among many of the important elements of explanatory political science. However, for evaluative political science, the range of politically relevant feelings to be found in a behavioral political system is not one among many interests, it is *the primary* subject of research. Here the aim is not to explain system persistence, but to evaluate the intrinsic goodness of a system. This is a different point of view than the one with such concerns as gauging the safety implied by public contentment and of estimating the degree of potential threats to persistence.

The focus of study in the intrinsic dimension is on the membership's politically relevant feelings *as such*; that is, how the members feel about life in relation to their political system. The aim here is to understand the quality of political life as that is experienced by the system's members. Here, Easton's interest in supportive feelings is incomplete and off the point. Instead, the evaluative effort is to take the measure of "political happiness" or what I call "membership satisfaction." Easton uses the term "political contentment," but only as an item that indicates safety from the persistence point of view. A politically contented membership is unlikely to put

stress on the system. But contentment need not be seen solely for its potential effect on persistence. Indeed, membership satisfaction can, and should, be understood as an element of political reality in itself, albeit with at least one qualification.

That is, whether for explanation or evaluation, history shows that, in the long run, all politically relevant feelings are, at least potentially, related to persistence. Down the road, politically relevant feelings can change, and the positive can become hostile, just as the negative can become supportive, and passivity become active. An assessment of intrinsic goodness is just a snapshot, a moment in time, and no guarantee of positive or negative feelings in the future. Thus, in the explanatory approach, persistence is proximal, but within the evaluative interpretive framework persistence is distal, yet not entirely out of the picture.

Suppose, for example, that substantial sectors of the membership feel alienated from the centers of power, inefficacious, or neglected by their authorities but remain politically passive. In this context, they would not constitute an immediate threat to the system's persistence. An explanation of how the system persists would describe how the political functions are carried out, but need not dwell on the compliant masses. Indeed, the functions of a system could be carried out with efficiency and effectiveness, measuring high in operational goodness, even while the masses lived in alienation and fear, provided they did not act to disrupt the flow of the system. Their passivity would render them unimportant from both the persistence perspective and for the project of measuring the system's operational goodness.

However, in these periods of passivity such feelings would have a significant impact on the measure of the intrinsic goodness of a system. With a major part of the members feeling this way, the behavioral political system under study, while safe, would be assessed by political science as far from its full potential for intrinsic goodness.

Positivist Argument

A positivist might argue that while operational goodness may be measurable, membership sentience is irrelevant to the goodness of a political system. In this view, operational flow is the sole standard. If many members are miserable and suffering, it does not matter provided the system is working well. This could be an argument, for example, in favor of the Antebellum South. The system is working well, they would say, and the political elites and slave owners see nothing wrong and want to keep the system as it is. But in that view, the political reality of membership feeling would have to be ignored. If political science is to be true to its name, then a major portion of the political system, the reality of human feeling, cannot be disregarded. For long periods in the Antebellum South, the absence of overt protest or rebellion did not imply bliss consciousness among the enslaved; even though their oppressors may have made that claim.

In this case, the suffering was endured without being potential behavior. The feelings of helplessness kept their pain "politically irrelevant" for the ruling class. But in the view of evaluative political science, such suffering is central to the intrinsic measure of the behavioral political system's goodness.

Criteria

For the purpose of establishing criteria for rating the intrinsic goodness of a political system, and for ranking it in comparison with others, an intrinsically good political system can be defined as one which embraces a politically satisfied membership. The facts about how folks feel determine the assessment of intrinsic goodness made by the political scientist. Membership satisfaction, then, is the determining norm for assessing the intrinsic goodness of a behavioral political system. Again, in this analysis, the likely consequences for persistence need not be considered.

Someone might ask why that standard is used, and not another. Easton notes that culture can set up expectations of the political system.[56] Different cultures might have different standards for intrinsic goodness. One might ask, then, whether this "membership satisfaction" standard is a product of Western hedonistic culture. Perhaps there is some other standard by which to assess a system's intrinsic goodness.

