

1-1-2008

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Published version. Published as a chapter of a book entitled *Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. Eds. Lynda Lee Kaid, Christina Holtz-Bacha. Thousand Oaks: SAGE, 2008: 729, [Permalink](#). Used with permission.

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SABATO, LARRY (1948–)

Larry Sabato, the Robert Kent Gooch Professor of Government and Foreign Affairs at the University of Virginia, is known for his research on U.S. elections. His political expertise has earned him different nicknames over the years. The *Wall Street Journal* once referred to him as “probably the most quoted college professor in the Land.” *The Washington Post* dubbed him “the Mark McGwire of political analysts,” and Fox News Channel called him “America’s favorite political scientist” while the *Washingtonian* magazine called him the “Dr. Phil of American politics.” Dr. Sabato is the founder and director of the University of Virginia’s Center for Politics, and his favorite slogan “Politics is a good thing!” aptly describes his lifetime contribution to political analysis.

Sabato’s research focuses broadly on national and state governments, particularly the different elements of the U.S. electoral scene. He has written numerous books and essays on topics such as the rising power of political consultants in U.S. elections, the changing nature of the gubernatorial office, the role of Political Action Committees (PACs) in the U.S. political process, and history of U.S. primary elections. He was among the first to identify the changing nature of the political scenario with increasing power being handed over to consultants and to point out how campaign financing determines U.S. electoral dynamics.

Sabato’s book *Divided States of America: The Slash and Burn Politics of the 2004 Presidential Election* analyzes the individual 2004 races in great detail and provides background analysis leading to the 2006 and

2008 elections. He is also the author of over 20 other books and countless essays discussing the American political process. His other recent works include *Get in the Booth! A Citizen’s Guide to the 2004 Election*, *Midterm Madness: The Elections of 2002*, *Overtime: The Election 2000 Thriller*, *Dangerous Democracy: The Battle Over Ballot Initiatives in America*, *Peepshow: Media and Politics in an Age of Scandal*, *Toward the Millennium: The Elections of 1996*, and *Dirty Little Secrets: The Persistence of Corruption in American Politics*. Sabato also issues a political newsletter through Sabato’s Crystal Ball, a critically acclaimed election analysis Web site which predicted results for the 2002 midterm elections and the 2004 presidential elections.

A graduate in government from the University of Virginia, Sabato also studied at Princeton University for a year before completing his doctorate at Queen’s College at Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar. He has appeared on numerous U.S. news programs as a political expert and has served on many national and state commissions and panels.

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Further Readings

- O’Connor, K., & Sabato, L. J. (2004). *Essentials of American government: Continuity and change*. New York: Longman.
- Sabato, L. J. (1981). *The rise of political consultants: New ways of winning elections*. New York: Basic Books.
- Sabato, L. J. (1991). *Feeding frenzy: How attack journalism has transformed American politics*. New York: Free Press.