
— Michael Nylan, University of California at Berkeley

George Orwell wrote in “Politics and the English Language” (1946) that the words democracy, socialism, freedom, patriotic, realistic, justice, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like democracy, nor is there any agreed definition but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides.” Stephen Angle presumes instead that Chinese and Americans can be guided into a mutually beneficial conversation about human rights, given their common ground, so long as they come to conversations with an informed understanding of each other’s histories and perspectives and a willingness to dismantle parochial barriers. He chooses not to emphasize, in other words, the “swindles and perversions” regularly perpetrated in the English language (not to mention the Chinese), when abstractions are invoked. Nor does he accept Jeremy Bentham’s cynical view that people invoke natural rights “when they wish to get their way without having to argue for it”—that talk of moral rights is merely “nonsense on stilts.”

Into the stalled debates over human rights that go over the same ground ad nauseam, Angle would have us interject Robert Brandom on the prospects for cross-language communication; Michael Walzer on “thick” and “thin” values (Chapter 2); Allan Gibbard on accommodation; a revised Richard Rorty on “presuppositionless critical reflection”; and John Rawls on the legally well ordered. Following this assessment of the extant literature, Angle proceeds to build his own powerful five-part case: 1) While the Chinese had no word for “human rights” (now rendered as 权利) prior to the “impact of the West” in the late nineteenth century, they did have institutions and words that “fulfilled the same functions in their own societies” (p. 74). (Those who doubt that it is possible to conceive something prior to making a word for it should see James Barr on biblical semantics or Jonathan Hall on Greek ethnicity.) 2) Many of the powerful in China were receptive to international law as soon as they became acquainted with it; they neither dragged their heels, as the revolutionaries alleged, nor ran for the cover conveniently provided by the “Asian values” claims. 3) Substantial constructive engagement is possible “even if differences between moralities persist” (p. 50). 4) Fruitful conversations will ensue if all parties examine the basic presuppositions behind both the most-favored American definition of human rights (participation in a representative democracy) and that typically espoused by the Chinese (full immersion in a stable, supportive social order). And 5) Americans may ultimately be persuaded of the benefits of applying their strong traditions of pluralism to the international scene, in place of imperialism or isolationism.

I have three complaints about Human Rights and Chinese Thought (all related), though I regard it as a major contribution to academic discussions on this topic. First, Angle’s writing style is unlikely to appeal to the politicians, financiers, journalists, and students whom he envisions taking part in myriad “horizontal” encounters pushing the logic of engagement toward consensus. I cannot but contrast Angle’s prose with that of such plain speakers as Tom Paine, Abraham Lincoln, Oliver Wendell Holmes, John Dewey, and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Second, Angle’s book tarry too long with the lofty pronouncements of the major heroes of the True Way neo-Confucian, self-strengthening, and Republican movements. His own insistence upon contextual awareness demands a search beyond historical summaries and thought experiments to address the ever-shifting realities on the ground, in China, Europe, and America today. After all, rights tend to be asserted in response to gross injustices, as Alan Dershowitz in Shouting Fire (2002) contends. Perfect justice is an ever-elusive ideal, but injustice is something we recognize from experience. How will knowledge of Liu Shipei’s stance, to take but one instance, prepare citizens watching the erosion of rights already enshrined in domestic and international law to reconsider their fundamental notions of those human rights?

Third, Angle’s defense of imperial China and the “Confucian tradition” would be stronger still had he discerned in them a greater plurality of views and practices. Having said all that, his preoccupation with Chinese concepts of reciprocity and desire is eminently sensible, since it must be desires for success that will insure human flourishing in life (howsoever defined) and beliefs in justice (or rough justice, at the very least) that finally motivate people to talk and act. Neither heritage nor nationality will change that.


— Emily Hauptmann, Western Michigan University

What are “the claims of culture” on political communities? Throughout this book, Seyla Benhabib argues that they are weaker and less obviously worth granting than many political theorists believe. She argues that a wide array of theorists (Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, and Iris Young among them) have been too quick to grant the political claims of cultures at the expense of universalist democratic norms. Lest one expect that her critique merely asserts that democratic universalism is more important or valuable than cultural autonomy, Benhabib’s aims are more ambitious. Instead, she means to show that many theorists who argue that representative democracies ought to accord greater political rights to culturally defined groups do so because they misunderstand culture itself.

Benhabib argues that those who are overly sympathetic to the claims of culture make the fundamental sociological mistake of understanding cultures as if they were “clearly delineable wholes” that can be mapped onto human groups in fairly straightforward ways (p. 4). Such a view of culture, she claims, is flawed principally on epistemic grounds. That is, those who see cultures as wholes mistakenly believe that they are more straightforwardly knowable objects than they are. At times, Benhabib suggests that this is more than just a conceptual incoherence; the inclination to regard cultures as coherent wholes can also be connected to the desire to control them: “It is the epistemic interest in power, I want to suggest, that leads to the silencing of dissenting opinions and contradictory perspectives, and yields dominant master narratives of what the cultural tradition is, who is in, and who is out. This epistemic power interest can be exercised by the tribal chief as well as by the enemy general, by the anthropologist in search of the truth as well as by the development worker in search of social control” (pp. 102–3). According to the author, Kymlicka, Taylor, and Young, however, are less guilty of this “epistemic interest in power” than is Susan Okin, who displays it not to uphold but rather to dismiss the claims of culture in a way Benhabib finds too sweeping (p. 103).

Rather than see them as wholes, Benhabib argues for a “narrative view” of cultures, a view she sometimes also calls “social constructivism” (pp. 5–11). This view rests on the following claims: First, she contends that cultures only look like wholes to those outside them or to those of their members who make it their project to recast them; to most “participants in the culture,” however, cultures are “polyvocal, multilayered, decentered and fractured systems of action and signification” (pp. 25–26). Second, she contends that if we think of
cultures as "systems of action and significature," we will attend primarily to what their members do rather than to how we might best define them: "[I]n reflecting upon politics of identity/difference, our focus should be less on what the group is but more on what the political leaders of such groups demand in the public sphere" (p. 16). Not only is such a view of culture sociologically right; it also, according to Benhabib, has "normative political consequences" any democrat ought to endorse.

It is worth noting that the adjectives the author uses in opposition to "holistic" ('polyvocal, multilayered, etc.) are not necessary attributes of narratives; that is, narratives are still recognizable as narratives even when they are univocal, single layered and so on. So if we pursue Benhabib's analogy and see cultures as narratives, does good sociology dictate that we see in them all the attributes she names? A few passages in The Claims of Culture suggest otherwise. Although perhaps she believes that all cultures could potentially have these attributes, she also worries that some policies may "freeze existing group differences" and warn against nationalisms that try to create "homogeneity out of narrative dissonance," and fundamentalist movements' quest for purity (pp. viii–ix, 8, 185–86). Are these a few exceptions that prove Benhabib's sociological rule that cultures are for the most part too fluid to have an essence? Or do these examples reveal that conceiving of cultures as "polyvocal, multilayered" is not so much sociologically sound as it is politically desirable?

Although the author offers some compelling illustrations of how holistic views of culture can get a lot about particular cultures wrong (pp. 5–6, 62), her principal concern seems to be to argue for policies that prod cultures toward becoming more "polyvocal" than they currently are. Among the policies that have this quality, according to Benhabib, are universal entitlements that are not group-specific, forms of "joint governance" that promote "cross-cultural dialogue," and citizenship being treated as a practice rather than as a passive marker of membership acquired by birth or ethnic origin (pp. 76, 127–28, 168–71). Indeed, the whole of her sixth chapter on citizenship in contemporary Europe highlights a range of policies she believes would foster just the sort of vital, dynamic, and porous cultural life she commends.

The whole of Benhabib's approach to culture is informed by her long-standing, deep commitment to discourse ethics. However attractive one may find the basic claims of discourse ethics, one feels at times as if she allows those claims to do a kind of work for which they are not suited. The fundamental norms that ought to govern our relations with one another—universal respect and egalitarian reciprocity—seem closer at hand once one accepts that most cultures are marked by multiple, contested narratives. I suspect these norms are too active in Benhabib's sociology for her to be able to offer a fully considered analysis of the concept of culture. One can accept that many cultures have been flattened by attempts to capture their dominant ideas; one can also accept that the world would be a better place for all of us if more cultures were as Benhabib represents them. But those who see cultures as coherent wholes are not always being just careless or controlling; they may also be giving expression to how cultures fulfill some people's desires for wholeness, coherence, or even purity. One may wish to disown these desires or their consequences, but they are still a part of the meaning and experience of culture.

A Marx for Our Times: Adventures and Misadventures of a Critique.

— Alex Callinicos, University of York

It is the mark of a major thinker that his or her work admits of different readings that reflect, among other things, the divergent contexts in which this work is received or pursued. Of few is this truer than of Marx. Daniel Bensaïd's newly translated study illustrates this very well. It was originally published in Paris in 1995, when the intellectual and political prestige of Marxism had probably reached its low point in twentieth-century France. The nouveaux philosophes had in the late 1970s succeeded in establishing, to the satisfaction of the French elite, that any version of Marxism led ineluctably to the totalitarianism symbolized by Stalin's Gulag Archipelago. The subsequent collapse of communism in the USSR and Eastern and Central Europe seemed to provide further support for this apparent lesson, as was affirmed in such works as Stéphane Courtois et. al., ed., The Black Book of Communism (1999) and François Furet's The Past of An Illusion (1995).

This very hostile environment did not so much destroy the extensive Marxist intellectual culture that had flourished in the aftermath of May 1968 as drive it largely underground. Bensaïd, however, remained a defiantly public figure, at once academic philosopher, Trotskyist political activist, and the author of numerous political and theoretical texts written in an elegant French prose that is well captured here by Gregory Elliott's translation. The French title of the work under review—Marx L'Intempestif, "Marx the Untimely"—highlights the embattled conditions under which Bensaïd perceived himself to be writing.

In fact, in the interval between the original publication of the book and the appearance of the English edition, the intellectual and political context has become more favorable for Benhabib's intransigent version of revolutionary Marxism. As he puts it in a new preface, "[h]istory...has got its colour back" (p. x). Politically, the French public-sector strikes of November–December 1995 helped to stimulate the emergence of a "left of left" that contested Socialist Prime Minister Lionel Jospin's compromises with neoliberalism and participated in the development of the international antiglobalization movement. Intellectually also there has been a recovery of confidence among French Marxists, and a new constituency for their output, as was evidenced by three international Marx congresses held in Paris (1995, 1998, 2001) and by the publication of such major contributions to contemporary Marxist studies as Presses Universitaires de France's Dictionnaire Marx Critique (2001).

Bensaïd's book can be seen as a contribution to this process of recovery. An important component of the French reaction against Marxism was the belated reception of certain polemics of the early Cold War—notably those of Friedrich von Hayek and Karl Popper—that had long been established as classics in the English-speaking world. One of Bensaïd's main interlocutors is provided by the Anglophone school of analytical Marxism that in the 1970s and 1980s sought to reframe the substance of Marxian theory in terms compatible with the norms of mainstream social science in general and rational-choice theory in particular. His generally negative appreciation of this project is indicated by one chapter title: "Class Struggle is No Game (Marx contra Game Theory and Theories of Justice)."

Yet Bensaïd's own enterprise is no mere affirmation of some received Marxist orthodoxy. Sensitive to the plurality of Marxisms, he offers his own reading of Marx, one based on a detailed and sophisticated knowledge of Capital. In a long and complex book, two themes in particular stand out. The first is a conception of history whose formulation is heavily indebted to the idea of contretemps put forward by Jacques Derrida in Spectres of Marx (1993). Time is always out of joint for Bensaïd's Marx, history "the discordance of times" (p. 52), the intersection of mutually incompatible tendencies in a process from which chance cannot be eliminated and whose outcome is not predetermined.

The reading implies a radically nondeterminist version of historical materialism. Socialist
revolutions are not the inevitable culmination of a historical teleology, but depend rather on “[t]he broken time of politics and strategy” (p. 23), on the hazardous calculations and interventions of human actors grappling with circumstances that they can neither fully comprehend nor control. The emphasis that Bensaid places on strategy is an intriguing but largely undeveloped aspect of a version of Marxism that offers suggestive insights rather than to develop them.

A second, and strikingly original, theme is the significance that Bensaid attaches to the influence of what Marx called “German science” to the latter’s theoretical project. The influence of the anti-Newtonian conceptions of nature developed by Schelling and Hegel, and sublimated even in the naturalistic materialism prevalent in mid-nineteenth-century Germany can be detected, Bensaid argues, in the very conceptual construction of Marx’s Capital. This is of more than historical interest, he suggests.

The “radical monism” (p. 314) espoused by the young Marx, who looked forward to a single science of nature both human and physical, is being vindicated by developments in the contemporary physical sciences, such as chaos theory. The workings of the capitalist economic system as portrayed in Capital are analogous to those of complex physical systems whose behavior is nonlinear because of their sensitivity to initial conditions. Apart from the epistemological warrant that it offers to Marx’s critique of capitalist economy and ecology, the one diagnosing capitalism’s inner contradictions, the other displaying its destructive effects on the natural world.

There is much that even the sympathetic reader could question in an ambitious and wide-ranging work that is often quicker to offer suggestive insights than to develop them systematically. All the same, A Marx for Our Times is a sign of the vitality of heterodox Marxist thought at a time when the legitimacy of capitalism is once again coming under challenge.


— Joseph Romance, Drew University

There is something remarkable and grand about an effort to completely rethink the history of American politics, and James Block offers just such a sweeping reassessment in this book. Instead of the primacy usually accorded freedom or equality, he argues that American politics is best understood as a quest for agency.

Agency is the idea that individuals use their freedom to “participate actively in shaping” a world to realize some “divine and collective purpose” (p. 22). Agency demands a new conception of how individuals relate to authority—one that is fundamentally egalitarian. For Block, to understand the modern world we must gain a renewed appreciation of the religious and communal traditions that provide a set of loftier objectives for Americans. However, this should not be seen as an effort to place individuals in some sort of communal strait-jacket. Instead, freedom is essential as a means for individuals to join communities that enable people to realize noble ends. We should note that this book is not a study of institutions; rather, it is an accounting of how intellectual ideas, from Hobbes to Dewey, shaped the development of American character. It is also a remarkable effort to unite the disciplines of history and political science. The audience should include historians, political theorists, students of American politics, and those interested in religion.

To comprehend how the idea of agency developed, Block argues that we need to appreciate the reconciliation between Protestantism and liberal theory. Protestantism faced a grave political problem as it unthetered individuals from the strict hierarchical societies that existed previously. Liberalism arises in an effort to “reverse this disorder and to reestablish social and institutional cohesion” (p. 28). Hobbes is the great theorist of this reversal who shows his reader the terror of freedom and convinces them to “voluntarily” authorize a new political order. These ideas about religion, freedom, community, and liberalism, though born in England, came together to create a new society in America. In effect, America is where Protestant individualism finally harmonized with liberal notions of personal consent.

Much of this book is surprisingly and bound to alter one’s perspective. Thus, while Locke is still an important figure to liberalism, it is Hobbes who is more central in understanding the role of agency in liberalism. The Puritans are still important contributors to American political history; however, they had only a “proto” theory of agency, because Puritans were too afraid of disorder and less respectful of individualism. The real heroes of American politics turn out to be the egalitarian Methodist preachers of the Great Awakening, because they promised their audiences the freedom for anyone to join new communities with a moral purpose.