However, there is evidence in history that political discontent can be an experienced feeling across cultures. Many revolutions over time and around the world have been based on the belief that a better, or more satisfying, political life would be possible if the current government is ousted. Clearly, membership satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, is a cross-cultural phenomenon.

Even without reference to the past, empathy and compassion seem to compel the principle that the number of members feeling satisfied and the saliency of their satisfaction are the proper data points to be sought for evaluating the intrinsic goodness of a behavioral political system. Upon those facts an assessment can be made. Intuitively it seems that few people could seriously contend that a life of political alienation and misery is better than a life in which the membership of a political system are genuinely satisfied. Therefore, using the concept of "membership satisfaction" as the measure seems to be the best possible method for political scientists to rate a behavioral political system's intrinsic goodness.[57]

Legitimacy
Another indicator of membership satisfaction can be the degree to which the authorities are acknowledged as legitimate by the members of the system. Public opinion studies can reveal this attitude. Also, defiance of laws can be interpreted as a form of political rebellion. Whether robbing banks or running stop signs, violations of the law imply a lack of respect for the laws broken, and perhaps a degree of disrespect for the law makers. Such behavior can be interpreted for its implications of civic discontent, which can be expressed in many forms.

Likewise, when members of a system regularly obey it's laws, and do so with little or no government compulsion, then an interpreter will likely find that this behavior is an expression of political contentment. Of course, each behavioral political system is unique, and the feelings of the people will be related to the context in which they are living. So when grand generalizations about the meaning of political behavior are made without reference to facts in context, a scientist should treat them with skepticism. Also, since people living in heterogeneous and complex societies invariably have competing and conflicting interests, the chance of ever seeing a score of perfect political contentment for such a political system is probably low.[58]

Methods

Feelings about the quality of political life have been studied on a regular basis in traditional opinion surveys. For example, some surveys instruct respondents to "indicate on a scale of 1 to 10, how strongly you agree with the statement that 'my government cares about people like me.'" There are a variety of methods for finding out how the members feel about life in relation to their political system. Interpretive methods, still being refined, can be much more sensitive to politically relevant feelings than large surveys.[59] Participant observation, ethnography, focus groups, and individual interviews have been shown to be very revealing by the interpretive political scientists who are skilled at using them. But if the existing political science literature is found to be inadequate or incomplete, then research from other fields can be consulted. Social psychology and sociology, for instance, have vast quantities of research which may help in understanding and gauging the satisfaction of the membership in a system. Of course, new studies can and will be done by evaluative political scientists as they research, rate, and rank various political systems

Empathy is the essential method for acquiring data about the intrinsic dimension of a political system. Using empathy as a method, the political scientist relates to the subject matter person-to-person, more at the level of sentience than intellect. Even in the intellectual preparation of a large survey, formulating the questions to be asked requires the scientist to enter into a personal relationship with the imagined respondents. Empathy is necessary for interpreting survey results as well. In a trained and skillful interpreter, empathic methods can be a fruitful way to acquire the data about a population which is necessary to evaluate a system's intrinsic goodness.[60]

Authenticity
Exercising empathy should also entail the skill in a political scientist at detecting inauthentic expressions of political contentment. This skill is crucial to constructing a professionally meaningful rating of membership satisfaction. For instance, in oppressive political systems respondents might give "safe" answers to questions about their feelings rather than report authentic expressions of their true views. Also, public sentience can be manipulated by deceitful or clever means, such as the Roman gimmick of "bread and circuses." An example of another trick is the use of the drug "soma" in Aldous Huxley's novel, *Brave New World*.[61] The members of a behavioral political system may be too fearful to express their true feelings, or they might not be aware of what their true feelings are. The interpretive political scientist may be able to use his or her skills and abilities to empathically discern what folks actually feel even if they misrepresent their feelings, are afraid to express their feelings, or lack the self-awareness required to know how they feel. Thus, in an assessment of a system's intrinsic goodness, the way the authenticity issue was dealt with may have to be discussed and its impact on the evaluation considered.[62]

Whether eliciting voluntary support with bribes or gimmicks, or commanding support with the threat of punishment, from the persistence point of view, any support will do. But for the political scientist's purpose of assessing the system's intrinsic goodness, the generation of inauthentic, or artificial, support would be treated as a "Potemkin Village," and an understanding of the true feelings of the people would be sought.[63]

