

Gabriel A. Almond

With the passing of Gabriel Almond, on December 25, 2002, shortly before what would have been his 92nd birthday, the profession of political science lost one of its most talented, creative, disciplined, influential, and widely respected members. At the time of his death, a professor emeritus at Stanford University, Almond was still actively involved in a number of research projects and remained vitally interested in public affairs.

The Chicago Years: 1928–1938

Throughout his scholarly life, it was Almond's good fortune to be, as he put it, in the right place at the right time—a pattern of luck that began in his undergraduate and graduate years at the University of Chicago. By the middle of the 1920s, under the leadership of Charles E. Merriam, the Chicago department of political science had become the creative center of a behavior-oriented and interdisciplinary movement in political science, a movement that later spread through the entire discipline in the two decades after World War II. Merriam surrounded himself with superior students who became his colleagues and would translate their mentor's message into novel theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of politics. Best known among them still today are Harold F. Gosnell and Harold D. Lasswell. Their influence is unmistakable in Almond's post-World War II work on the role of public opinion in the making of American foreign policy, on the psychological appeal of communism, and in his masterful and influential study—in collaboration with Sidney Verba—of the “civic culture” in five nations.

Almond began his intellectually rewarding career in 1928 as an undergraduate at the University of Chicago. There he encountered a faculty working at the discipline's research frontiers as well as a cohort of bright fellow graduate students who became innovators in different fields of specialization and leaders in the profession. In his senior year, Almond took Lasswell's course on “Non-Rational Factors in Political Behavior” and, clearly under Lasswell's guidance to judge from its voluble title, wrote a senior thesis on “Developmental and Equilibrium Analysis of Balancing Power Processes.” He also collabo-

rated with Lasswell in a joint study of people on public relief. The study, a truly pioneering work, based on a sample of case records but also on personal interviews with the relief clients, led to Almond's first published article (with Lasswell) in the *American Political Science Review* for August, 1934, under the title “Aggressive Behavior by Clients Toward Public Relief Administrators: A Configurative Analysis.” Lasswell also encouraged Almond's Ph.D. dissertation on the elite of New York City, one of his mentor's interests. Of his New York adventure, Almond once recalled: “I went to New York . . . bringing my University of Chicago culture with me. . . . Making contacts with the New York City elite . . . presented some problems. . . . I had, in some sense, to give false credentials to get invited to a dinner or a social occasion as a graduate student working for a Ph.D., and what I really was interested in was seeing at first hand what their attitudes and their values were.” His good intention to be a “participant observer” could not be sustained—“I just couldn't take it [like tea with Emily Post, he often recounted in good humor] and at the same time do a full day's work at the New York Public Library.”

The story of Almond's tribulations as a Ph.D. thesis writer has a unique aftermath. While he successfully “defended” the dissertation and received the degree in 1938, the work was not published until sixty years later under the title *Plutocracy and Politics in New York City* (1998). The reason for this enervating postponement was that when, in 1944, Almond included a number of chapters on the psychological aspects of wealth, Professor Merriam, concerned about offending some of the major New York donors to the University of Chicago, refused to recommend its publication. As Almond has ruefully written, including the chapters “would have given me the claim of being a political psychologist as well as a political sociologist.”

With the Ph.D. baton in his briefcase, Almond joined the faculty of Brooklyn College in 1938, a time when jobs in academe were difficult to come by. He later remembered the “boredom” of having to teach five sections of the conventional course in American government for 15 hours per week. He remained at Brooklyn until World War II rescued

him by bringing him to Washington, DC for government service.