Block’s ideas are compelling and exciting because they force us to move beyond some of the tired trade-offs that so often characterize American politics, that is, one camp that says Americans only want freedom and another that argues that freedom has led to immorality and an atomized world of lonely individuals. Additionally, Block offers a way of revitalizing communitarianism, because communitarian theory is sometimes criticized for being hostile to personal freedom; however, freedom must be seen as a means to some greater end that can only be realized in a community. Genuine community is only embraced after a kind of walk in the wilderness—the novelists and preachers he cites tell the story of people who in their loneliness realize the emptiness of pure freedom—that compels Americans to embrace the demands of a collective identity. Thus, Americans freely choose their commitment to a greater good. Indeed, the idea of “personal responsibility grounded in an individualism” was the key to a consensus that emerged during the revolutionary era and united the disparate groups that voluntarily came together to create a new nation (p. 287).

In a book of such extensive scope, there are bound to be points that puzzle, even infuriate, the reader. For instance, if Block is right, Catholics contributed absolutely nothing to our understanding of American political thought. Next, he is absolutely right to remind us of the religious aspects of the American founding period and to insist that there were a number of groups that needed to be rallied to make the revolution a success. There was an elite, secular group and a second group of more religious commoners. Jefferson successfully spoke to both groups; however, Block downplays the Enlightenment, secular thought of the founding too much. Given his striking demand for us to rethink American political history, it is incumbent upon him not only to make his positive case for agency, but to explicitly explain why the secularists are not as important. Of course, to do that would make a long book even longer, but such epic projects demand Herculean efforts. Furthermore, we need more proof that agency is the way Americans actually thought. At times, Block is quite convincing. His analysis of the preachers and of early novelists like Charles Brockden Brown and Herman Melville are some of the strongest parts of the book in offering evidence about the way the idea of agency seeps into the general culture. But there are times when the evidence is somewhat thinner. After all, there are significant ways in which secular thought continued to influence American conceptions of politics—William Graham
Sumner, for instance, is more important than Block is willing to admit. Finally, it is not exactly clear how someone like Lincoln fits his accounting. Lincoln certainly articulated a grand purpose to the ideals of American community and freedom, but his relationship with organized religion was ambivalent at best.

Block's arguments are powerful and bound to force many to revise their theories about American politics. Even if one does not completely agree with the thesis, his contentions must now be seriously considered. Moreover, I would suspect that much work should now be done investigating many of the intriguing points that he makes in this extensive discussion of American politics. If A Nation of Agents does not ultimately convince everyone, it certainly marks the beginning of a splendid argument.


— David Fott, University of Nevada, Las Vegas

To say the least, it is a gamble for an author of a book about a philosopher to neglect one aspect of the philosopher's thought and yet advance a thesis about the entirety of that thought. William Caspary takes that chance in his book on John Dewey, but the dice do not roll his way. Caspary's thesis is that "Dewey's moral pragmatism and his democratic politics, alike, revolve around a central theme of conflict and conflict-resolution" (p. 3). He largely passes over Dewey's metaphysics, which he says has been explored well by others. Nevertheless, Dewey's writings on human nature should have given the author doubts. In an article that Caspary does not cite, Dewey claims that humans have innate non-material needs, such as for companionship, "cooperation with and emulation of one's fellows for mutual aid and combat alike," and aesthetic expression; combat, he continues, need not take the form of war but may be channeled toward fighting disease (John Dewey, "Does Human Nature Change?" in The Later Works, vol. 13, 1988, p. 286). Dewey gives no priority to conflict over other human needs.

Indeed, Thomas M. Alexander made a much better case for aesthetic expression as central to Dewey's philosophy (John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience, and Nature, 1987). But Alexander wisely delved into Dewey's metaphysics, as did H. S. Thayer, whose seminal critical account of pragmatism goes uncited by Caspary (along with other recent scholarship on Dewey). According to Thayer, "Continuity is seen [by Dewey] as a deeper and more pervasive trait of things [than conflict or discontinuity]; indeed, it underlies or is a feature of conflict. For the conflict that initiates human deliberation and inquiry is itself 'continuous' with conditions (material, organic, and social) that precede it and with those that are to follow" (Meaning and Action, 2ed ed., 1981, p. 464, n. 14). To see continuity as more fundamental than conflict leads to the insight that promoting the sharing of common goods has a sounder claim to be an axis for Dewey's thought than promoting the solving of conflicts: The latter task is only one aspect of the former.

To be sure, Caspary does not ignore the sharing of common goods. He underestimates its significance, however, because he does not treat Dewey's main work of political theory, The Public and Its Problems, with sufficient care: "Dewey defines a public as those people and groups who are indirectly affected by some transaction, and who become conscious of their diverse interests with regard to it" (p. 25). The latter condition is not part of Dewey's definition of a public, however; a public exists whether or not the people who constitute it are aware of their stake in the matter. On the same page cited by Caspary, Dewey remarks that technology has so complicated life "that the resultant public cannot identify and distinguish itself" (Later Works, vol. 2, 1984, p. 314).

According to Dewey, the primary task is to increase communication, not to resolve conflict. Caspary avoids sustained consideration of any of Dewey's works of political theory in favor of collecting passages from a variety of books and articles dealing with conflict; he does so under the Neoplatonist assumption that Dewey has a "theory of conflict and conflict-resolution" that can be assembled from various sources, and despite the fact that Dewey never attempts to construct such a theory (p. 4). Caspary's method is just the sort of acontextual approach that a Deweyan should reject.

Chapter 1 also contains material from current work in mediation. Chapters 2 and 3 analyze Dewey's accounts of natural and social science, respectively. Chapter 2 contains a good analysis of Dewey's views on the relation between qualitative and quantitative science. Caspary wisely notes the qualifications that attend the success of Dewey's attempt to analogize science to democracy; but both Dewey and Caspary fail to appreciate that science makes gains because scientists are not completely socialized, not because they are.

Chapter 4 discusses individual ethical deliberation, while Chapter 5 covers public ethical deliberation and ethical theory. Caspary provides an accurate account of the former, using abortion to illustrate the Deweyan approach. Surprised that Dewey offers no concept of "tragic" ethical conflict, he suggests that it could simply be added to Dewey's account (p. 131). Caspary does not see that Dewey's view of human nature is too pliant to allow abandonment of his optimism that all conflicts are resolvable and all losses can be overcome. In Chapter 5, Caspary, following Dewey, largely confines public ethical deliberation, which is practical, with ethical theory; for Dewey an ethical theorist is simply a systematic deliberator. From there, Caspary seems to assume that moral argument is inherently abstract, hence, less powerful than Deweyan dialogue (which contains a lot of what is today called "values clarification") as a way to settle serious conflicts. The implausibility of Dewey's conflation of ethical theory with practical deliberation may be enough to make one conclude that ethics is not a theoretical subject after all. In a Deweyan spirit, Caspary attempts to redescribe the opposition between self-interest and duty as a matter of seeing duties as "interests of the self" or "identifying broader underlying interests" among people so that the opposition disappears (p. 156). No conflict is so serious that it cannot be described away? That is unbelievable.

The concluding chapter—the most successful—concerns Dewey's progressive political strategy. As Caspary notes, that strategy includes consciousness raising, conflict resolution, social experimentation, "a politics of theory, as in emancipatory conceptions of politics, science, ethics, esthetics, and education," and electoral politics (pp. 174–75). The programs he cites here as well as earlier—especially the Mondragon Cooperatives in Spain—are surely ones that Dewey would think worthwhile. Caspary reminds us that despite Dewey's lack of attention to political institutions, his thought can give some guidance to social movements. In making that helpful point, however, Dewey on Democracy sheds little new light on Dewey's thought.


— Bernard Yack, Brandeis University

In her book, Joan Cocks evaluates the responses of a number of prominent intellectuals to the surprising prominence of nationalism in modern political life. The subjects of her study, Karl Marx, Rosa Luxemburg, Hannah Arendt, Franz Fanon, Isaiah Berlin, Tom Nairn, V. S. Naipaul, and Edward Said, share a number of things that justify their being brought
together in this way. On the one hand, they all think of themselves as progressive or radical critics of nationalist and international elites. On the other hand, they are all, as “professional critics,” inspired by the “impulse to puncture myths” (p. 10) and thus have little patience for the nationalist enthusiasms that so often mobilize the ordinary people whose interest they want to promote. As a result, the popularity of nationalism confronts their political and intellectual passions with a paradox: The critical sensibility that sets them against social and political privilege also puts them at odds with the feelings of ordinary people. Cocks’s book provides a helpful guide to their struggles to resolve this paradox.

The most interesting chapters are on the less familiar thinkers. Cocks does an especially good job of showing how a nice neo-Marxist like Nairn could evolve into a rather ferocious nationalist. Her appreciation of the dilemmas Nairn faced makes her critique all the more telling. And by juxtaposing V. S. Naipaul and Edward Said, she brings out strengths and weaknesses of their thought that would be missed were they treated independently. Given her acknowledged leftist sensibilities, it is especially impressive that she does not hesitate to criticize the incongruities of Said’s self-image as an outsider or to defend the genuineness of Naipaul’s enthusiasm for those that he meets at the margins of the world’s distinct societies.

When it comes, however, to the more canonical thinkers, especially Marx and Arendt, Passion and Paradox is a little less enlightening. In these chapters, Cocks seems more interested in salvaging the reputations of thinkers that she admires than in identifying promising insights into our difficulties with nationalism. She seems especially eager to revive Marx’s reputation as a critic of nationalism. (The title of the Marx chapter is “Marx Uncovers the Truth about National Identity.”) But she only succeeds in showing that if Marx were right about the relationship between class and nation, it would be easy to resist nationalist passions. She does not show that he is right. Marx, she argues, is on to something important when he urges us to treat the nation as an “illusory” collective subject, a new opiate for the masses. But that argument is far less compelling and important if we do not share Marx’s belief in a real collective subject, namely, the proletariat. We do not need Marx to teach us that nationalism is based on shared myths and illusions. What Marx adds to this idea is the belief that we will discover class solidarity when we strip away the nationalist masks that hide our true identity. As long as Cocks does nothing to restore that faded Marxist belief, I do not see why we should be turning to Marx to make sense of our difficulties with nationalism.

Overall, there is a tension in Cocks’s assessment of her subjects, one that aptly illustrates her theme of “passion and paradox.” On the one hand, she is clearly drawn to direct and forceful rhetoric. “Luxemburg,” she tells us, “deserves our admiration for her bold and fiery style” (p. 57). Nairn has the virtue of “a sharp tongue and fighting spirit, so refreshingly at odds with the cultural irony and world-weariness of our age” (p. 127). And even Marx’s frequent ethnic slurs, reprehensible as they may be, are “also refreshingly colorful and irreverent,” at least “compared with euphemisms that turn all peoples into the same shade of gray” (p. 22). On the other hand, Cocks takes great pains to emphasize the unresolved dilemmas and conundrums that nationalism creates for progressive intellectuals. It would seem, then, that in order to “confront the national question,” one might have to abandon some of the confident self-assertion that she admires in political rhetoric. It is to her credit, therefore, that she resists the temptation to pronounce and preach, and instead strives to help us think through the problems of nationalism for ourselves by clearly charting the intellectual struggles of some of our most interesting predecessors.

### Regulating Intimacy: A New Legal Paradigm


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**Laura R. Woliver, University of South Carolina, Columbia**

Important recent scholarship seeks to integrate the lives of women into political citizenship while avoiding echoes of male paradigmatic templates of justice, rights, public/private, and freedom. Recognizing the intersections of gender, race, class, and sexuality within the context of women’s lives is central to these efforts. The books of both Jane L. Cohen and Beth Kyoko Jamieson are works in this domain.

In **Regulating Intimacy,** Cohen advocates a new reflexive paradigm for law that would abandon “the dichotomies of status and contract, public and private, regulation versus nonregulation, and which frankly acknowledges both the legitimacy of diverse forms of intimacy as well as the necessity for a context-sensitive pluralistic legal regime” (p. 198). Without a reflexive approach, our legal system yields a “dichotomy that installs a male standard and systematically disadvantages women” (p. 42). She highlights how the approach to questions of regulating intimacy is conducted within an authoritative framework of two competing legal paradigms—the classical liberal and the welfare model—which “structure the possible responses in ways that are characteristically one-sided and reciprocally blind” (p. 126).

The reflexive approach incorporates an awareness about the source of all constitutional and rights and principles, and about the choice of legal forms available to us today for the most appropriate regulation and/or support for self-regulation” (p. 75). Cohen reviews many of the patriarchal usages of the concept of privacy in our past (and present) and advocates that instead of rejecting the concept of privacy rights, we should “redescribe the principle and defend its normative content” (p. 75). After explaining the three paradigms (classical liberal, welfare, and reflexive), she explores how each operates within three cases of regulating intimacy—contraception and abortion, same-sex relationships, and sexual harassment in the workplace—and how a reflexive approach gets closer to agreed-upon goals of equality, justice, and personal agency in constructing one’s own imaginary domain.

Mere acceptance of negative liberty, for instance, might be necessary but certainly not sufficient to protect freedom and equality in personal intimacy. Asserting that freedom is simply when the state is kept out of one’s personal life overlooks the context in which people navigate options concerning their most personal and intimate decisions. The U.S. Supreme Court decision **Harris v. Mc Rae** (1980) illustrates the liberal legal paradigm’s blindness to the effects of social class and ability to pay that shape women’s exercise of their rights to obtain a legal abortion. Keeping the state out via **Harris v. Mc Rae** means that poor women are not afforded the same intimacy rights as women who can afford to pay for a legal abortion.

Both Cohen’s and Jamieson’s strongest chapters are on sexual diversities. Cohen displays how merely accepting the rights of gay citizens to practice their choices in private without government interference or coercion still stigmatizes people’s chosen intimacy by relegating it exclusively to private behavior. Building on Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick’s (1990) themes in **Epistemology of the Closet,** Cohen shows how even “tolerant” communities still do not accept gay affections enacted publicly. Society allows public displays of heterosexual orientation (holding hands, hugging, and kissing). Justice and equality for consensual
intimacy requires the incorporation of diverse intimacies into civil society without any stigma attached to someone’s chosen relationships. Society should move from a tolerance stance for sexual diversity to one of respect. Cohen argues that, “the moral criteria undergirding the regulation of adult intimacy should be whether adult intimacies are wanted, consensual, reciprocal (mutual recognition of rights), and responsive to the obligations that intimacy incurs, or whether they are imposed, abusive, or involve force, domination, or exploitation” (pp. 54–55). In the realm of sexual harassment, therefore, the target should be “not sex but sexism” (p. 150).

Cohen brings the body back into theoretical analysis, avoids atomistic, possessive, unencumbered individualism, and hopes to benefit both males and females since “we are all embodied selves” (p. 60) with stakes in privacy and the geographical territories of the self. Dominant juridical paradigms narrow our discussions to either/or choices within zero-sum games of whether the state regulates or does not regulate what is defined within the discourses themselves as private/public, acceptable/deviant. She points out how the powerful zero-sum framed choices derived from the liberal or welfare paradigms in the law display the deep problematics at work for feminist jurisprudence and theory.

These deeper problematics, which predate recent feminist attempts to reform law to more justly incorporate the lives of women, is what the second book, Real Choices: Feminism, Freedom, and the Limits of Law, could have explored more. Jamieson’s thesis is the refocus of feminist legal theory toward liberty. Utilizing feminist renditions of the principles of identity, privacy, and agency, the author seeks to display that “liberty is no threat to equality” (p. 12). She asserts, however, that many feminist scholars have overlooked this.

Real Choices uses three cases to posit contingent conclusions about the function of liberty: Identity: sexual diversity and the law; Privacy: surrogacy, sperm donation, and the law; and Agency: the rights and responsibilities of battered women. Jamieson contrasts these hard, real cases of the circumstances of people’s lives to “the cities of speech” spun by many political theorists (p. 65).