Irrelevant Feelings

As we have seen, for evaluative political science, politically relevant feelings include those sentiments related to a person's quality of life in a behavioral political system. Another task for the political scientist, then, is to sort out politically *irrelevant* feelings. These could include, for example, what Henry David Thoreau calls "lives of quiet desperation," or the suffering of existential angst and ennui, psychological problems, unhappy family life, or bothersome religious uncertainties. Such feelings could color responses to questions about the quality of life in a political system. A skillful interpretivist will be able to sort out a mix of emotions, and identify the politically related sentiments. Of course, any of these feelings could become politically related if people blame the government for them, or if the people demand that the government fix their unhappiness, or fill their empty lives.

CONCLUSION:
Questions for Further Research and the Prospects for Political Science

A Quantitative Gauge of Feelings?
As I mentioned earlier, Easton has proposed constructing "an index of political contentment." He thought that, like a thermometer, it could be used to test whether public hostility was nearing the boiling point. If that happens, then the authorities could produce outputs designed to reduce the threat.

One problem with this idea, which Easton also noted, is that currently the ranking of politically relevant feelings, such as those from supportive to hostile, can only be done qualitatively and not with the quantitative precision of a thermometer.[64] The same challenge exists for evaluative political science. Like pain and pleasure, general intrinsic goodness can be ranked qualitatively to reflect its intensity. For example, from low, to medium, to high; or, even from 1 to 10. But the metrics for membership satisfaction are currently nowhere as precise as are, for example, those for air temperature.[65]

Can the measure of system goodness ever be quantified? Perhaps. It may be possible that after extensive studies in a variety of political systems and their cultures, a strong consensus of political scientists could agree on some kind of numerical system to add a finer grade of precision to such terms as support, hostility, and membership satisfaction.[66]

The Total Goodness Measure
At least in principle, once the general level of membership satisfaction has been determined, then it can be combined with the evaluation of a system's operational goodness to characterize the system's overall goodness – *the Total Goodness Measure.*

However, as we have seen, measuring intrinsic goodness differs from the measurement of operational goodness. And the subject matter for both are different in kind – operation and feeling. So, if there are two different metrics, one for operational goodness, and one for intrinsic goodness, and these refer to two different subjects, then maybe the final evaluation can only be expressed in two ratings: operational goodness and intrinsic goodness.

At first, it may seem that the quantification of operational goodness appears an easier task than that of intrinsic goodness. Performance specifications for functions can be quantified, and

fulfillment can be measured. But, as Easton asked, how can the support or hostility for a particular function be quantified?[67] Also, to measure *synergy* requires that the whole system be seen as more than the sum of its parts.

Presently, then, evaluative political science can show the way to assess the goodness of a behavioral political system using such qualitative terms as poor, medium, and excellent, for a particular system, and worst, worse, or better, best, for comparing systems. While this is a giant step forward for political science, the problem of quantification remains a challenge.

The End of Political Philosophy?
As we have seen, the "norm" for Normative Political Science is Easton's conception of the political system. As a norm, it has two primary functions. One is that it can organize and guide empirical research so as to stay within the realm of the field and create a body of political science knowledge. The other function, as shown here, is that it can serve as a standard by which to evaluate the goodness of a behavioral political system. As we have seen, the Total Goodness of a political system depends on how well a system satisfies a) the definition for it, and b) the people in it. These measurements are not dependent upon the political philosophy of the political scientist. As with taking air temperature, a libertarian and an authoritarian can reach the same results when assessing goodness, because the assessment depends entirely on the facts of the situation.

In Normative Political Science, membership satisfaction research is the ultimate political science test of a behavioral political system's goodness. From this point of view, how folks feel in a system is more important than how well the system operates. If an operationally inept system embraces widespread authentic contentment, then the final judgment of it must be that it is a good political system. If a system is operationally sharp as a tack, but most members are miserable in it, then it must be judged as a poor political system. Thus, Normative Political Science lets the authentic feelings of the people be the judge of their political system's goodness. This interpretive framework, then, liberates the political science profession from both the positivist's denial that the goodness of a political system can be rationally appraised, and from the centuries old disputations over what standards to use in such an appraisal.