The War Years: 1941–1946

Wartime Washington was a beehive of social scientists and Almond became one of the hundreds of bees who found themselves in the dozen or so agencies that were in need of “intelligence.” The demand for “intelligence” as a governmental function on a large scale was something radically new. That the “Chicagoans” would be in the forefront of the social scientists arriving in Washington should not come as a surprise; the nation's capital became something of a replica writ large of the interdisciplinary movement that had been nursed at the University of Chicago. Once again, Harold Lasswell was for many, whether from Chicago or elsewhere, a kind of “advance man” who facilitated their migration into the new agencies. Through Lasswell's intervention, Almond obtained a job in the “bureau of intelligence” within the Office of Facts and Figures (later the Office of War Information). Lasswell, as Almond recounts, thought of the bureau as “a really major research effort, both here and abroad that would guide American information and activity. . . . In particular, he wanted to have a monitoring of the media in the country and abroad. He wanted to have a regular surveying of opinion and attitudes relating to the war.” Though the agency's emphasis shifted from informed social science research to easily available news reports as sources of intelligence, Almond continued to work for the reduced operation. His job was to help in setting up a content analysis code. He also headed a small unit assigned to collect information about Germany, Italy, and Occupied Europe. “Beginning with a knowledge of German, I began to think of myself as a European specialist, and as a comparativist during these middle years of the war.” While, from the point of view of his interdisciplinary education and orientation, Almond once again found himself in the right place at the right time, he seems to have considered his government experience unrewarding. “I can't say,” he told an interviewer, “that our morale, as contributing to the war effort, was particularly high.”

Much more exciting and rewarding was his work in post-war Germany for the United States Strategic Bombing

Survey. The major purpose was to study, by way of survey research, the effect of strategic bombing on the population's attitudes and behavior. The Almond team's special assignment was to retrieve documents dealing with the air war and to interrogate not just police and Gestapo officials but also survivors of the German resistance. In this connection Almond again came to be in contact with American social scientists, especially the scholars who were experimenting with and applying probability sampling in survey research. Some of them had come from the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago; others later migrated to the University of Michigan and formed the Survey Research Center. Once again, Almond had come to be at the right place at the right time; he later referred to this unusual experience as "a form of postdoctoral training."

Return to the Academy: 1947–1963

Almond was appointed to the professorate at Yale in 1946 where he also became a member of the Institute of International Studies, one of the first of such research groups in the country with an interdisciplinary orientation. Once again, he found himself in an intellectually stimulating environment. His first major book, *The American People and Foreign Policy* (1950), quickly established him as a leading practitioner of a behavioral political science. Immediate evidence of the work's importance came when the journal *World Politics*, then only in its second year, asked a well-known social psychologist to review it in the unusually large space of over 10 pages. One of the study's major themes is the periodic swings of American public opinion toward international affairs—from idealistic to cynical attitudes, from withdrawal to support for intervention, from optimism to pessimism. Much influenced by the then-current attempt to explain politics and society in psychosocial terms, but also distancing himself from the then fashionable but nebulous notion of "national character," Almond formulated the concept of "mood." By "mood" he meant a rather pliable and formless reaction to an ambiguous context that was particularly pronounced in foreign affairs. He argued, however, that the pervasive and destructive nature of "mood swings," especially among the lower social strata which feel powerless, is offset by "attentive publics" among elites. "Attentive publics" was another then-

novel concept that Almond introduced into discourse about the relationship between public opinion and public policy formation.

When the Institute moved to Princeton in 1950, Almond, now tenured, followed. About this time began his long-time and deep commitment to the interdisciplinary activities of the Social Science Research Council that on a national scale launched what had begun in Chicago as the "behavioral movement in political science." Quite apart from this involvement, his own research of the early 1950s culminated in the innovative *Appeals of Communism* (1954), a book that remains, even today, a masterful treatment of the topic. Based on a wide range of data—opinion polls conducted in this country and abroad, depth interviews with former Communists, and content analysis of relevant documents—the study employed whatever methodologies and relevant theories were available at the time, securing for Almond the recognition of having been one of the first practitioners of "political psychology" long before it had become a field of study in its own right. Almond remained at Princeton until 1959 when he moved back to Yale, and from there, four years later, to Stanford where, as chair from 1964 to 1969, he effectively rejuvenated an old-fashioned department of political science.