Regarding same-sex intimacies, Jamieson, like Cohen, illuminates the illogic and cruelties manifest in present laws. Utilizing the “don’t ask/don’t tell” United States military charade policy and the _Romer v. Evans_ (1996) decision that invalidated Colorado’s antigay amendment, Jamieson articulates a convincing analysis of liberty and equality, which recognizes that sexual diversities matter. On the _Romer_ opinion, for example, she cautions that the crux of the issues in the case focus on “the denial of remedy for the evils of discrimination, not any affirmative requirement to institute positive laws” (p. 102), thus remodeling closets.

Analogizing surrogacy laws and regulations to _Lochner v. New York_ (1906) is an important and original insight within Jamieson’s chapter on privacy and liberty. _Lochner_ redux refines contracts and declares all signatories rational, equal actors. Rational contracts then equal rational outcomes, including selling (or renting) women’s wombs to produce commodified babies. The author’s elegant treatment of surrogacy, sperm donation, and just family laws that celebrate liberty while not exploiting others is compelling.

Jamieson’s strong assertions, however, sometimes overgeneralize. The chapter on domestic violence most sharply does this. A long, first-person narrative from a woman named “Jane” whom Jamieson interviewed explains her choices during a prolonged abusive relationship. Telling women’s stories is an important antidote to the dominant paradigms in scholarship. These stories have their strongest impact when they are tied more closely to theory and illuminate androcentric blindness to elements of feminist jurisprudence.

Contrary to Jamieson’s statements, many feminists do listen to the voices of survivors of domestic violence. In fact, breaking the silences about domestic violence involves telling women’s contextualized and complicat-ed stories. Jamieson assumes that when the question “Why didn’t she leave?” is raised, it always implies that she should have left. Some people might be implying that the woman is responsible for not leaving, but others could actually be asking about the context of the woman’s embedded life through the question. They wonder if she is poor, friendless, and worried about her children, other loved ones, or whatever might be the multiple reasons why she might stay. People might be seeking just the context Jamieson assumes they ignore when they ask about the survivor and her circumstances. Many studies of and protocols within battered women’s shelters display respect for the agency of the women involved and do not derogate or patronize them.

Admirable is Jamieson’s reversal of survivor blaming by asking about the perpetrator’s responsibility and why he is still sticking around. An excellent feminist legal study by Judith A. Baer (Our Lives Before the Law: Constructing a Feminist Jurisprudence, 1999) includes a similar turn-around-is-fair-play exercise that highlights patriarchal foibles in the law and contributes to theory.

Both books seek to remind us of why we should strive for nuanced relationships between the state and citizens negotiating their intimate relationships. As Jamieson phrases this, “The freedom to define oneself, and to do it again and again in various and shifting permutations, is a radical act of liberty” (p. 112). Cohen and Jamieson pose important questions to jurisprudence scholars (feminist or not) and ask us to move to a more plural and contextu-alized vision of justice, freed from the bound-aries of anachronistic, patriarchal legal mind-sets that unnecessarily dichotomize choices and constric imaginary domains.


**Cybering Democracy: Public Space and the Internet.** By Diana Saco. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002. 344p. $54.95 cloth, $19.95 paper.

— Wayne Gabardi, Idaho State University

Both of these books concern themselves with the impact of the Internet and digital culture on the constitution of public space, the idea and reality of a democratic public sphere, and democratic theory. At the same time, they adopt different analytic perspectives, single out different issues, and offer different interpretations of the common themes.

Jodi Dean urges us to abandon the ideas of “the public” and a “democratic public sphere” so that we can save democracy. Manipulated by the new telecommunicational-informational capitalism into an ideology and practice of “publicity,” the public realm has very little to do with popular sovereignty, civic engagement, rational knowledge, and critical deliberation. Our capitalist technoculture delivers to us on a daily basis a mediated hyperreality driven and shaped by fantasy and desire. It is a world of spectacles, consumer seduction, symbolic excess, conspiracy theories, celebrity, porn, and the uncovering of not-so-secret secrets. Thus, the need for the kind of ideological critique inspired by Hegelian-Marxist-Lacanian cultural analyst Slavoj Žižek.

Diana Saco provides us with a very detailed, vivid, and technically savvy account of how cyberspace operates as a technological, spatial, social, and political reality. Her orientation, grasping cyberspace as a complex social construct, illuminates a host of important Internet-related terminology, issues, and debates—virtual embodiment, bit space,
nonlinear networks, the new Private Network Access Points (PNAP)-dependent Internet, National Security Agency (NSA) surveillance, hacker culture, and the U.S. encryption debate, to name a few.

Saco embraces the kind of spatial turn in social theory developed by Henri Lefebvre, Edward W. Soja, Michel de Certeau, and Michel Foucault. Space is a complex social product whose constitutive features include bodies, technological objects, institutional practices, networks, and discourses. This is precisely how we should understand cyberspace, as a digitalized social space structured by these same features. Unfortunately, political theory, and specifically democratic theory, has largely misunderstood the nature of space. It has too often been conceived of as a static, physical container made up of citizen-bodies. However, Saco sees in the models of public space developed by Hannah Arendt and Jürgen Habermas intimations of the kind of public space that the Internet can offer us. More than this, it is Foucault’s concepts of discourse and heterotopia that offer us the best tools by which to illuminate cyberspace. In short, we should conceive of cyberspace as a public space of discursive appearances characterized by diverse symbolic codes of ordering, the result being a complex and disturbing collage of spatial orders. The prospect of cyberdemocracy rests upon understanding cyberspace as a heterotopic social space of disembodied, yet very real, citizens and publics.

For Dean, the modern, and now postmodern, public sphere has always been based upon the integral relationship between secrecy and publicity. Today, driven by the Internet and 24-hour cable news channels, the media operate in a publicity-fantasy-secrecy mode where codependent producers and consumers of news and information obsessively participate in games of concealment and secret discoveries (the “public’s right to know”). Revealing secrets legitimizes the public realm, a public, however, that never really exists. “The public” is a simulated, technocultural construct that most people believe actually operates as a democratic representation of “the people.” It does not.

This is why Habermas’s civic republican vision of a rational public sphere is doomed to failure. Both television and the World Wide Web structure public worlds that are more about the lure of secrets and the promise of revelation than about deliberation, debate, and the generation of knowledge and consensus. Habermas’s ideal of communicative transparency helps promote technoculture with its appeal to unlimited information and communication. At the same time, his conservative turn toward defending liberal representation, law, and the constitutional nation-state legitimates a very traditionally modern notion of a national public space easily manipulated by the forces of high-tech globalization.

What we should do, concludes Dean, is to abandon the notion of a modern national public sphere, lower our expectations concerning the public sphere and democracy, and focus instead on specific issues and issue networks that function like little democracies (“neo-democracy”). Utopian visions of the Internet as a microelectronic agora or an Enlightenment public sphere are fantasies easily manipulated by today’s telecommunication and information power structures and technologies. By deftly maneuvering our way through the new media, we can both indulge our subjective desires and engage in civic networking without succumbing to the big fantasy worlds that modern and postmodern technocultures are constantly reproducing for our we-want-to-know and we-want-to-believe subjective identities.

While Saco is not as pessimistic as Dean about the promise and reality of cyberspace as a democratic public sphere, she does have some similar concerns. She sees cyberspace as a heterotopic space still in its infancy. Its form and content seem to be somewhere in between Habermas’s ideal of an interactive realm of communication and opinion formation and William Gibson’s dystopian vision of a corporate-controlled, simulated sensorium populated by hedonistic consumers, libertarians, and cyberpunks. Yet as Saco draws conclusions from her analysis of the U.S. encryption battles between law enforcement, national security, and corporate groups and computer civil liberties groups, she is forced to admit that the discourse that dominates the Internet is classical liberalism. The liberal public/private dichotomy, national security vs. privacy, freedom of choice, and freedom of movement shape most Internet political debates. Although cyberspace defies liberal spatial boundaries and strategies, liberalism is the preferred discursive formation.

There are so many interesting ideas and issues to discuss and scrutinize in these two books. Unfortunately, this short review cannot accommodate all of them. Let me therefore make a few critical comments and suggestions. Dean employs the metaphor of “little brothers” (Chapter 3) to illustrate how we have shifted from technocracy (the Big Brother of the panoptic state) to technoculture (the constant monitoring and marketing of personal information by the new network economy) as the dominant mode of control. While I agree that the trading of our little secrets via computer networks is omnipresent, I would not write off Big Brother yet. In the aftermath of 9/11 and the advent of the new Homeland Security State, Big Brother is making a comeback. I also value Zygmunt Bauman’s metaphor of the “synopticon” (In Search of Politics, 1999, p. 71), the colonization of the public sphere by the private sphere, resulting in the many voyeuristically watching the few.

At the heart of Dean’s account of digital subcultures, reality TV shows, advertising, and movies (the stuff of postmodern technoculture) lies Žižek’s brand of Lacanian pop culture analysis. Indeed, the subtext of her book is the clash of critical theorists—Žižek vs. Habermas. And Habermas is no match for the postmodern Žižek. Employing his brand of cultural psychoanalysis, Žižek is able to brilliantly dissect our unconscious acceptance and internalization of technoculture’s symbolic order. Habermas, on the other hand, is a dinosaur who suffers from “Habermasochism” (see pp. 34–40).

Yet at the same time, Dean admits that her case may be exaggerated. How could this be otherwise? If, as she and Žižek point out, our postmodern reality is structured by an excess of the symbolic, of information, of images, of hysterical subjects, of the perverse pursuit of secrets, then so must our analysis be excessive. Maybe the new technoculture of screens (large and small), spectacles, and secrets, of Hollywood’s virtual capitalism, website celebrity status, conspiracy theories, and the pursuit of radical subjectivity is overblown. That is, it is taken way too seriously. Despite the fact that I agree with Dean regarding many of her criticisms of Habermas, from his idealized notion of a democratic public sphere to that of a postconventional ego identity, I tend to believe that Žižek and Habermas are at the extreme ends of the critical interpretive spectrum. The truth (perspectival, of course) lies somewhere between a neo-Lacanian analysis of our postmodern culture (as the collapse of the symbolic “big Other”) and a neo-Kantian attempt to advance moral-practical reasoning. I say this because I believe (which is, of course, sustained by a fantasy) that the world we live in today is neither modern nor postmodern, but rather somewhere in between. That is, our cultural and political life is an amalgam of the modern and the postmodern. We live in a society in transition.

As for Saco, she does a superb job of rethinking spatiality and showing how Internet cyberspace is a social space relevant to democratic politics. But I do not perceive this space to be fundamentally heterotopian. Nor does Saco connect her social (re)theorizing of space to democratic theory. That is, no theory of cyberdemocracy is advanced. Rather, the preconditions of a theory are impressively explored.
One of Saco’s central theses is that the experience of cyberspace is what Foucault meant when he invented and employed the term heterotopia. It is “that disturbing space of otherness where mismatched objects appear together” (p. 13) and disrupt the discursive order of things. She contends that what gives heterotopias their “shock value” is “that no privileged point of reference—no standard of order—is immediately available to give meaning to the incommensurate mix of objects brought together” (p. 20). While Saco makes a great effort to demonstrate that this is the case, I neither perceive nor conceive of cyberspace as radically heterotopian. As I surf and access the Internet almost daily and encounter porn, transhumanist, supermodel, APSA, Raelian, “Zapatistas in Cyberspace,” and other seemingly incongruous websites, I don’t find myself in surreal, nonsensical, or strangely heterotopic worlds. Nor do I find myself experiencing a great divide between the virtual and corporeal worlds. Sufficient context is provided by the accessing subject, the medium, and/or the site.

Saco does such a good job of demystifying cyberspace that one can easily perceive and conceive of it as a new technological extension of physical and social bodies, spaces, and discourses. The experience of virtual estrangement or a collage effect (the Internet as a “twilight zone”) is simply not there.

More importantly, Saco does not carry through with the important work she does in Chapter 2 that illuminates how democratic political theory insufficiently deals with spatiality. I strongly agree with her claim that the production and reproduction of social and cultural space is the infrastructure upon which political and democratic theories are built. Her analysis of the spatial orientations of Madison, Arendt, and Habermas is insightful. Yet while we are urged to upgrade democratic theory in the wake of the Internet and spatial theory, this is not undertaken. We are provided with a “techno-topography” (hardware and software) and an “ethno-topography” (“wetware”) of cyberspace, not a political model or theory of cyberdemocracy. In fairness to Saco, she does state in the Introduction that her main concern lies with three topics—space, Internet technology, and the body. Yet her constant reference to democracy does not culminate in a theoretical spatial model of cyberspace as a democratic public space.

Both Dean and Saco want microelectronic democracy to succeed. And they do a great job of pointing out the dangers facing digital democrats. But they do not offer us strong empirical signs that e-democracy has a viable present or future. However, the evidence does exist and can be found in a number of city and local civic projects that constitute what has been referred to as the growing “civic networking movement” (e.g., see Roza Tsagarousianou, Damian Tambini, and Cathy Bryan, Cyberdemocracy: Technology, Cities, and Civic Networks, 1998). Whether focusing on information provision and exchange, deliberation plebiscitary feedback, citizen initiatives, or grassroots self-organization and empowerment, projects such as Amsterdam’s Digital City, the IperBoLE project in Bologna, Santa Monica’s PEN (Public Electronic Network) system, and Neighborhoods-Online have been able to successfully create democratic cyberspaces.

The sophisticated conceptual lenses developed by Dean and Saco bring into sharper focus the aspects of cyberspace and postmodern culture about which many of us have only a surface knowledge and understanding. Thus, Publicity’s Secret and Cyberspace Democracy are valuable contributions to a rapidly maturing literature on the Internet, digital culture, and democracy. My own view is that while each have their distinctive characteristics, the medium and message of print media, broadcast media, and the Internet are first and foremost about commerce, then news and entertainment, then social connectivity and information, then democracy, and then critical public sphere discourse.


— Stephen L. Elkin, University of Maryland

Constitutional theory—which is not analysis of constitutional law or commentary on the text of written constitutions—has grown, if not into the full flower of adulthood, at least into a strapping adolescent. Its current vitality can be traced to the events of 1989 and their aftermath, with their attendant concern for new constitutional designs, and to the current strains in the American constitutional order, perhaps most notably the conflicts engendered by an increasingly conservative Supreme Court. The vitality is also the result of a natural extension of institutional analysis in the social sciences: Whatever else working constitutions are, they are assemblies of political, legal, and economic institutions. The appearance of this volume edited by three distinguished students of constitutionalism is not then surprising.

But it is of some importance, because the chapters assembled by John Ferejohn, Jack Rakove, and Jonathan Riley, as well as their own introduction to the volume, significantly advances the kind of constitutional theorizing that is, or at least should be, at the center of the current revival of constitutional discussion. Thus, the chapters are simultaneously empirical and normative—and are built around the proposition that a constitutional polity is a particular kind of political order that has then a characteristic kind of politics. The polity may not have a constitutional text as part of its political order. Thus, its politics may or may not be shaped by textual interpretation rendered in judicial decisions, for this is only one kind of constitutional politics. Indeed it might not even be the best kind, as Riley suggests in the second of his two chapters and Pasquale Pasquino echoes in his discussion of the different kinds of constitutional orders that are consistent with the liberal idea of a separation of powers. In general, the editors and authors make clear that constitutional theory has, or should have, as its central concern the creation and maintenance of constitutional political orders.

