

The books that inspired Elinor Ostrom: “Lasswell and Kaplan’s *Power and Society* broadened my perspective on individual choice and behaviour in a way that was very instrumental”.

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**Elinor Ostrom** was jointly awarded the 2009 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences for her analysis of economic governance. Here she shares the most important book of her early career and recommends a new path-breaking book in the field.



The book by Harold D. Lasswell and Abraham Kaplan on *Power and Society* is certainly one of the most important books in my early career. What was so important was that Lasswell and Kaplan saw multiple values that could be used in efforts to achieve multiple outcomes. They included power as one of the values that people might use as a resource as well as an outcome. They might search for using power to get power or knowledge to get power or to get any of the other eight values that they included in their analysis. This broadened my perspective on individual choice and behaviour in a way that was very instrumental.

Oran Young has written a recent book on governance that I think is a really path-breaking book - *On Environmental Governance: Sustainability, Efficiency, and Equity*. It covers a great deal that Oran Young had included in some earlier works but does so in a way that provides a genuinely integrative picture.

I have very little spare time for pleasure reading. I do take a fair number of journals in political science, economics, public policy, and resource policy. One of my evening activities is going through the recent articles and choosing those that I will read very seriously and take notes on.

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**Elinor Ostrom** is an American political economist whose work is associated with the new institutional economics and the resurgence of political economy. She was awarded the 2009 Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, which she shared with Oliver E. Williamson, for her analysis of economic governance, especially the commons. She was the first, and to date, the only woman to win the prize in this category. See her full biography on the [NobelPrize.org](http://NobelPrize.org).

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