Philosophical notions like "democracy," "socialism," "communism," "justice," "equality," "freedom," or "liberty" lack precise definitions and clear examples in reality. They are emotionally laden terms used by political actors to stimulate membership behavior in the practice of politics within a system. Just as Easton noted, forms of government and philosophical ideals are not the focus of interest for his explanatory political science (as discussed in the above subsection, "Flow and the Form of Government"), so they are not relevant to the evaluative political science assessment of a system's goodness. As Supreme Court Justice, Oliver Wendel Holmes, understood, there is no Universal Standard of Justice looming over the world, "like a brooding omnipresence in the sky."[68] I would add that there is only the fact-based professionally evaluated goodness of a particular behavioral political system.[69]

Evaluative political science can rate the operational and intrinsic goodness of a political system, and then rank systems according to their comparative goodness. As pure research, this is a descriptive process, and not prescriptive. Once the evaluative process for a behavioral political

system has been completed, problems will become apparent for which applied political scientists can trace their causes, and perhaps suggest ways to improve a system's ranking.

Over time, the American Political Science Association could establish a role for itself in the USA, and around the world, like that of The National Institute of Health and The World Health Organization. In other words, the political science profession could make of itself a source of information for humanity about both the goodness of political systems and the ways of making them better, just as the NIH and WHO are sources for everyone about matters of public health.

To achieve this status we need only commit to the standards and methods of Normative Political Science.

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[1] Easton's best known work is The Political System (New York: Knopf. 1953.) Ironically, however, he does not present his theory of the political system as such in that book. The theory is presented thoroughly in two succeeding works: A Framework for Political Analysis (Prentice-Hall, NJ 1965), and A Systems Analysis of Political Life (University of Chicago, 1965).

[2] For a discussion of Easton as an interpretivist, and why he is not a positivist, see Kelleher, William. 2017. Letting Easton be Easton—an Interpretivist. Qualitative & Multi-Method Research. 15(2): 22-28. DOI 10.31235/osf.io/cmnvx
Entire Issue: https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/uploadedFiles/moynihan/cqrm/qmmr_files/QMMR15_2.pdf
Single essay: https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/cmnvx/
As John Gunnell has observed, and which is discussed in the QMMR paper, the association of Easton with positivistic behavioralism has been a reification of ignorance and misunderstanding in the political science profession since the 1960s.

[3] The Structure of Value (Southern Illinois University Press. 1967).

[4] Ibid., page103 passim.

[5] Although contemporaries, the two men probably never met, and their writings were probably unknown to each other. In this essay I will synthesize their works.

[6] To adapt Hartman's value science to Easton's political science, I will discuss the systemic dimension as the conceptual element of evaluation. The extrinsic dimension will be discussed as the operational element. The intrinsic dimension will be discussed as the intrinsic element, which consists of the intentional, or mental, realm of feelings, attitudes, and meanings.

[7] See note 1, above.

[8] A Framework for Political Analysis (herein after "AF"), page 96. Notice that Easton uses the term "value" in a way closer to common usage, while Hartman re-defines the word to fit in his value science.

[9] Ibid., 50.

[10] See Diagram 3, the simplified flow chart, AF 112. Also, Diagram 2, A Systems Analysis of Political Life (herein after "ASA"), 32.

[11] RE complex models, see AF 110, and ASA 30.

[12] ASA 29.

[13] Ibid., 29.

[14] Ibid., 479.

[15] Ibid., 29.

[16] See note 2, above.

[17] AF 112.

[18] Ibid., 75.

[19] Ibid., 86.

[20] Ibid., 109.

[21] ASA 31. Persistence is not the same as "equilibrium." Easton rejects the equilibrium metaphor, because, among other things, it implies stasis as an ideal when the political system is dynamic. Also the equilibrium model characterizes the political process in mechanical terms when, in Easton's view, the behavior of political actors is primarily based on their own agency and decision making, and is not a mechanical tendency. This is discussed further in Kelleher, note 2, above.