As is common in edited volumes, there is some looseness of fit. Thus, Lawrence G. Sager’s nicely argued chapter, “the birth logic of a democratic constitution,” might be more at home in a volume of relentlessly normative work of the kind done by students of constitutionalism working in law schools. The looseness is partly caused by the wide array of types of constitutional theorists contributing to the volume. There are chapters by historians, constitutional lawyers, theorists of comparative politics, game theorists, and practitioners of rational choice analysis. The variety in the types of theory assembled, however, also works to the book’s advantage—and not just because, as is usually said in these matters, a diversity of perspectives is presented (as if that were a good in itself). The editors and authors have worked harder than this kind of anodyne praise suggests in bringing together papers that indeed employ a variety of theoretical commitments but that emphasize a set of common themes. That this can be done employing such a wide range of theoretical orientations is impressive.

Thus, this same chapter by Sager, focusing on the American case, considers the interconnections between the ways in which a constitutional order is founded—in particular, the procedures employed in the constitutional revolution that brought the new American republic into being—and the procedures built into the new order for altering its basic rules. His chapter indicates that the interconnections are both empirical and normative. The majoritarian procedures that may have been necessary...
for a new constitutional order to be born also encourage a simple majoritarian view of how its constitutional rules are to be subsequently altered. This, in turn, argues Sager, may make a “justice-seeking” constitution more difficult to realize.

In so arguing, Sager is well within the overarching theme of the volume, which might be stated as follows: Constitutional theory must take as central the problem of making constitutions actually work more or less as they are designed. Much of the existing work in constitutional theory, the editors indicate, focuses on the processes that lead to agreement on a set of constitutional arrangements, and leaves unconsidered what will induce political actors to pursue their purposes inside the new rules. The two questions, of initial construction and of maintenance, are not only connected; the original agreement effects subsequent incentives. They are both necessary to address if we are to understand why some constitutional orders ultimately fail and others succeed—or, in the editors’ language, how a constitutional culture is formed. Constitutionalism or constitutional politics, they argue, is an ongoing process.

The rest of the chapters in the volume, illustrate and give specificity to this theme. Thus, Rakove and Johnson—highlight another feature of any compelling constitutional theory: It must have room for analysis from the point of view of political actors trying to form a constitutional order—particularly how they are likely to act—and from the viewpoint of constitutional designers. It is in the connections between the two, we might argue, that the real value of constitutional theory is likely to lie. They suggest one way in which empirical and normative considerations might be linked. It is tempting in the kind of work presented in Constitutional Culture and Democratic Rule to assume, or even directly argue, that what is possible is desirable. Since creating a stable constitutional political order is so difficult a feat, we might argue that the particular way it is being done in the case we are considering is the way it should be done more generally. (Hardin, for example, is seemingly attracted to something like this proposition.) This position is only tenable if there is only one way a stable and attractive constitutional order can be constructed. This seems unlikely, and the task of a constitutional designer might be understood as trying to encourage those who must agree to the creation of a new constitutional system to prefer—on perhaps suitably disguised normative grounds—one constitutional path over others. For the most part, the editors and contributors understand that constitutional theory must join positive and normative analysis. Positive propositions on what will increase the tenability of a constitutional path over others. For the most part, the editors and contributors understand that constitutional theory must join positive and normative analysis. Positive propositions on what will increase the kind of cooperative and other kinds of behavior required by a constitutional order need to be joined to normative ones on the paths to which political orders are attractive and why.

These chapters also provide a good deal of evidence, if more is needed, for the more general proposition that normative political theory must rest on a careful account of human beings and human arrangements as they are and might plausibly become. Similarly, they indicate that the purpose of positive theory, and of the empirical work on which it rests, is to improve the quality of our political arrangements. In both regards, the chapter by Stephen M. Griffin is of great interest since he sets out a program for the development of a constitutional theory that is focused on the creation and maintenance of fundamental political and legal institutions in light of an institutional design for a desirable constitutional order. The kind of theory he proposes might be called “constitutive” theory, focused as it is on how to constitute desirable political regimes. If Griffin’s program takes hold, students of Aristotle might find it difficult to resist a quiet smile of satisfaction.


— Martin Beck Matušík, Purdue University

Since the Czecho-Slovak Velvet Revolution of 1989, Anglo-American philosophers have become reacquainted with the world of Czech phenomenology in English translations of Jan Patočka’s books and commentaries by Paul Ricoeur, Richard Rorty, and Jacques Derrida, as well as three studies of Patočka. Edward Findlay introduces Patočka as a political philosopher who transformed the phenomenology of his teachers—Edmund Husserl’s passion for rational life and Martin Heidegger’s critique of metaphysical foundations—through recourse to Socratic care for the soul. Findlay claims that Patočka holds out for a nonfundamentalist and postmetaphysical, yet neither relativist nor nihilistic, philosophical and political project for Western civilization. While Findlay worries about a Husserlian Eurocentric bias surviving in Patočka, he thinks that the latter’s politics point us away from radicalism (totalitarianism, nationalism, religious fundamentalism) to a robust democracy.


Philosophy has played a significant public role in the history of Patočka’s small country; Bohemians and Moravians both loved and persecuted their philosophers. The founder of modern Czechoslovakia, philosopher Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk, influenced his countryman
existential revolution (though he emphasizes dissident ideas of nonpolitical politics and Where Kohák finds in Czech phenomenology Kosík’s in Louvain. the Husserl archives in Prague; they ended up with the rise of Nazism. When Hitler invaded Czechoslovakia, Patocka was not able to save the Husserl archives in Prague; they ended up in Louvain.

With the exception of the 1960s (Karel Kosík’s Dialectics of the Concrete, 1976), the philosophical world hardly noticed Czech phenomenologists again until 1977 and 1989. Patocka was persecuted first by the Nazis and then by the Communists. As the speaker for the Czechoslovak Manifesto for Human Rights of 1977 (Charta 77), with Havel and Jiří Hálek, he entered more visibly the political scene of Czech dissent. “Jan Patocka’s Flying University,” where I attended seminars in my late teens, functioned during the 1970s and 1980s as an underground outlet for the study of philosophy pursued at night in the apartments of dissidents. Philosophers from abroad took part in these seminars, some finding themselves arrested or expelled by the Communist authorities. These secret gatherings became incubators of civil society that nurtured intellectuals to adopt roles of leadership in the Velvet Revolution. Patocka died a Socratic death of an untreated brain hemorrhage at the Czech secret police station. I was arrested at his funeral in March 1977 as a student at Charles University. Patocka became the soul of the yet-uncorrupted velvet transformation, bequeathing to dissidents the legacy of the solidarity of the shaken. In his death he became even more that “spiritual person” (pp. 104ff., 146–49) who would serve as a nonpolitically political signpost for the practicitioners to manipulate meaning are born. The spiritual person might not recognize her task as political, as there are no sure signs (Havel’s dramatic vision notwithstanding) that existential revolution can or should translate into realpolitik. Yet there is one domain where realpolitik fails and where spiritual activity in its proper role appears to meet the need: This is the domain of human self-assurance in the form of religious fundamentalism, political empire building, and economic consumerism. Solidarity of the shaken who recognize the problematicity and utter nihilism of these forms could yet come to invent a Patockean spiritual or existential politics as care for the soul.


— John Christian Laursen, University of California, Riverside

There was a time when one could teach a course on ancient political theory using only texts from Thucydides, Plato, and Aristotle. “Minor schools” and “nonphilosophers” could be dismissed as insignificant. That time is no more. This text draws on Dio Chrysostom, Lucian, Philodemus, Plutarch, Euripides, and several others—in addition to Plato and Aristotle—in order to provide “a genealogy of the critical attitude in Western philosophy” (p. 170–71). To be conversant with thinkers of the stature of Michel Foucault, you must know the work of these figures.

This volume contains edited transcripts of recordings of previously unpublished lectures that Foucault gave at Berkeley in 1983. They just preceded his last course, as reported in Thomas Flynn, “Foucault as Parrhesiast: His Last Course at the Colledge de France,” in James Bernauer and David Rasmussen, eds., The Final Foucault (1988). People have been referring to a transcript of these lectures since shortly after he died in 1984, and so it is good to finally have them in print and available to everyone.

Foucault’s lectures explore the significance of the Greek word parrhesia, usually translated as “free speech”: Etymologically it means “to say everything.” This volume ups the ante for a catcher title, calling it “fearless speech.” There was a verb form and, by the Greco-Roman period, a noun meaning one who speaks freely: the parrhesiastes. The focus here is on the truth-teller, not the truth itself. Surveying the evidence, Foucault concludes that the ideal-type fearless speaker is frank, tells the truth out of a sense of duty, and is exposed to danger for criticizing someone with more power. Such speech
evolved from a critical alternative to rhetoric to a position within rhetoric; from speaking out against the demos to speaking out against monarchs; and from speaking freely to reform the city to seeking frank advice in reforming oneself.

Foucault’s approach was to analyze all of the uses of these words that he could find in ancient texts. This skates close to the nominalist fallacy, and he does not deal with texts and thinkers who did not use the word. So we find him saying that “I never found any texts in ancient Greek culture where the parrhesiastes seems to have any doubts about his own possession of the truth” (p. 14). This should be enough to raise red flags about such speakers. Foucault adds that the “sceptical question,” how it is “that the alleged parrhesiastes can be certain that what he believes is, in fact, the truth . . . is a particularly modern one which, I believe, is foreign to the Greeks” (p. 15). But Pyrrho of Elis, Arcesilas, Carneades, Sextus Empiricus, and other ancient skeptics were Greek, and skeptical doubts were certainly not foreign to them. One can argue that they did not claim to speak the truth, but they did freely criticize everyone around them, and we need to know something about the connections between fearless speech and the sceptical tradition.

After all, a key question for any critical activist must be: how do we know we are right? Neither Sextus nor Cicero’s Academica are mentioned in this book.

Euripides explores parrhesia in many plays, and in Foucault’s analysis, Ion “is entirely devoted to the problem of parrhesia” (p. 27). The question is, who has the right, duty, and courage to speak freely? The eponymous character speaks freely to a king and to a woman, and it is underdeveloped. His explanation that her emotions made it possible for her to speak out seems to trade on stereotypes.

The Greeks recognized that there is a negative side to free speech, and Foucault returns to this point time and again. Free speakers can be insignificant “chatterers.” Bad, immoral, and ignorant speakers are dangerous for democracy and monarchy alike. On the one hand, this was a common aristocratic critique of democracy; on the other hand, it is often true.

Diogenes of Sinope and the ancient cynics are rehabilitated in Foucault’s hands. Too long relegated to the unphilosophical, they are descendents of Socrates and ancestors of modern critics and social activists from Nietzsche to Foucault. Too little known today, they are well surveyed in R. Bracht Branham and Marie-Odile Goulet-Cazé, eds., The Cynics: The Cynic Movement in Antiquity and Its Legacy (1996) and Heinrich Niehues-Probsting, Der Kynismus des Diogenes und der Begriff des Kynismus (1979). The chief obstacle to placing them at the heart of the critical activist’s enterprise is that although they were fully critical, they were also fully antipolitical. The critic ties the hands of the activist.

Finally, there is parrhesia in the care of the self. This is wanting other people, like Socrates, to tell you the truth about yourself. But how can you know that the one who is speaking to you is reliable? Plutarch knew that it is hard to tell a parrhesiastes from a flatterer. Laches answers that we can trust Socrates on courage because we have seen him steadfast in war, and Plutarch explains that we can trust those who are consistent and reliable in life. But if we really have to find a Socrates or other paragon of consistency, we may never know the truth about ourselves. By the end of the book, the duty to speak freely has become a Christian duty to speak truth to yourself.

Fearless Speech is a tour de force as a reconstruction of one of the cultural roots of critical philosophy and social activism. It is honest enough to recognize that there are almost unsurmountable problems in identifying who are the real truth-speakers and who are the flatterers, the chatterers, the bad, the immoral, and the ignorant. Setting out to find the ancestry of the critical attitude, Foucault provides it with a self-subverting genealogy. Shall we call this Foucault’s Last Paradox?


— Larry May, Washington University

This is the best book in a recent resurgence of interest in social groups. In clear and carefully argued discussions, Keith Graham sets out “to explore how the reasons we have for acting are affected by the simple fact that we are social creatures” (p. 1). The book is based on two facts that are not quite so simple, but which Graham thinks are truisms: the fact of causal interconnection (“everything a person does carries causal implications for the lives of other human beings”) and the fact of collective agency (“some of the things a person does gain their significance from being part of some collective action”) (p. 4). He uses these facts to challenge those liberals and rational choice theorists who have taken for granted the primacy of individual preference in practical reasoning. He sees himself as defending a moderate position, neither reducing all reasons for acting to individual preferences, nor eliminating individual preferences either. So Graham is also critical of communitarians who have reduced individual preferences to the preferences of groups.

In Chapter 1, Graham identifies four versions of the claim often made by individualists that persons are distinct: 1) as qualitatively distinct, as a type different from other types of entities; 2) as separate from one another; 3) as forming a unity of desires within one individual person; and 4) as not being interchangeable with one another. He admits that individuals are distinct in the fourth sense but raises significant challenges to the third, and in conjunction with later arguments, with the first and second as well.

In Chapter 2 we see Graham at his best, defending the view that persons play a much larger causal role in one another’s lives than we normally realize. There are two major arguments presented. First, and most intriguingly, he argues that our own preference satisfaction depends crucially on other persons. Even the simple preference to shave in the bathroom in the morning requires other persons for its satisfaction, since reference must be made to a room, lighting, and a razor: “The existence of these objects is a precondition of my performing it, and it is a contingent truth that no individual could provide it for themselves.” He proposes a hybrid ground for acting not captured by individualists. What this relates to “is the role which the action would itself play as a causal consequence rather than the consequences it would itself generate” (pp. 50–51).

Second, he claims that preferences when acted on “always carry causal implications for the lives of others besides the preference holder” (p. 62). People should realize that acting on their preferences affects others by making possible or impossible the actions of others. Both of these points provide an original and sustained way to undermine the distinctness of persons as a unity of desires and preferences.

Chapter 3 is the longest chapter and in many ways the most problematical. Here, Graham attempts to show that individuals are not qualitatively distinct from certain collectivities. He says that collectivities are not persons, but that collectivities “share enough characteristics to enter the moral realm in their own right” (p. 66). What is problematical is that he seems to vacillate throughout the chapter on the ontological status of these collectivities and, hence, on precisely how collectivities are indeed distinct from individual persons. At the
beginning of the chapter, Graham says that collectivities are entities that resemble individual persons in some respects (p. 66), but by the next page he says that collectivities are themselves agents (p. 67). At one point, the entity status of collectivities is attributed to the fact “that ineliminable reference to it occurs in the best descriptions of our world” (p. 84). But at another point, collectivities are said to exist because they can “deliberate, form projects, make decisions, and then act in their realization” because collectivities possess various powers (p. 100). By the end of the book, this becomes especially problematical since he continues to talk of collectivities with distinct powers but also says that collectivities “are themselves composed of individual human beings and nothing more” (p. 176). The more modest claim that we need collectivities to form our best explanations of social phenomena seemingly gives way to more radical talk of collectivities as possessing powers of mind and body, yet collectivities are composed of nothing but individual human persons. While these various positions may be reconcilable, Chapter 3 does not do so but leaves the reader wondering how it is that collectivities are distinct from human persons.

In Chapter 4, Graham tries to gain some distance from communitarian and other collectivist accounts of social groups, but also to explain how collective identification can be a separate form of rational motivation. In this chapter, quite a lot is made of my ability to distance myself from collective identifications, contrary to what communitarians have held, such as when they have said that our community memberships are outside of our choices. Yet later, this motivation is said to be “not traceable back to some individual state of myself which my behavior or attitudes are designed to realize” (p. 182). Once again we see the hybrid or moderate nature of the author’s position. Our own identities are intimately intertwined with our membership in various collectivities, but not so intertwined that we cannot extricate ourselves by dissociating with the collectivity.