Toward a Comparative Politics: 1951–1963

With the coming of the fifties, Almond would again be the right person at the right place at the right time. It was a time of much ferment in the social sciences, especially in his own home discipline of political science. The major foundations—Carnegie, Rockefeller, and Ford—had become aware of the need for advanced and sophisticated social science research, and for the training of social scientists. The Social Science Research Council, then headed by the political scientist Pendleton Herring, became a major agency for promoting new developments in the social (now increasingly named "behavioral") sciences. In the fall of 1953, the Council asked Almond to organize a new SSRC committee to work on bringing the behavioral approach to the study of comparative politics. At that time the sub-field of comparative politics was limited largely to the study of the major Western European states with an emphasis on constitutional and structural/institutional arrangements. Almond quickly organized the new Committee on Com-

parative Politics with a double mandate: first, to mobilize all the powers of the modern social sciences—including in particular the insights and findings of sociology, anthropology, and social psychology—for the comparative study of political systems; and second, to expand the range of comparative analysis to include the non-Western world, and in particular, the new states just emerging from colonial rule. A majority of the members of the initial Committee on Comparative Politics were specialists on the newly independent states and such non-Western countries as Japan, Turkey, and Iran.

By the summer of 1955, the Committee had organized its first workshop which examined the role of leadership in the political development of the post-colonial states. Almond recognized early on that among academics there was a great deal of untapped energy and specialized knowledge that could be brought together at relatively low cost to produce significant advances in the discipline. Although he was foremost an intellectual theorist and research scholar, he was also a man of action who had a keen sense of the state of the discipline and what organizational measures were likely to be most productive.

In addition to recruiting volunteer scholars, Almond sought additional foundation funds for a competitive program of grants to individuals for fieldwork. That effort supported 24 recipients, representing six disciplines, and produced research in 21 countries. However, it soon became apparent that a proliferation of ad hoc area-oriented studies would not produce the accumulation of knowledge expected of a science. At the beginning, Almond suspected that the field of comparative politics would benefit greatly by following the experience of American politics which had achieved a breakthrough by focusing on the role of interest groups, public opinion, and electoral behavior. However, there needed to be a more solid theoretical foundation for the analysis of political development. Building on the earlier social theorists who analyzed social change during the initial phase of the industrial revolution in Europe, and on "systems analysis" in sociology, Almond crafted a heuristic theory for analyzing total political systems. He posited that all political systems consisted of a set of specific functions which could be performed by the same or different structures in different settings. This structural-functional formulation was the basis for *The Politics of*

the Developing Areas (1960), which he edited with James S. Coleman. Almond did not insist upon a rigid application of his theoretical formulation, but rather encouraged others to use what they found most useful. Thus, the approach, in a loose way, provided the basis of one of the Committee's most noteworthy projects, the nine-volume series, *Studies in Political Development* (Princeton University Press). Each volume examined political development from a different perspective, such as communications, bureaucracy, political parties, political culture, and the historical sequences of a set of general crises in development.

Gabriel Almond had the extraordinary ability to recognize how people with different skills and area specializations, working with different concepts and theories, could still be brought together to produce a more general contribution to knowledge. He significantly advanced comparative studies through his ability to devise multiple models and to conceptualize typologies that would highlight significant factors for explaining differences among systems. He was thus able to bring order to the otherwise confusing world of political realities. As an intellectual leader, he also had a remarkable instinct for judging when the stage was right for setting out in new directions. In the meetings of the Committee he would tolerantly listen to the group discussion and then intercede to make first a general intellectual point, but then a proposal for action. He provided the leadership that fundamentally changed the character of comparative politics. In the end, the Committee on Comparative Politics produced over 300 reports ranging from books to articles to unpublished memoranda. It organized 23 conferences and cosponsored six others. It conducted five summer workshops. In all, its activities involved some 270 scholars, with nearly 50 from foreign countries.

What is perhaps Almond's best known book, *The Civic Culture* (1963), co-authored with Sidney Verba, appeared during this period and had a significant impact on the comparative study of democracy. It was one of the first large-scale, cross-national survey studies that examined the cultural roots of democracy in five nations. It opened the new field of comparative surveys and represented one of the first attempts to systematically study cultural factors in comparative politics. *The Civic Culture* spawned much additional research, some written to replicate it, some to present alternative positions, and some that went beyond it.