[22] ASA 475, AF 79.

[23] AF 55, 71, cf. ASA 479.

[24] ASA 478.

[25] AF 79, cf. ASA4 78. Easton's rejection of the "state," and other proposed defining concepts for political science, are discussed in Kelleher, n. 2, above.

[26] AF 53.

[27] Ibid., 53 Another way to say this is to use Lasswell's famous language; that is, the authoritative allocation of values settles conflicts over who get what, when, and how. AF 96 But Easton distinguishes his theory from that of Lasswell, see note 2, above.

[28] AF 53.

[29] Ibid., 55.

[30] Ibid., 55.

[31] Ibid., 90.

[32] Ibid., 91.

[33] Ibid., 80.

[34] Ibid., 26.

[35] Ibid., 26.

[36] Ibid., 26.

[37] Ibid., 26.

[38] Ibid., 7.

[39] ASA 479.

[40] AF 97.

[41] Ibid., 97.

[42] Ibid., 97.

[43] Ibid., 97.

[44] See Easton's discussion of "parapolitical systems," Ibid., 52f.

[45] Ibid., 82.

[46] Ibid., 80.

[47] For instance, Easton discusses the rise of industrialization out of feudalism. The input-output processes persisted even as major changes took place in the political institutions. See ASA 154f.

[48] While Easton's understanding of the political system as struggling to survive, or persist, evokes associations with the Darwinian idea of evolution, Easton did not take a stand on that interpretation. Nor does his understanding come anywhere near the misanthropic notions of "Social Darwinism," which would have nations competing for survival. Easton's focus was on the behavior of each unique system struggling to keep up its authoritative allocation of values for its society. Of course, the philosophy of evolution is complex, but Easton's conception also has some similarities reminiscent of Henri Bergson's 1907 book, Creative Evolution. The role of shared intentions is also considered in Michael Polanyi's Personal Knowledge.

[49] As stated above, the problems of gaging an over-all performance rating will be discussed further towards the end of this chapter.

[50] See ASA 230 passim.

[51] For political science, to be "authoritative" the outputs must be the products of authorities. Identifying who the authorities are in a particular behavioral political system is a matter for empirical study. Because political science is the study of behavior in relation to the authoritative allocation of values for society as a whole, other forms by which values are allocated are not central to the professional concerns of political scientists. For example, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awards Oscars to folks in the movie business. This authoritative allocation of values, in itself, is not political. Of course, the Academy, actors, producers, and all sorts of other workers in the movie business can engage in political activity after the awards are given. Charities allocate values to the needy. University Admissions Departments allocate values to the applicants who hope they can study there. As such, these are usually not political activities because they are not based on policies meant for the society *as a whole*.
Easton's definition may imply another standard by which to assess the operational goodness of a political system. If allocations of value are only for some special interests, and not society as a whole, then the system's operational goodness may be diminished accordingly. Suppose that, in the USA, Republicans say their tax cuts for the wealthy are good for the whole society due to "trickle down" benefits, such as job hiring or increased wages. If this proves untrue, then, by definition, the Republicans have diminished the operational goodness of the political system by their selfishness.

[52] ASA 477.

[53] While Easton discusses the importance of support, both specific and diffuse, throughout his writings, Chapters 10 and 17, in ASA, are especially rich. However, for evaluative political science, support per se is only one indicator of a system's intrinsic goodness. In taking this measure, a variety of interpretive methods inquiring into the politically relevant feelings of the membership is necessary.

[54] See Easton's discussion of overt and covert support at ASA 159f.

[55] Ibid., 405-406.

[56] Ibid., 404f.

[57] The Utilitarianism of such philosophers as Jeremy Bentham, advocate the principle of "the greatest good for the greatest number." As a practical matter, maybe that is the best a society can hope for. But the Utilitarian principle is inconsistent with "the logic of fulfillment." While sometimes "more is better," for Normative Political Science, the highest good would be the whole of a population feeling the maximum degree of satisfaction with their political life. In this sense, "the greatest number" having "the greatest good" falls short on both counts. To be perfectly good, the whole membership must have it all. The rest is lesser goods.