In Chapter 5, Graham argues that agents may distance themselves mentally even from place of birth, nationality, or racial origin (p. 147). Our group memberships give us collective reasons for action, but do not swamp our individual reasons for action. Loyalty is perhaps the best example where an individual has reasons for action that are not reducible merely to individual psychological states, but which can be overcome by those same mental states. Similarly, in Chapter 6, he shows that altruism cannot be understood on strictly individualistic or collectivist analyses but requires a hybrid account of practical reasoning. In general, Graham’s argument for seeing some collective interests as not reducible to individual preferences is highly persuasive in Practical Reasoning in a Social World, which is an excellent book. Corporate Capitalism and Political Philosophy. By Suman Gupta. London: Pluto Press, 2002. 289p. $69.95 cloth, $29.95 paper.

— Robert A. Garman, The University of Tennessee

Death and taxes never disappear. Nor, it seems, does the depressing expansion of commercialism, or the steady drizzle of left publications alerting us that the capitalist tail is now wagging the public dog. The Quixotes amongst us should perhaps clear space on a bookshelf and prepare to reinvent the wheel. Suman Gupta’s book defines corporate capitalism from a philosophical perspective and accuses it of murdering politics.

Gupta defines “political philosophy” as the understanding of communal existence with a view to explaining what its justifiable ends might be. A “political will” articulates this collective consciousness, and the “political state” interprets this will and establishes efficacious institutional means (see pp. 59–61). The capitalist corporation, on the other hand, exists to maximize capital formation and private profit. Corporate capitalism, in short, is inimical to political philosophy. To the extent that it infects society with its greed, citizens are collectively immobilized. The polity dissolves, moral judgment is replaced by selfishness, and social justice morphs into acquisitiveness. Gupta believes this has already happened.

These definitions unfold in five jargon-filled chapters inspired by analytical philosophers of mind and language like John R. Searle and Daniel C. Dennett. The route Gupta travels from definitions to conclusions is long, circuitous, and often confusing, with substantial narratives on seemingly unrelated figures ranging from Marx, Weber, and Durkheim to Peter Drucker, Tom Peters, Kenneth Waltz, and John Kaler.

The philosophy of corporate capitalism is called managerialism, which Gupta describes by tracing pertinent discourses from Frederick Winslow Taylor to the present. In a nutshell, corporations are run today by managers taught to value capital formation and profit more than society, workers, even stockholders. In a chapter called “The Macro Issues Behind Executive Pay,” he shows how recent examples of corporate corruption that have weakened the nation, punished stockholders, and ruined the lives of workers are caused by the logic of the corporate system rather than by evil personalities. Moreover, this same logic lives in the state as well. Modern corporate capitalist states mirror business practices and values as they make public decisions. They also transparently relegate economically significant political decisions to businesses, and let corporate capitalists have free play in national and international markets. Globalization spreads business values, practices, and power overseas.

All this is interesting, and for leftists compelling. But it is not new. For years, progressive scholars have told us that businesses were undermining the liberal state and directing globalization. Gupta’s unique contribution to this literature is linking corporate capitalism to the death of political philosophy. The modern state has been depoliticized. It is no longer a state because it stands for speculation and profit instead of a political will. Consequently, for Gupta, modern political philosophy is nonpolitical. By justifying the corporate capitalist state, it has sold its political soul to managers. Modern political philosophy is politically irrelevant.

Gupta is not saying modern political philosophy is bad or unjust or inadequate. He is denying that it exists in mainstream public discourse. What is this “antipolitical philosophy” that has replaced the real thing? In a “preliminary” sense, he says, it is marked by three recurring positions: It is based on philosophical first principles; it believes in automatic or nonvolitional processes; and it leaves no room for human intervention (pp. 179–81). Later, he asserts that the one principle most associated with antipolitical philosophy “is that of the primacy of individualism” (p. 199). Liberalism, in short, is the source of our worst problems. Authentic political philosophy must, instead, recognize “the interconnectedness or interlinkedness [sic] of social and political phenomena (including problems)” (p. 206). If Gupta is correct, much of what we call Western political thought would disappear, at least from political science programs, and many naive scholars, myself included, would be unemployed. While I agree that dialectics, his remedy, is a valuable tool for social inquiry and change, I am less confident that it alone is true.

Liberal human rights theory, understood dialectically, actually defines justice as the minimal state reinforced by a market economy, and articulates a political will (i.e., an individualistic collective consciousness) that has mobilized electoral majorities in several nations, including ours. The liberal political state acts to strengthen the free market while maximizing each citizen’s legal autonomy. All this may indeed energize exploitation and inequality. These, however, can be democratically challenged with reasoned debate and political
mobilization, not an intellectual fiat. Prove you can play with the other kids before arrogantly ending the game. Gupta illustrates antipolitical theory by reducing the idiosyncratic narratives of Mannheim, Popper, Hayek, Nozick, and Fukuyama to their lowest common denominator. These chapters leave a residue of anticapitalism, rather than honest critique or a convincing alternative to individualism.

The author has read widely and clearly knows a lot. Regrettably, style trumps substance in this book. At its best, Corporate Capitalism and Political Philosophy is a difficult read, but rarely does it rise to its potential. Sentences are measured in inches rather than words. Paragraphs are depressingly long. Salient points are repeated, occasionally italicized, and then annoyingly cited later in the text. The author often converses with himself rather than the reader, complaining about too little space or rationalizing lengthy non sequiturs. Key ideas are mangled by painful prose. Here, for example, is a fairly typical construction: “The dynamics of the political will rests [sic] first in the interpreting-acting agency of the political state in respect of the intentional system of the people-land-resources it is with regard to and of nothing else, and second in the oppositional expression or (if necessary) with regard to and of nothing else, and second in the oppositional interpretation of the reflection it also claims to further.”

Enter Tim Luke’s Museum Politics. It is a valuable tour guide to America’s museum complex, a concatenation of national, regional, and local institutions animated and informed by norms of power and entertainment. Luke’s book is more than a genealogical exposé of museum cultures—whether they deal with history, politics, nature, technology, or some combination of all four—it is also a contribution to political theory as an enterprise. On the one hand, then, the author argues that museums are important sites of politics heretofore neglected. It is thus critical that the effects they engender be calculated and catalogued. While not univocal, they do tend to be contributive to dominant values and arrangements. On the other hand, he rebukes traditional approaches to political theory. They tend to be academic exercises on classic texts and of narcissistic interest only to practitioners.

Luke’s critical gaze impresses. Inter alia, he explores America’s genocidal westward expansion at the National Museum of American Art, the Hiroshima controversy at the National Air and Space Museum, the problematic politics and presentations of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the cyborg ethos of the Pima Air and Space Museum, the regime of bio-power at the Missouri Botanical Garden, and the relentless commodification and destruction of Native American peoples at the Heard. Given the extraordinary number of American museums and visitors, his analytic scrutiny is well placed. The irony is that these omnipresent sites of moral instruction and cultural reproduction are more or less invisible, much like monuments that with age fade into the background of society. They iterate and reiterate ideas, norms, sensibilities, dispositions, habits, practices, rituals, understandings, and affections that are key to the quotidian reproduction are more or less invisible, much like monuments that with age fade into the background of society. They iterate and reiterate ideas, norms, sensibilities, dispositions, habits, practices, rituals, understandings, and affections that are key to the quotidian reproduction are more or less invisible, much like monuments that with age fade into the background of society. They iterate and reiterate ideas, norms, sensibilities, dispositions, habits, practices, rituals, understandings, and affections that are key to the quotidian reproduction. They tend to be academic exercises on classic texts and of narcissistic interest only to practitioners.

Luke’s academic exercises on classic texts and of narcissistic interest only to practitioners. It is a revolutionary merely becomes, in effect, a new establishmentarian (p. 226). I say this is; it is to say that museums “mediate aesthetic and epistemic authority to define certain natural and historical realities such that they assure all who visit that their life ‘is as it should be’ in the American way of life” (p. 101). This formulation, taken from a discussion of the American Museum of Natural History, works as well for the other sites discussed.

Yet Luke does not always take full advantage of the opportunities he has forged. While contesting the self-conception and conduct of political theory is part of what makes it a viable enterprise, he may be susceptible to the very charges he brings against it. His theoretical optic may have been redirected from the so-called great books to lived empirical realities, but many of his museum analyses rely heavily and often mechanically on Michel Foucault (among others). It is not just that Foucault’s books are great; it is that when Luke shifts into theoretical overdrive, the place of the museum visitor gets lost. It soon becomes difficult to figure out how museums are able to function at all in their reproductive capacities. In Luke’s hands, they often seem solipsistic and thus unable to produce any worldly effect. In short, he seems to get trapped in the very “professional presumptions of an academic guild” (p. xxiv) that he criticizes—at the expense of his own project.

This is unfortunate for Luke’s political project. The culture wars cannot be conceded to conservatives, who have long understood the importance of museums. It is not just that conservatives police with zeal the content of museum exhibitions; many, like Gene Autry and Richard Nixon, own and operate institutions to the detriment of a democratic pluralist political culture. Gene Autry offers “Ten Cowboy Commandments” to obscure crimes of western settlement, and the Nixon Library narrates Watergate in order to deny the existence of a presidential cover-up and establish a liberal conspiracy to undo the 1972 election. Yet Luke is interested in more than contesting conservative political renderings on the museum front and replacing them with his own favored ideological constructs. Perhaps the ethos that animates the book should conclude the review: “[O]ne must not simply critique one set of political engagements by the established social formations in order to substitute his . . . own apparently different, but also quite limited, ends to the service of these same means. All too often, the means for always being in control of the power plays simply erase the substantive agendas of any alternative set of critical ends. So the would-be cultural revolutionary merely becomes, in effect, a new political establishmentarian” (p. 226). I say perhaps because Luke’s observations also reveal...
Many democratic theorists believe that people must learn to be more reasonable and less emotional in order to be good citizens. Yet they also agree that citizens have been persistently unable or unwilling to resist the pull of emotion. Under these circumstances, prospects for democracy look dim. But according to George Marcus, this description of the circumstances is not accurate. In his book, he argues that citizens need not be dispassionate to be reasonable because the use of reason in fact depends upon emotion. Thus, passion is not the hindrance it has been accused of being and democracy is working better than has been claimed.

Where democratic theorists err is in accepting the conventional presumption that reason and passion are "independent and antagonistic" (p. 14). According to this view, reason is judicious and universal, while emotion is mysterious, inarticulate, thoughtless, blind, impulsive, intractable, extreme, biased, and selfish. Given these conceptions, it is hardly surprising that democrats would see emotion as a substantial threat and seek to limit its role in politics. "It is the weakness of reason that has become the dominant and agreed-upon problem for citizenship," the author states, and the proposed solution is to "cleanse the public of its ill-advised, if natural, choice to succumb to passion's seductive embrace" (pp. 28, 30).

In contrast to this conventional understanding of emotion, Marcus draws on recent work in neuroscience to argue that it is emotion that "invokes" reason in the first place. He contends that emotion "systems" are brain processes that work largely outside of our conscious awareness. The "disposition system," for example, consists of various levels of enthusiasm that indicate to the brain whether the tasks it is engaged in are going well or poorly. This feedback allows the brain to make adjustments and thereby helps us to execute all of the routine things we do, such as writing our names and driving to work. The "surveillance system," on the other hand, consists of various levels of anxiety or calm that alert the brain to the circumstances that overall, "the demands of citizenship are being met" (p. 117). This conclusion appears to rest on two claims: first, that habitual behavior and "noninvolvement" in politics is actually a good thing in many circumstances, and second, that the mistaken belief that people must be calm to be rational has masked the amount of deliberation actually occurring (mostly amidst anxiety). Both of these claims could use more support than they are given. But even if both claims are true, that does not mean they are true enough to justify his assessment of the current state of democracy. Conscious examination of every political practice and issue may well be profoundly impractical; that impracticality tells us nothing, however, about whether there ought to be more examination than there is.

Marcus’s relatively unanxious appraisal of liberal democracy offers some new ways of thinking about the nature of and relationships among reason, emotion, and habit in politics. Readers who are interested in questioning the accepted wisdom about these things may find his ideas useful, although those who are more anxious than he appears to be will likely still reach a less sanguine conclusion.


— Meta Mendel-Reyes, Berea College

The revival of the peace movement in the wake of the events of September 11, 2001 underscores the timeliness of this book by Francesca Polletta. If it had been published only five years ago, the book’s subject, the strategic value of participatory democratic decision making, might have been recognized for historical interest, but not for contemporary relevance. The great social movements of the 1960s and 1970s had been superseded by the twin triumphs of capitalism and globalization; while pockets of grassroots organizing existed in the United States and elsewhere, they seemed hardly likely to coalesce beyond occasional outbursts at international economic summits. However, with hundreds of thousands of citizens in the streets in opposition to war, this book reminds us of the importance of social movements in American political history, and calls attention to critical tensions that the current one is likely to face.

Polletta’s title phrase, “Freedom Is an Endless Meeting,” was a widely repeated, if sometimes ironic, description by a participant.
of one of the distinctive features of the 1960s movements. Scholars have joined in recognizing the salience of shared decision making, but according to Polletta, they have focused simplistically on a “strategy/democracy conundrum” (p. ix). To the extent that movements fail to rise above decentralization, nonhierarchical structure, and consensus-based decision making, they are doomed to failure. While some observers have recognized the impact of participatory democracy in the realms of personal or cultural transformation (e.g., see Winifred Breines, Community and Organization in the New Left, 1989), Polletta stakes a claim for its political significance. Her central argument is that “far from being at odds with the demands of political effectiveness, participatory decision making can ... contribute to making change in the political arena” (p. viii).

A sociologist, Polletta interweaves comparative and historical analysis of the major American movements of the twentieth-century. The book is organized chronologically, with theoretical chapters at the beginning and end. She addresses the labor and peace movements during the first half of the century; the Southern civil rights movement, especially the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC); the New Left, especially Students for a Democratic Society (SDS); the women’s liberation movement; and community organizing and direct action at the end of the century. She draws upon archival and oral-history material, as well as original interviews with activists.

In Polletta’s view, the practical benefits of participatory democratic decision making take three forms: “solidary, innovatory, and developmental” (p. 5; sic). By solidary, she refers to the way in which shared deliberation increases group ownership of and commitment to decisions. Such deliberation also facilitates innovatory tactics vital to organizational success. Most importantly, democratic decision making helps to develop a sense of efficacy and skills needed by the members of social movements, most of whom have been excluded from formal participation.

As Polletta’s historical studies show, participatory democracy’s successes, as well as failures, reflect its “relational bases” (p. 16). The “participatory democratic dilemma” is that the “very relationships generating the trust and respect that democracy requires may also come with norms that undercut a democratic project” (p. 221). She offers an original framework for distinguishing among the relational underpinnings of twentieth-century social movements: religious fellowship (e.g., pacifist organizations), tutelage (e.g., SNCC, SDS), and friendship (e.g., SNCC, SDS, women’s liberation collectives). Each model features a distinctive deliberative style that promotes democratic participation and political effectiveness; however, each also has its own potential sources of conflict (Table 1, p. 18).

For example, when participatory democracy takes the form of tutelage, as in SNCC, decision making is guided by trusted organizers who aim to prepare the members for action and leadership. Potential sources of conflict may arise about where to draw the line between needed direction and inappropriate dependence; this is most likely to occur when movement goals are uncertain. According to Polletta, SNCC’s quick demise was due primarily not to racial divisions or to arguments over structure, as is usually argued, but to the fact that “when the ends of action become either contentious or unclear, tutelary relations supply no way of adjudicating among them” (p. 86).