The Stanford Years: 1963–1976

Almond's view of political change and development was broad and encompassing. In *The Politics of the Developing Areas*, he proposed a broad analytical framework for identifying the basic institutions and processes of social change; in *The Civic Culture*, Almond and Verba used quantitative empirical analysis to consider the cultural components of democracy. In the 1970s, he worked with a group of students at Stanford on an even broader approach. In *Crisis, Choice, and Change* (1973), Almond and his collaborators considered the role of leadership and strategic choice in political change. They turned to history, using seven historical accounts to consider the relative applicability of various approaches to political explanation. As Almond put it later, "we took . . . four distinctively different approaches to development explanation and . . . tried to use them . . . in historical contexts, not so much to generate a theory from these case studies . . . but as a demonstration of how these distinctive approaches fitted in together and had to be used together to get an adequate historical explanation of the historical outcome." His work had now gone beyond an earlier focus on the social and psychological variables that explained the "input" side of politics to consider the performance of political systems—their productivity. This expansive view of political explanation was carried over to his well-known textbook with his former Stanford student Bingham Powell, a standard work that went through numerous editions.

The Years of Retirement: 1976–2002

Crisis, Choice, and Change was completed shortly before Almond's retirement from Stanford in 1976. In an oral history interview with Richard Brody at about that time, he described his comprehensive view of comparative politics as representing a ". . . sense of closure as far as my own career is concerned." But his career was far from closed. In retirement, Almond remained an active scholar and member of the discipline, rarely missing the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association. His attention turned to two main topics: the state of the political science discipline and a study of the role of religious fundamentalism in political life. In a number of articles, brought together in *A Discipline Divided* (1990), Almond deplored the divisions in political science. What he believed to have been a

more unified, though pluralistic, discipline was now—to use the phrase that became standard in the field to describe the unease he and others felt—seated at "separate tables," unable and unwilling to collaborate. He described the discipline as divided into two tendencies: "those who view the discipline as a hard science—formal, mathematical, statistical, experimental—dedicated to the accumulation of tested 'covering laws,' and those who are less sanguine and more eclectic, who view all scholarly methods, the scientific ones as well as the softer historical, philosophical, and legal ones, as appropriate and useful." Almond identified with the second school, because he thought that the ". . . qualities of human culture and behavior were not explicable by hard and fixed laws." It was not so much that he rejected a scientific approach, rather he wanted a political science that was open to many approaches, a political science that was empirical and whose conclusions were open to testing and falsification. His objection was to premature closure in the name of overarching theories. Rational choice theory was his prime example of the latter. To Almond, politics was too important and too complicated to be encompassed in any particular approach; he wanted us all around the same table arguing it out.

Gabriel Almond spent a large part of his retirement as a leader of a large-scale project on fundamentalisms sponsored by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The project took a very broad view of what is one of the more important religious and political phenomena of our time: fundamentalist religion. The project has the Almond stamp on it. It brought together numerous scholars, specialists in one religion or culture, to consider the more general subject of fundamentalist religions, just as he had brought together, many years earlier, numerous specialists to study the comparative politics of development. Almond and others provided an overarching framework within which comparisons could be made, but not one that obliterated the particularities of the many religions studied. The result was a massive outpouring of scholarship: 75 research papers and five volumes. The project culminated in an overview volume, *Strong Religions* (2003), co-authored with R. Scott Appleby and Emmanuel Sivan. The book considers the role of fundamentalist religion most broadly, from its social roots to its political consequences. It does not simplify and reduce all to a single pattern, but allows one to see beyond the particularities of each of the forms of fundamentalism. The book also reflects

Almond's lifetime interest in religion and its role in social and political life. He was a student of the Old Testament and often cited its lessons in a modern context. His last paper, finished just before his death, was on "Foreign Policy and the Theology of Ancient Israel." Almond's early work with the Committee on Comparative Politics had been within the framework of modernization theory and its focus on the secularization of the world, but he had never abandoned his belief in the importance of religion.

Few scholars have had as broad and sustained an impact on political science. Almond's first publication was his 1934 research on bureaucratic behavior in welfare offices. His last, *Strong Religions*, appeared shortly after his death in 2003. Seven decades of creativity is a record few scholars attain. The 1934 article coauthored with Lasswell represented an innovative approach to citizen

encounters with government, looking at the social and psychological micro-interactions of citizens face-to-face with officials. It was an approach that would be followed in many later works. And the article was about one of the most important substantive issues of that depression era: how government provides assistance to its needy citizens. The last book, about fundamentalism, is on one of the most important substantive issues at the beginning of the 21st century. And it too will provide a template for further research in this important area. Almond straddles Isaiah Berlin's famous distinction: he was neither a fox that knows many things nor a hedgehog that knows one big thing; rather he was a person who knew many big things. Almond was a producer of large-scale classifications and approaches who never abandoned close empirical work; a generalist who accepted the variety of particular nations and cultures; an early

user of quantitative approaches who never abandoned history. Some of Almond's schemas have been modified or replaced by others. Almond would have—and he did—welcome changes and modifications to his work, and assumed that others would move beyond it.