[58] See Easton's discussions of scarcity, notes 25-29, above.

[59] No scholars have done more to bring together, to refine, and to teach about interpretive methods for political science than Dvora Yanow and Peregrine Schwartz-Shea. For example, see the comprehensive study they have edited, including essays they have written – Interpretation and Method Empirical Research Methods and the Interpretive Turn. 2nd Edition. 2014. M. E. Sharpe, NY.

[60] A flawless explanation of the role of intersubjective agreement in the process of validating interpretive science studies is given by Peregrine Schwartz-Shea in "Judging Quality Evaluative Criteria and Epistemic Communities," Chapter Seven, pages 120-146, Interpretation and Method, note 59 supra.

[61] Chatto & Windus, London. 1932.

[62] One example of the empirical research that could be used in an evaluative study of intrinsic goodness claims that 77% of middle class Chinese respondents "would rather live under their system of government than any other." Also, "more than half of the respondents state that their system of government does not need to be changed." The study was conducted by sending Chinese students to populated areas with a questionnaire and script.
Zang L. Middle Class and Its Attitude Toward Government in Different Political Systems: A Comparison of China and Japan. Chinese Political Science Review (2020) 5(1) 74-94 Section 3.1 (page number not available online) DOI: 10.1007/s41111-018-0115-1
Although the study seems to be done in a methodologically correct manner, for me, the results of this study raise questions about its trustworthiness. For instance, did the respondents fear that their interrogators might also be informants? To pass the credibility test, in my view, this study requires serious triangulation.

[63] Clearly, open societies are required for the political science profession to do its work. To this end, the American Political Science Association can advocate for open societies so that members can do their work. Perhaps closed and dangerous societies can be named and shamed by the APSA.

[64] Easton saw the difficulties of trying to quantify such politically relevant feelings as support, hostility, etc. Indeed, he declined to engage "the onerous and complex technical aspects involved" in the project. ASA162. Yet he returned to the confounding conundrum in his discussion of ordinal and cardinal terms at ASA 161-165, and 168-170.

[65] Prior to the 1700s there was no universally agreed upon way to measure temperature. Only different opinions. Then Fahrenheit and Celsius invented competing measures. Complete intersubjective agreement has still not been achieved, as the split between Europe and the USA shows. See Chang, Hasok. Inventing Temperature: Measurement and Scientific Progress. Oxford University Press, USA. 2004.

[66] On the general necessity for intersubjective agreement, and its role in the creation of quantification schemes, see the incisive essay by Dvora Yanow, "Neither Rigorous nor Objective? Interrogating Criteria for knowledge Claims in Interpretive Science," Chapter Six, pages 97-119, Interpretation and methods, note 59 supra.

[67] Incidentally, Easton commented that "it is impossible to speak meaningfully of support for a system as a whole [because that] is too undifferentiated an idea." ASA 165. However, he did have a sense that the membership can have a feeling about the system as a whole. He observed that "Environmental disturbances may help to shape not only what the members want, but *the sentiments* they display toward the political system *as a whole*, its institutions and leaders." ASA155 (it. ad.). He also noted that among the members there could be variations in "the level of satisfaction with experienced conditions." ASA 402.

[68] Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote in a dissenting opinion in Southern Pacific Company v. Jensen, 244 U.S. 205, 222 (1917) that "[t]he common law is not a brooding omnipresence in the sky, but the articulate voice of some sovereign or quasi sovereign that can be identified."

[69] For a discussion of Easton's vision of the place of applied political science, political philosophy, public intellectuals, and the role of the profession in politics, see Kelleher, William. 2017. Back to the Future: How Understanding David Easton Can Give Guidance to the Caucus for a New Political Science. New Political Science 39(4):1-14 DOI:10.1080/07393148.2017.1378293 Single essay: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/320209515_Back_to_the_Future_How_Understanding_David_Easton_Can_Give_Guidance_to_the_Caucus_for_a_New_Political_Science