Once movement decision making is viewed in all its complexity, the apparent conflict between strategy and democracy is more properly understood as a series of challenging, potentially reconcilable, tensions. The key is to “develop new kinds of democratic relationships, ones that maximize the mutual respect, trust, and concern characteristic of formally nonpolitical relationships but avoid their weaknesses” (p. 218). For example, she endorses the creation of feminist-style “hybrid” organizations (p. 219) that allow expertise to exist with and be accountable to membership.

Freedom Is an Endless Meeting is original, well written, and thoroughly researched. Polletta not only makes an important contribution to our understanding of American social movements but also offers a persuasive argument for their essential role in political change. Her analysis of participatory democratic decision making reclaims the value of this oft-maligned practice, without yielding either to oversimplification or nostalgia.

The book’s comparatively minor weaknesses include the fact that Polletta’s methodology tends to privilege those whose names are known and whose present-day status renders them accessible to an academic scholar. The dilemmas discussed may be those facing relatively educated, middle-class leaders, rather than the people who are being organized, the tutors rather than the tutees. Participatory democracy seems to be an ideal subject for participatory action research, in which the community is involved in designing and carrying out the study. But what would historical participatory research look like?

Finally, Polletta’s discussion of contemporary movements is slightly dated, as may be expected in a book that encompasses all the major social movements of the last century. It already appears that the twenty-first century will bring new democratic dilemmas, such as the challenge of balancing face-to-face deliberations with the electronic organizing that can produce almost instantaneous decision making and action. The reemergence of the peace movement suggests that the activists will not wait for the scholars, although both would benefit by asking whether freedom is lost when pressing a key replaces the “endless meeting.”


— Kevin B. Smith, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

An educated citizenry has long been viewed as a central prop to American democracy. The structural strength of this pillar of the republic at the dawn of the twenty-first century is a matter of some debate. Are schools up to the challenge of adequately preparing citizens for self-governance? What exactly does education really (as opposed to ideally) contribute to civic society? Are there education reforms we might pursue that increase the odds of inculcating democratic values and habits? Are there reforms we should avoid for fear that they might decrease these same odds? Making Good Citizens offers a range of answers from a number of well-known scholars.

Although the underlying theme of education’s contributions to civic culture is a constant throughout the book, the essays themselves are something of an eclectic mix. Roughly speaking, they can be divided into thirds. The first four chapters outline the theory connecting education to civic involvement and offer some empirical evidence for these causal links, though the theory and empirical evidence are not necessarily tightly integrated from chapter to chapter. Diane Ravitch sets the basic tone for what follows in a thoughtful opening chapter whose basic point is this: Democratic values and habits are not innate. They need to be communicated and nurtured between generations. The important debate is over how school can best fulfill this critical function. A few chapters later, Robert Putnam undertakes a multivariate state-level analysis examining the empirical link between education and civic capital. Whereas Ravitch suggests that a liberal education precedes civic involvement, Putnam tests whether civic involvement positively predicts education outcomes. Causal order is seemingly reversed. Both essays are well done and well worth a
reader’s time, but they are not necessarily conveying a consistent message.

Such differences may be considered all to the good, especially given the second third of the essays. Collectively, these amount to an extended debate over what values public education is capable of transmitting, and what these values actually mean for the broader civic culture. It is easy to agree that schools should inculcate good civic values, but what, specifically, are they? Who is best at teaching them? Nathan Glazer argues that in the past, there was a rough consensus on the values that schools should transmit. Prior to the 1960s, there were plenty of disagreements over education, but these differences tended to center on class divisions. Today, the value consensus is shattered—it is the values themselves that are at the core of most disagreements in education. The ways in which a school handles controversial topics such as sex education become, in effect, value-based yardsticks for judging school performance. There are now at least two cultures—both with a legitimate claim to be civic cultures—that have value-based differences over everything from phonics versus whole language to discipline. Lacking a consensus on which set of values to institutionalize, schools become flashpoints for political conflict regardless of the choices they make.

These differences run so deep, some of the authors suggest, that the notion of the common school may have become obsolete. In a pluralistic society with deep disagreements about what values education should transmit as the basis for civic culture, might it not be better to accept or embrace these differences, rather than confine schools to shrinking common ground? This general question is the topic of the last third of the essays, which grapple with the role of religion in education. Public schools must deal with the conflicting crosspressures resulting from the loss of consensus on values. The results are compromises that please few and anger many. Religious schools by their very nature have considerably fewer individual adherents; the spiritual marketplace should not be subsidized by the state. Essays by Jean Bethke Elshtain and Alan Wolfe are not so sure about this position. Civil society needs a framework of authority, a structured set of values that allows a healthy pluralism to flourish. Religion and religious schools can make important contributions to these civic ends, and it makes no sense to ignore them. Cannot religious pluralism—or at least private schools—play a useful role in democratic pluralism? If so, should this role not be supported by the state?

Joseph Viteritti certainly thinks so. In the final chapter of Making Good Citizens, he argues that the potential benefits of choice-based education reforms outweigh their risks. Ultimately, he suggests, market-based reforms such as vouchers can help redress the inequities that exist in public education. In promoting equality of opportunity, they will make an important contribution to the democratic function of education. I do not support Viteritti’s policy conclusions, and find backing in an earlier essay by Norman Nie and D. Sunshine Hillygus. Their analysis examines the impact of college curricula on rates of civic participation. Among their findings, business majors are much less involved and interested in the political sphere. Institutionalizing the values of business into the structure of education does not strike me as a particularly good way to shore up civic culture.

My dissent with Viteritti (and other authors in this volume), should be read more as a plaudit than a criticism. Agree or disagree with the ultimate conclusions, these essays engage a reader in a lively intellectual discourse with some of the brightest minds thinking seriously about education’s role in a civic society. This book should be warmly recommended to anyone interested in how schools shape future citizens.


— John Tamborino, Johns Hopkins University

Mark Redhead’s book is one of the closest studies to date of Charles Taylor’s life and thought. Taylor has been widely read and discussed since his earliest publications over forty decades ago, but only recently have books appeared that attempt to cover his broad and deep thought in its entirety. Redhead does an excellent job of capturing the breadth, depth, organization, and nuances of its subject. He devotes more space to exposition than to criticism and refinement, but, given the complexity of Taylor’s thought, this is no small feat. Readers looking for a clear summary of Taylor’s ideas, or interested in any number of particular areas of his thought, will benefit from this book, as will those exploring issues of cultural pluralism, especially in a Canadian context.

Redhead follows a red thread running through Taylor’s thought—his attempt to overcome political fragmentation in a manner that recognizes particularity and promotes unity. This theme is rooted in Taylor’s experience as a bilingual Canadian and manifest in his commitments both to the cultural preservation and self-government of Quebec and to a Canadian federation that pursues national shared values and overarching purpose. Redhead maintains that too little attention has been given to the defining features of Taylor’s life, which include having been raised by an English Protestant father and a French Catholic mother; his roles as a leading Anglo-American scholar and an active Quebec intellectual; his deeply held Catholic faith; and his political commitments, engagements, and activism as a social democrat in Canada’s New Democratic Party. The book proceeds (meticulously, if in places a bit slowly) by discussing the historical and political context of Taylor’s life and thought, his “articulations” of “deep diversity,” the “modern malaises” of atomism, fragmentation, legitimation crisis, instrumental rationality, and “enframing technology,” the problems that bedevil procedural liberalism, the constitutive role of self-interpretation in selfhood and subjectivity, Catholicism and modernity, and much more.

Redhead’s principal claim is that Taylor’s conception of deep diversity, as a solution to political fragmentation, is insufficiently open to difference and thus fails by its own standard. In the end, Taylor “promotes a totalizing moral vision in which the core of his spiritual vision occupies a fundamental space. Taylor thus responds to Nietzsche’s challenge, as well as to the challenge of elucidating the basis for shared values in a deeply diverse democracy, by promoting a moral vision that is in tension with his commitment to cultural pluralism” (p. 213). To an important extent, it is through his religious faith—“I’m a Catholic Christian with a strong theistic outlook” (p. 197)—that Taylor introduces a moral ontology, hierarchy of goods, and set of values that are presumed to be, at some level, already held by others. He also outflanks his interlocutors by appealing to the transcendental, warning, in his less restrained moments, that not to do so condemns them to everlasting postmodern confusion and violence. The Christian faith...
sustaining Taylor’s orientation and commitments has become increasingly apparent in recent years, and Redhead is correct to lay this out and to explore its implications and limitations.

Most of Taylor’s scholarly writings are highly abstract (many of his essays make virtually no reference to anything factual or concrete, relying on hypothetical examples in the limited instances in which examples are introduced), giving readers the impression that he is the quintessential philosopher. Thus, it is extremely helpful to learn more about his popular writings and civic and personal life, especially his extensive, lifelong participation in Canadian politics. This exposes additional layers in what is already perhaps the most multilayered set of ideas offered by any contemporary philosopher or political theorist, and shows the extent to which political concerns have inspired Taylor’s more abstract theoretical reflections. And it makes his accomplishments both as a scholar and as a public intellectual that much more impressive.

Nevertheless, there is a reason that Taylor is world-renowned as a philosopher and political theorist but not as a political pundit, activist, or candidate. Quite simply, he is gifted at the former but not at the latter. His extensive efforts in party politics in Canada have been of limited success (when not resoundingly unsuccessful), and his commentary on the mundane aspects of politics, quoted at some length in this book, often come across as, well, rather mundane.

Moreover, Redhead’s portrait of Taylor’s “failure” to offer an “adequate solution” to Canada’s political problems or to the conflict between unity and particularity seems to presume that political theory primarily is about solving such problems, about theorizing until one has arrived at a solution that can then be implemented by political actors. Thus, I qualify my claim that Taylor’s political action is far less impressive than his theory by submitting that we should not presume that theory and practice are so closely wedded, such that a satisfying or powerful theory entails an equivalent action or practice. Although Taylor does, in some places, offer such a restrictive conception of theory, his own work displays its multiple roles. His theoretical contributions and interventions, including his most abstract, are often extremely challenging and productive when considered in the context of political action or practice, though not merely in the focused, contained, or conclusive manner suggested by Redhead. Rather, the power of Taylor’s thought is, in part, to raise avoided or forgotten questions, to enlarge consciousness by attempting to articulate inchoate elements in thinking that circulate beneath its more readily apparent layers, to press us moderns to grapple with tensions, problems, and paradoxes inherent in modernity and for which there may be no solution, and to engage those with alternative understandings of modernity. In addition, much of Taylor’s probing, wide-ranging reflections exceed his practical concern for Canadian politics, or his theoretical concern for political fragmentation. Redhead acknowledges such aspects of Taylor’s thought, and that Taylor (most of the time) does not expect to arrive at a settled or satisfying solution to the most significant problems, but the structure of this book suggests otherwise.

In a similar vein, Redhead underestimates the extent to which Taylor’s thought has evolved in the course of his career. “Deep diversity,” the ideal that “embodies much of Taylor’s political theory” (p. 3), is, as Redhead notes, a term Taylor introduced only recently. Redhead persuasively illustrates the extent to which this “vision is the product of four decades of personal involvement in Canadian politics” (p. 3). Yet he seems to read this vision into Taylor’s earlier thought, rather than exploring how it has gradually emerged as his earlier, stronger commitments to solidarity, unity, and commonality have been scaled back. The ideal of deep diversity has emerged dialectically in Taylor’s thought, as one would expect, but in some ways the ideal is a reluctant concession, necessitated by the increasingly apparent cultural and ethical diversity in his midst.

Having made a strong case that Taylor’s response to the crisis in Canadian politics, and to political fragmentation in general, makes too little room for difference and diversity, Redhead offers “three forms of openness” (p. 228) to advance Taylor’s thought. These are, first, a “practical, non-ontological approach to moral sources” as a basis for shared values and common goods, in place of the ontology underlying Taylor’s conception of moral sources; second, a “rooted cosmopolitanism” that acknowledges the weight of cultural identity; and, third, greater appreciation of the ways in which procedural liberalism safeguards cultural diversity and self-government. Many readers are likely to be convinced by the second and third of these, in contrast with the first, which comes as a surprise, given Redhead’s preceding discussions. His practical, nonontological approach is presented somewhat hastily, and the present space does not permit its full discussion. I limit myself to observing that some of Taylor's crucial insights—especially regarding the nature of moral sources, reflection, selfhood, and identity—seem to be lost in this alternative approach (though in places, the approach appears to remain ontological and thus may benefit from another name).

As Redhead helps us to see, Taylor’s thought would be opened up by acknowledging more fully that his moral ontology is contestable and, consequently, that alternative ontologies deserve attention. In the meantime, we would do better by assuming that such ontologies are unavoidable and indispensable and incomplete and contestable, and by pursuing conceptions of political thinking and engagement, and models of public life, that incorporate this assumption. This would be deep diversity. Nonontological approaches may be diverse but not deep. Charles Taylor displays the sort of careful, meditative, generous temperament for which Taylor is widely admired, suggesting that Redhead is in an excellent position to respond to the above challenges and to continue to help us think beyond his subject.

Aristotle and Modern Politics: The Persistence of Political Philosophy.

— James Bernard Murphy, Dartmouth College

Aristotle: Tessitore is to be commended for his yeoman’s labor in assembling this very fine collection of (mostly) new essays exploring Aristotle’s thought in relation to a wide variety of themes in contemporary political theory. The 12 contributions are divided into four broad parts: the problem of community; the theory of virtue; the relations of law, economics, and politics; and the foundations of modern politics. But these divisions are not very illuminating and these essays might well have been organized quite differently: The essays do not address or complement one another, either within the four parts or across the volume as a whole. They can easily be read in any order. The strength of this collection lies in the high quality of each contribution and of each contributor: Sometimes the whole is less than the sum of the parts. These essays embody much of the best Aristotelian political theory in America today.

Even part-time Aristotelians will already be familiar with Bernard Yack’s arguments about agonistic community in Aristotle’s politics and with Martha Nussbaum’s “capabilities approach” to human flourishing outlined in her “Aristotelian Social Democracy” (Liberalism and the Good, edited by R. Bruce Douglas, Gerald M. Mara, and Henry S. Richardson, 1990.) But in addition to these, Tessitore has given us 10 strong new essays (here listed in the order found in the volume):
Susan Collins’s exploration of how the virtue of justice in Aristotle attempts to unite both individual flourishing and political community; Tissot’s own Aristotelian critique of Alasdair MacIntyre; David K. O’Connor’s analysis of Leo Strauss’s reading of Aristotle as a response to Heidegger; Charles R. Pinches’s argument that contemporary liberalism suppresses its debt to Christian theology; Miriam Galston’s argument that an Aristotelian approach to legal reasoning would steer between natural law theory and critical legal studies; Jill Frank’s proposal that Aristotle enables us to usefully transcend the antithesis in property law between private right and public good; Douglas J. Den Uyl and Douglas Rassussen’s argument that if we understand civic friendship as a kind of friendship of advantage, then Aristotelianism need not be as hostile to commercial society as was Aristotle; Gerald Mara’s interpretation of Aristotle’s “Athenian Constitution” as a study of democratic political culture and political education; Stephen S. Salkever’s contrast of Aristotle’s open-ended and dialectical inquiry with the quite different and more theoretical aspirations of contemporary democratic theory in Jürgen Habermas and John Rawls; and finally, Fred D. Miller, Jr.’s attempt to reconstruct Aristotle’s account of moral psychology and moral action in the light of the admittedly modern concept of individual autonomy. These are important essays on important topics and there is something here for everyone.