Seven decades of productivity: a long life, and a fruitful life. Gabriel Almond died on Christmas Day, 2002, just before his 92nd birthday. He was surrounded by his family at their annual reunion in Asilomar near Monterey on California's most spectacular coast line.

Heinz Eulau,
Stanford University

Lucian Pye,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

Sidney Verba,
Harvard University

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Ronie Garcia-Johnson

Ronie Garcia-Johnson Garcia-Johnson, assistant professor of Environmental Policy at the Nicholas School of the Environment and Earth Sciences, Duke University, died of melanoma on April 15, 2003, after an illness of four months' duration. She is survived by her husband, David Johnson, and two children, Madeleine Revel and Soleil Holiday Garcia-Johnson.

Garcia-Johnson graduated *magna cum laude* from Harvard College in 1991 and received her Ph.D in political science from the University of Michigan in 1998. She came to Duke in the fall of 1999. At Duke she was known for her outstanding scholarship, her brilliant teaching, her dedication to interdisciplinary research, and her personal commitment to the people with whom she worked. She inspired intense dedication from her students, and built strong ties with faculty members

across the university, including those in political science, law, and public policy as well as the Nicholas School. Her death leaves an emotional as well as an intellectual hole in the community of scholars at Duke who knew and worked with her.

Garcia-Johnson's most important work of scholarship, *Exporting Environmentalism: U.S. Multinational Chemical Corporations in Brazil and Mexico* (MIT Press, 2000), won the Harold and Margaret Sprout Award from the International Studies Association in 2001. The award honors the best book or article published in the previous two years that makes a significant contribution to the study of international environmental policy issues.

Exporting Environmentalism argues that U.S.-based multinational corporations "export environmentalism," in two ways. First, they engage in practices

that often are more environmentally friendly than local corporations in the same industry. Second, these corporations export the *ideology* of environmentalism—a set of values, assumptions, ideas, and expectations that provide guidelines for protecting the natural environment.

Garcia-Johnson showed that U.S.-based chemical firms in Brazil and Mexico in the 1990s exported environmentalism for instrumental, not altruistic reasons. However, improving their own environmental practices, and demanding improvement from their competitors, served their interests. By exporting environmentalism the firms increased their competitive advantage, discouraged governmental intervention, and helped defend the reputation of the chemical industry.

Exporting Environmentalism shows once again that "hard-nosed business-

men” were the carriers of ideas originally promulgated by idealists and academics. John Maynard Keynes once said that “practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.” Garcia-Johnson showed that in some respects, multinational firms are the prisoners of environmental scientists and visionaries. Environmentalist ideology is carried not just by activists, but also by profit-seeking businesspeople.

Garcia-Johnson pointed out that multinational corporations export environmentalism, but she did not celebrate this fact uncritically. Indeed, the impli-

cations of her pioneering analysis are not necessarily benign. Corporate environmentalism, she argues, was designed in part to head off governmental intervention. Corporate networks and organizations are neither transparent nor democratic. It is not clear in a systematic way how effective they are in making a big difference in environmental quality.

At the time of her death, she was a leading investigator (with Gary Gereffi and Erika Sasser) on the Duke Project on Social and Environmental Certification. This project was funded by the Ford Foundation to explore the emergence, evolution, diffusion, and effectiveness of certification institutions

(including Responsible Care® and ISO 14001).

Ronie Garcia-Johnson was an exemplary teacher and scholar. Committed as she was to environmentalist values, she was also committed to the pursuit of knowledge through social science. Her life was tragically short but luminescent. Political science, the field of environmental policy studies, and Duke University will all be poorer for her absence. And those of us who knew her personally will daily grieve her passing even as we remind ourselves to celebrate her rich life.

Robert O. Keohane,
Duke University