If there is a theme common to all or at least many of these diverse essays it might be Aristotle’s relation broadly to liberalism; indeed, Tissot begins both his introduction to the volume and to his own essay with the familiar observation that, with the collapse of communism, liberalism is now hegemonic, so that the task of contemporary political philosophy must be to theorize liberalism. Yet this “end of history” cliché was more compelling before 9/11 and the recognition of new challenges to the alleged liberal hegemony. Perhaps a volume truly about Aristotle and Modern Politics should include chapters on “Aristotle and Islam” or “Aristotle and Empire” or “Aristotle and Terrorism.” No doubt the exploration of liberal political theory and practice in the light of Aristotle’s thought is often quite illuminating. As many of the contributors show, contemporary debates within liberalism skirt many fundamental questions about the nature of human goodness and the basis of justice, and liberal cosmopolitans can appear startlingly parochial when framed by the deep challenges posed by Aristotle’s thought. In this light, even liberal political philosophy begins to look more ideological than philosophical, although several contributors also assert that there are ideological elements in Aristotle’s philosophy as well.

But this focus on liberalism, aside from itself being parochial, also tends to be slippery and muddled. After all, the liberalism taken now to be hegemonic ranges from the libertarian right to the social democratic left; Anglo-American liberalism has little in common with continental liberalism, and liberal political theorists emphasize the distinction between comprehensive and political liberalism. The term “liberalism” now functions largely as an honorific (or, for others, a term of abuse), rather than as a term of conceptual clarification. Of course, the notion of what is “Aristotelian” is equally pro- tean, and this volume presents us with libertarian, social democratic, cosmopolitan, and aristocratic portraits of Aristotle. What never comes into focus is the illiberal Aristotle. From the quite congenial portraits in this collection, we could hardly realize that Aristotle defended mandatory abortion and infanticide, natural slavery, the subordination of women, the disenfranchisement of workers, piracy, the prohibition of lending at interest, the political control of religion, and Greek conquest of the barbarians. Some of these well-known views are quietly conceded by some contributors, but none uses them to explore the vast gulfs between Aristotle’s and our moral sensibilities.

What does it mean to be an Aristotelian today? For some, it means exegetical mastery of Aristotle’s authentic texts, for others, mastery of a tradition of ancient, medieval, and modern commentary on Aristotle; for still others, it means philosophical reconstruction of Aristotle’s thought in light of modern ideas, and for yet others, it means neo-Aristotelian theorizing of modern politics. In a collection such as this, we should expect to find (and we do find) primarily philosophical reconstruction of Aristotle and neo-Aristotelian theorizing: few of the contributors are as clear as is Fred Miller about the importance of distinguishing these very different approaches to Aristotle. A few of the contributors engage in exegesis of Aristotle’s texts, even though none makes this a primary aim. Aside from a few passing references, none of the contributors attempts to engage the vast tradition—ancient and modern, Islamic, Jewish, and Christian—of commentary on Aristotle. None expresses responsibility for, loyalty to, or even interest in, a particular historical tradition of such commentary. Apparently, being an Aristotelian now means relating to the texts of Aristotle mediated only by one’s own individual judgments and conscience. In this sense, Aristotle scholarship today is deeply, one might say, fundamentally, Protestant.

This book resembles some piano performances, in which the pianist’s left hand traces a conventional melody line while the right flies off in audacious arpeggios. Geoffrey Vaughn’s “left hand” offers a sound discussion of the problem of imputing intentions to Hobbes, and suggests we should focus on his practical intentions in particular. In the vein of David Johnson’s Rhetoric of Leviathan (1986) and Quentin Skinner’s Reason and Rhetoric in the Philosophy of Hobbes (1996), Vaughn takes the view that Hobbes looked to political education to solve the problem of disorder, and that he came to embrace rhetoric as a means of political suasion. The audacious side of the interpretation lies in its treatment of Behemoth as a key text in the enterprise. Vaughn reads the dialogue between “A” and “B” that makes up the work as an exemplar of the process of political education. The title phrase, “Behemoth teaches Leviathan,” is meant to telegraph this claim. “Leviathan,” he explains, “is Hobbes’s philosophy in systematic form; Behemoth is his philosophy in pedagogic form” (p. ix).

Vaughn’s logic is admirably clear and well laid out. Hobbes’s practical goal, he says, was to stabilize existing governments without tinkering with institutions, which ruled out solving the problem of disorder through institutional engineering. Instead, Hobbes had to rely on education. But what kind of education? Since Hobbesian subjects are not to engage in “private judgment” and develop their own independent ideas, he cannot have had a philosophical education in mind; his political education must be designed to discipline subjects and to govern their opinions (p. 38). This exoteric doctrine for the masses has three elements: the negative Golden Rule (“do not do unto another what you would not have done to you”); the dramatic image of the state of nature; and the combination of a state religion with a minimalistic version of essential Christian doctrine. Together, these elements convey the core lesson: Protect yourself and distrust others (p. 71).

Observing Hobbes’s increasing use of historical examples through the several versions of his political theory, Vaughn argues that rhetorical history was to be the vehicle for conveying this political education. By “rhetorical history” he means the use of history to instruct through narrative, as opposed to philosophic precept:

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— Deborah Baumgold, University of Oregon
"The unique advantage this provides is the possibility of governing opinions without providing explanations or demonstrations" (p. 90). It is a covert means of instruction, which manipulates rather than enlightens the reader, and produces not knowledge but mere opinion.

The argument culminates in a novel interpretation of "Behemoth" that draws our attention to the dialogue form of this history of the Civil War. The work was completed in 1668, some 17 years after the publication of *Leviathan*. It is commonly read as a case study illustrating the application of Hobbes's theory to the immediate case. However, Vaughn observes, the standard view ignores the dramatic style of the work, in which an older protagonist, A, educates the younger B about the war. Taking seriously the dialogue form, Vaughn draws the conclusion that "Behemoth" is "an example of how to educate someone through the medium of history" (p. 133). It illustrates "how to produce a docile people—a Behemoth and not another Long Parliament—which is capable of being turned, with sufficient skill, into a Leviathan" (p. 134).

It is an imaginative and thought-provoking interpretation of *Behemoth*, which leads one to question the very nature of the work. A good commentary should do this. A very good commentary will pair such imaginative insight with a cogent account of authorial intentions. Vaughn himself emphasizes the importance of this in an opening critique of other commentaries for their insufficient attention to Hobbes's intentions. He charges, for instance, that in Skinner's work, "both the initial observation and the procedure for explanation are external," and so it is "Skinner, as an observer, who formulates both the problem and the solution. Neither were prompted by Hobbes" (pp. 4–5). Yet his own interpretation seems vulnerable to the same complaint, inasmuch, as Vaughn admits, "[t]he rhetoric of history can be drawn out from the implications of several of Hobbes's arguments. The possible construction of such a technique, of course, does not prove that Hobbes ever recognized it as an implication of his arguments" (p. 89).

His reading of "Behemoth" also gives the appearance of being an interpretative construction. There is a simpler possible explanation for the dialogue form of the work, which Vaughn notes but dismisses. In old age, Hobbes used the genre for several works, including the *Dialogue... of the Common Laws* (1666) and three appendices to the Latin *Leviathan* (1668) (pp. 107–8). It may well be that "Behemoth" was composed as a dialogue simply because this was a genre favored by Hobbes in the period. Sometimes authorial intentions are simpler and more straightforward than interpretive constructions.

Interpretation, to borrow from Hans Georg Gadamer, is inevitably a melding of the horizon of the work with that of the reader. Despite insisting on the importance of the former, *Behemoth Teaches Leviathan* ends up being more Vaughn than Hobbes.


— Alan Wolfe, Boston College

Should citizens of a liberal democracy who are religious put aside their convictions when they vote or offer arguments on behalf of the positions they hold? Many political philosophers believe that they should. Paul Weithman insists that no such requirement should be imposed upon them.

Weithman's main concern is with writers who argue on behalf of intelligibility or accessibility as a precondition for liberal democratic debate and discourse. From their point of view, disagreement will be inevitable, especially over such highly contentious moral issues as abortion or stem cell research. To prevent democracy from deteriorating into potentially ugly war, all citizens, according to what he calls the "standard view" on these questions, ought to be able to justify the positions they hold in terms that their opponents can at least understand, and their opponents are required to do the same.

In some forms, the criterion of intelligibility would seem to rule out strongly held religious convictions on the grounds that they are motivated by revelation rather than reason. People of faith cannot always provide reasons for their views that will be intelligible to the secular. But many dangers would follow, Weithman believes, if we were to conclude that their opinions should not count or should count less than others.

To demonstrate why this is the case, the author turns first to empirical findings about how religion actually works in the United States, even while acknowledging the reluctance of political philosophers to shift the grounds of their arguments from ideal standards to actual reality. He points out, for example, that those who hold to the standard position often do this themselves, since they are often at pains to show how religious extremists stand in opposition to public reason. Making good use of many empirical studies, most particularly Sidney Verba, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Henry Brady's *Voice and Equality* (1995), Weithman demonstrates the degree to which religion serves as a source of political mobilization and thus as a contributor to democratic health. He also documents the ways in which religious motivations often produce outcomes favorable to the least advantaged. Besides, he asks at one point (echoing political philosopher Nancy Rosenblum), are we not better off wanting religious believers to be encouraged to participate, thereby moderating their views, than to be effectively alienated from democracy's rules of the game?

The bulk of *Religion and the Obligations of Citizenship*, however, is not concerned with empirical findings but with a closely reasoned argument challenging the two writers who, in Weithman's opinion, have offered the best defense of the standard view: Robert Audi and John Rawls. Because the arguments Weithman advances are complex, I will not try to summarize them here. It suffices to say that he is a minimalist when it comes to establishing the obligations citizens can be expected to fulfill so that their reasons meet the criteria of liberal democracy. He defends the position that it is sufficient that citizens have reasons that are comprehensible to themselves, and he finds more demanding conceptions unable to meet all the criteria they themselves establish.

Weithman's book is an important contribution to an important debate, and it will be viewed as an essential text among those who find fault with the approaches of books like Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson's *Democracy and Disagreement* (1996) or Stephen Macedo's *Liberal Virtues* (1990). Remarkably fair-minded in spite of the contentious issues with which he is concerned, Weithman writes as someone strongly attracted to liberal theory yet without the suspicion of faith that can often be found in those precincts.

I have only one complaint with this otherwise stimulating book. Liberals are not the only writers who sometimes treat religious believers as less than full citizens of their society. The same could be said of theologians like Stanley Hauerwas or the literary theorist Stanley Fish. Hauerwas's treatment of believers as "resident aliens" and Fish's argument that people of faith can never accept liberalism are "empirical findings but with a closely reasoned argument challenging the two writers who, in Weithman's opinion, have offered the best defense of the standard view: Robert Audi and John Rawls. Because the arguments Weithman advances are complex, I will not try to summarize them here. It suffices to say that he is a minimalist when it comes to establishing the obligations citizens can be expected to fulfill so that their reasons meet the criteria of liberal democracy. He defends the position that it is sufficient that citizens have reasons that are comprehensible to themselves, and he finds more demanding conceptions unable to meet all the criteria they themselves establish.

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The first section of the book, Chapters 2 through 4, is designed to put some empirical teeth into the gains-from-exchange model of legislative behavior. First, Adler lays out a set of related hypotheses regarding the makeup of House committees and the types of policies that might spring from them. Next, aggregate data on constituency characteristics for districts dating to the 1940s is investigated. One would assume, for example, that if committees were vehicles for the distribution of benefits to constituencies, then the members on a given committee would have similar constituencies—and that these constituencies would have a higher demand for the programs and services under that committee's jurisdiction then would the constituencies of noncommittee members. Sure enough, the author's in-depth analysis suggests that "House members gain assignment to panels of specific interest to their constituents, resulting in panels whose membership is over-representative of districts with qualities of particular concern to those panels" (p. 73).

Adler also takes a step beyond that "traditional" classification of committees into prestige, policy, and constituency—advanced by Richard Fenno in 1973. Instead, he uses each committee's policy jurisdiction to derive "profiles" of district characteristics that would suggest greater demand for policy benefits controlled by that committee. The result is a sharper look at the importance of supplying benefits to constituencies, regardless of the committee's policy domain. That is to say, the notion that "policy" or "prestige" committees are less useful for providing constituent benefits is rejected: "[S]eating on many House panels still fail prey to the most fundamental force in congressional politics—the reelection motive" (p. 73).

Another issue confronted early in the book is the extent to which these committees meet constituent demands. Is there evidence that members can actually deliver? As with similar studies, Adler's findings here are a tad modest, due to a good bit of variance among committees, but it does suggest a relationship between committee membership and the distribution of federal funds from programs under that committee's jurisdiction. At the very least, the author makes an impressive effort to demonstrate empirically a relationship that many simply assume.

Those who study the conduct of reelection campaigns might be somewhat disappointed with Adler's operationalization of "constituency." Can we assume that the "demands" driving legislative action are revealed by district-level census data? Modern campaigns are not about pleasing constituents, or even voters, but rather targeted groups of voters. As turnout continues to lag—especially in primary elections—perhaps legislators have come to realize that pleasing a slice of the constituency is good enough. Rational legislators might be responsive to a small group of constituents, but somewhat aloof to district-wide interests. Perhaps this explains some of the variance.

The second half of the project explores how the committee/relection connection stymies committee jurisdiction reform efforts. Chapters are devoted to the Legislative Reorganization Act of 1946, efforts during the 1973–74 period (sometimes referred to as the Bolling-Hansen reforms), and the GOP reform efforts in the 104th Congress. While each chapter is well developed, thorough, and offers unique insights, a consistent theme emerges: Reform efforts are muted by electoral concerns, and in many instances, the results enhance the demand/supply nexus created by committee jurisdiction.

Chapter 7, on Republican reform efforts during the 104th Congress, is particularly informative. Many have suggested that partisan interests have become increasingly potent when it comes to organizational/procedural reforms. Given the polarization of the House in the early 1990s, maybe the party interests trump individual reelection motivations. Put a bit differently, are chances of true jurisdiction reform greater during periods of partisan polarization? Adler tackles this issue head-on, arguing, in the end, that "electoral requirements do stifle reform efforts, but the leverage takes on a much more partisan character as caucus leaders are constrained to attend to the electoral needs of their membership as a whole rather than on an individual level" (p. 172).

There is much to applaud in Why Congressional Reforms Fail. Unlike other research questions where the answer is elusive, here the answer is straightforward. Would anyone really doubt that committee reforms are trumped by reelection concerns? But the strength of Adler's analysis lies in the care with which he charts the dimensions of the issue. Far too many of us have simply jumped on David Mayhew's electoral connection bandwagon and assumed that all internal adjustments are tied to reelection concerns. This book is a high-end piece of scholarship—potent in its descriptive, qualitative elements as it is rigorous in its empirical sections. Adler's review of the existing scholarship is nothing short of stunning. It is a must-read for anyone interested in subtle yet powerful forces at work in the legislative process.
In this book, R. Michael Alvarez and John Brehm have produced a provocative and important statement about the nature and functioning of mass opinion. Political scientists have grappled with the cognitive processes underlying the survey response since at least Philip Converse’s seminal (and pessimistic) statement on the subject. There can be little doubt that future scholarship in this area will have to contend with Alvarez and Brehm.

The book contains two central theoretical claims. The first—synthesizing the core values school with the newer belief sampling approach—is that the public possesses a multiplicity of widely shared predispositions that can be used to decide policy questions sensibly. However, because some policy domains invoke conflictual predispositions, and because individuals often lack adequate political information, mass opinion is fraught with malleability.

The second, and more novel, claim of the book is that understanding this fickleness of opinion—what scholars once simply bemoaned but now consider a legitimate object of empirical study—requires analysis not only of the opinion itself but also of the response variability surrounding it. As a strategy for explicating the public’s renowned muddleheadedness, the modeling of error structures is a truly innovative and valuable idea. The authors’ findings suggest important new insights about the nature of belief conflict, and they offer sound new empirical procedures for distinguishing it from other attitudinal states of mind.

Alvarez and Brehm take as their starting point a major corollary of the belief sampling model of public opinion—namely, that people do not generally possess any single or “true” opinion about an issue. Rather, they possess distributions of opinions, reflecting, among other things, the degree of consistency in the underlying considerations used to construct them. By relying on heteroskedastic choice methods to estimate the response probabilities of individuals sharing like characteristics, the authors provide the most ambitious and methodologically sophisticated attempt to date to model opinion distributions.

The book’s central concern is the testing of a theory of response variability. The authors’ approach is to attribute the error variance on a given issue to one of three conceptually distinct states of mind, depending on how and whether response variance is predicted by multiple predispositions and political information. They argue that response variance reflects ambivalence (internalized conflict about a policy choice) when the former is heightened by the activation of mutually conflicting predispositions, and when response variance is heightened by the acquisition of new information; it reflects equivocation (“speaking in two voices”) when response variance is diminished by the activation of mutually compatible predispositions, and when response variance is reduced by new information; and it reflects uncertainty when response variance is reduced by political information alone.

The major finding in the book is that opinion variability is far more likely to reflect uncertainty and equivocation than ambivalence. It is interesting that this strongly echoes one piece of wisdom about mass belief systems (a lack of informational wherewithal) but refutes another (ambivalence is ubiquitous). The equivocation effect reveals that where analysts often see logical competition among predispositions (e.g., racial resentment and egalitarianism), the public sees compatibility. The authors’ theoretical approach provides sensible criteria for distinguishing between explanatory constructs that have often been conflated in prior studies of public opinion. Being in a state of conflict about a policy choice is a very different predicament, cognitively speaking, from being unsure (or indifferent) about which values and beliefs should be used in deciding the issue. Given the intractable debates on what exactly error variance in mass opinion represents (e.g., empty-headed respondents, flawed questions, difficult choices), this is an important achievement.

However, by ascribing response variance on any given issue to a single state of mind, the authors would seem to preclude the reasonable possibility that it is a product of all three—ambivalence, uncertainty, and equivocation—among different respondents. For example, both liberals and conservatives may apply egalitarian and individualist principles to the debate about affirmative action, but may reasonably differ as to whether the values have conflictual implications (ambivalent liberals) or compatible implications (equivocal conservatives) for policy choice. Moreover, by absorbing the issue frames offered to them by politically compatible elites, some liberals may view the policy solely through the lens of egalitarianism, and some conservatives may view it solely on the basis of individualism (uncertainty). This more variegated reality would imply that the effect of information on response variance should be contingent on individual differences in the structure of value-attitude relations. Similarly, when an issue is hypothesized to induce ambivalence (e.g., abortion), the effect of information is likely to be highly nonlinear (rather than positive linear, as the authors propose), widening response variance among respondents who endorse both of the competing values (e.g., feminism and religion) but narrowing it among those who endorse one of the values over the other.

The concept of ambivalence has recently permeated larger debates in the public opinion arena, with some scholars suggesting that it is a central feature of mass political attitudes. Among the most notable findings in *Hard Choices, Easy Answers* is that ambivalence is actually quite rare, and contrary to much conventional argument, does not characterize opinion on racial issues. Alvarez and Brehm make a persuasive case that ambivalence is likely to occur only when the competing values are truly incommensurable, that is, when the conflict involves fundamental individual rights that cannot be reconciled by privileging one value over the other, and when the alternative outcomes are personally meaningful. The implication here is that the cognitive act of endorsing conflicting values is not isomorphic with the psychological experience of ambivalence (current practice is to equate one with the other). This is a highly defensible position that should cause scholars to take a more circumscribed view of the ambivalence construct, and to take greater pains in their research to discriminate ambivalence from uncertainty, confusion, or indifference.

In the final section of the book, the authors broaden the scope of their analysis to examine questions of collective public opinion and mass-elite differences in the nature of response variability. Here, they demonstrate convincingly that the problem of ecological inference is exacerbated by the nonrandom variability they document throughout the book. The conclusion of Chapter 9—that ambivalence is much more common among decision-making elites than among the mass public—while suggestive, is based on a rather narrow set of military issues.

In *Hard Choice, Easy Answers*, Alvarez and Brehm bring a sophisticated methodological arsenal to bear on enduring questions of public opinion. They have produced an invaluable study of the structural underpinnings of political attitudes, one that is deserving of serious consideration from a broad range of social scientists.

— Howard Lavine, *State University of New York at Stony Brook*
Howard Ball has written a comprehensive and opinionated overview of U.S. Supreme Court opinions on a variety of subjects relating to personal or intimate choices and associations. It is a handy book to have, both as a classroom tool and as an example of non–value-free scholarship, even if experts on American constitutional law will find little that is new in terms of information or analysis.

After an introductory chapter that provides some necessary background in constitutional history, and that frames these debates (not very usefully) as a “balance” between personal freedoms and state interests, Ball organizes his thorough and readable overview into separate chapters on marriage, family, motherhood, child rearing, and death. The chapter on marriage covers such issues as the right of heterosexual individuals to marry or remarry, the right of married couples to have access to contraceptives, differences in the legal rights of husbands and wives, and the problem of violence against women. In the sarcastically entitled chapter on “Rhapsody of the Unitary Family” (taken from a dissent by Justice William Brennan from a case challenging the legal presumption of spousal parenthood), we are reminded that there was a time when someone like Justice Thurgood Marshall would pressure his colleagues to extend some constitutional protections to family settings that did not conform to conservative models (for example, by prohibiting a suburb from using zoning laws to exclude a grandmother-led family from residential housing), but then we are taken through a series of examples to demonstrate “the continued vitality of traditional nuclear family values” in the Court’s decisions (p. 79).

The motherhood chapter focuses almost exclusively on issues surrounding abortion. The discussion of child raising includes cases involving the custodial rights of unwed fathers, the due process rights of minors whose parents are attempting to commit them to a mental hospital, the rights of children to visit grandparents, the First Amendment rights of parents to take partially nude photographs of their children, and parental decisions to send their children to religious schools or remove them entirely from school settings. The chapter on death focuses on an individual’s right to end life-sustaining medical care, a family’s ability to decide whether to end such care for “incompetent” family members, and the right to have access to physician-assisted suicide. Ball ends with a chapter on issues that might arise in the coming years.

The author is fair enough to let everyone in these debates have their say, but thankfully he is also eager to speak his mind when he considers the Court wrongheaded (which is much of the time). He characterizes the Court’s conception of the so-called nuclear family as “heterocentric” and “homophobic” (p. 35) and bemoans the justices’ seeming blindness to the fact that their preferred “Father Knows Best” imagery is no longer the dominant pattern of American households, and has not been for a generation” (p. 69). In celebrating the Court’s decision to make birth control an individual right rather than a right that is coextensive with the nuclear family, Ball recommends that “the natural step is to end inequality, exploitation, female subordinateization, and battering by the abusive male” (p. 89). Comments like these are not offered as part of a more fully developed normative critique, and will undoubtedly drive some readers crazy, but they also make the book more lively and provocative than it would have been if the author had hidden behind a more dispassionate veil.

Ball also keeps the narrative flowing by incorporating anecdotes and plenty of insider information on the justices’ secret squabbling. It is useful for him to remind us that at the time Congress starting debating the Violence Against Women Act in 1994, Chief Justice William Rehnquist was decrying the tendency of the Congress to federalize “crimes for symbolic reasons,” and in a 1998 speech he singled out the Act as an unfortunate exemplar of that tendency; of course, by 2000, the Chief Justice was able to muster a five-person majority in favor of voiding the law. While it does not amount to much, it spices things up to learn that after the Court had allowed six unrelated university students to be excluded from a neighborhood limited to one-family dwellings, a neighbor wrote a thank-you note to the lone dissenter, Thurgood Marshall, in which she expressed the view that the students “did nothing to destroy the tranquility and tidiness of this village” and that the ordinance was written by “outright bigots” who did not like college students, Blacks, or Hispanics (p. 77). When reviewing the early abortion decisions, we get not only the familiar overview of the Court’s internal deliberations but also a recounting of Justice William Douglas’s outrage over Chief Justice Warren Burger’s attempted manipulation of the Court’s first abortion cases and his embarrassment when his vitriolic draft dissent found its way into the Washington Post.

Sometimes Ball attempts to use these stories to say some things that are designed to sound like weightier theoretical contributions to scholarly discussions, but his heart is not in that effort, and that is all right. Each chapter begins with a vignette that is designed to illustrate “the stresses, doubts, frustrations, and personal conflicts” that the justices face when addressing these difficult issues (p. 4), but these examples are more valuable for their contribution to the narrative than to public law scholarship. There are similarly unnecessary gestures in the direction of the “strategic” nature of judicial decision making or the “fluidity of judicial choice” (a fancy way of saying that justices sometimes change their minds). Most readers will be grateful that these academic detours do not detract from the important part of the discussion, which is the substance of the Court’s opinions on these important questions of public policy. The Supreme Court in the Intimate Lives of Americans allows us to focus anew on these questions, and engage Ball in these debates, and that is a real contribution.
interest rates. The southern economy withered; the western economy was drained, and the industrial core of the northern and midwestern thrived at the other regions’ expense. On this uneven battlefield, the major parties contested the nation’s economic policy future.

The book’s innovative analysis of state political party platforms from 1877 to 1900 shows how “the major parties repeatedly and consistently presented to the national electorate three visions of economic development” (p. 201). State Republican parties advocated the gold standard, protective tariffs, laws that nationalized markets, and policies that redistributed resources to the industrial core. The Democrats opposed protective tariffs and favored policies beneficial to commodities; until 1896, the Democrats supported the gold standard because of New York City’s role in the Democratic coalition. Insurgent “third” parties opposed the gold standard and ignored tariffs. Class conflict took different forms in each region. Claims on wealth centered on the workplace in the industrial belt, on the cotton crop in the South, and on grain marketing in the West. This trifurcation of class conflict helped prevent the conflict of labor and capital from defining national political cleavages: The “deflection of industrial workers into relatively apolitical strike activity, away from national politics, was ... a major reason why robust industrialization and an open democratic politics coexisted in the American experience” (p. 240). The People’s Party in 1892 and the Democratic Party in 1896 united the southern and western opponents of industrialization by proposing to redirect the flow of wealth away from the industrial core. Republican economic policies, however, had created a formidable political coalition to oppose them.

The gold standard, a critically important foundation of industrial expansion that guaranteed investors both liquidity and stability, was the most vulnerable pillar of Republican economic policy. Southern and western constituents demanded currency inflation to relieve them from the constantly tightening economic vise of high interest rates and declining prices. Members of Congress from areas with high interest rates put presidents under continual pressure to relax the gold standard’s relentless financial discipline. But these presidents (mostly Republicans but including gold Democrat Grover Cleveland) uniformly held fast until the 1896 election decisively aligned Congress behind gold. Courts, particularly a U.S. Supreme Court dominated by Republican nominees, allowed the judiciary to strike down legal barriers to market expansion without fear of electoral retribution.

The tariff supplied the political glue for these Republican economic policies. While the gold standard ensured that the financial sector would stay loyal to the Republicans, protective tariffs drew industrialists into the Republican coalition. Abundant, detailed tariff schedules could be fine-tuned to protect specific industries in particular geographic areas. Tariff protection could attract industrial workers as well as their bosses. Selective tariffs permitted protection for wool producers, extending Republican support into the West. The resulting budget surplus allowed for military pensions to Union Army veterans, a political side payment that broadened the Republican base further (while excluding the ex-Confederates who voted in the South). Bensel persuasively emphasizes that whatever their direct economic impact, tariffs were politically indispensable for U.S. economic development. Tariffs made it possible to delegate management of the gold standard to the executive branch, and to pass the explosive issue of market expansion onto the politically insulated courts. In this way, “political party coalitions ... made intersectional redistribution the most important factor in American politics” (p. 527).

A magnificent book like Bensel’s inevitably raises some questions. It explains the fragmentation of the nineteenth-century backlash against capitalism in the United States, but does that explanation then account for the absence of a working-class party in the twentieth-century United States, as implied? The working-class parties that emerged in Britain, Germany, and elsewhere in the early twentieth century were not farmer–labor alliances; they were labor parties, driven by organized labor’s energy and its agenda for the industrial economy. Certainly, alliances with agrarians in nations brought these parties power in some places, but even where electoral alliances were necessary, the labor party indisputably dominated the alliance.

The Political Economy of American Industrialization, 1877–1900 also raises questions about the agents of economic change. Were these policies largely inevitable because they served a necessary function, or were they epiphenomenal, or were they forged prospectively by visionary (if pragmatic) political entrepreneurs? The book tends to give the courts a little more credit for forging a national economy than they deserve, and business leaders and the Constitution a little less. The analysis of state antitrust laws hints at an embryonic story about the states’ hopeless battle to retain economic authority as the expanding national market made their prerogatives irrelevant.

Quibbles aside, Bensel’s award-winning book is a brilliant achievement, a model of scholarship rich with insight and meticulous documentation (the book has 82 tables and 16 maps). It proves again that American political development scholars are providing the most politically sophisticated research in the field of public policy. Vigorous politics—not just a stable legal regime, as suggested by the institutional narrative of Douglass North—was a necessary condition for the growth of the American economy. That economy remains as thoroughly political today as it was more than a century ago.


— Janna C. Merrick, University of South Florida

In January 2003, Clonaid, Inc., which markets itself as the first human cloning company, announced the births of two cloned infants with promises that a well-known medical news reporter would be permitted to arrange for DNA tests to prove that the infants were indeed cloned with cells taken from their mothers and not conceived through sperm fertilization of their eggs. Shortly thereafter and amid much media frenzy, officials at Clonaid changed their minds, saying that neither couple wanted to be identified. The scientific community dismissed it as a hoax, and perhaps it was. But it is a temporary “hoax” because scientific advances will surely provide the needed technology in the relatively near future. As Andrea Bonnicksen argues, scientific advances in cloning technology—and in reproductive technology in general—are like a train moving forward with some stops and a few lurches along the way, but moving forward nevertheless. The challenge, then, is to get on that train and steer it in the right direction. Unfortunately, determining the right direction is no easy task, as is evidenced in virtually every chapter of her thought-provoking book.

Bonnicksen’s purpose is to use “reproductive cloning as a case study to inform efforts to develop a responsible policy structure for managing innovative future technologies” (p. 5). The study is rich in its discussion of agenda-setting events, such as the birth of Dolly the sheep and the various antics of Clonaid. It also provides an excellent analysis of the pluralistic interaction of interest groups, including cloning research facilities, the National Institutes of Health, the National Bioethics Advisory Commission, the Catholic Church, and various other organizations that take

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positions either for or against human cloning. The author traces with great detail and precision the mostly failed efforts of the federal and the state governments to develop cloning policies. She considers the regulatory roles that the Food and Drug Administration, federal research funding agencies, and professional associations could play. She looks to Canada, Australia, Great Britain, and Europe for public policy models and concludes that there is almost universal opposition to human cloning for reproductive purposes, but significant support for cloning for therapeutic purposes—for treating and curing such diseases as Parkinson's, cancer, and diabetes, among others, and also for the potential of growing human tissue and “replacement” body parts. Most likely, however, prohibiting reproductive cloning will retard scientific advances for therapeutic cloning.

The study is also rich in its philosophical dimensions, and the author traces the pro-cloning/anti-cloning debate to the pro-choice/pro-life abortion debate that provides its roots. Much of the cloning debate centers on the fact that embryonic stem cells are more viable and show greater promise for successful cloning than do adult stem cells. Human cloning has become the new battlefield for the pro-choice/pro-life struggle that seeks to define when life begins. If life begins at conception, then it is morally wrong to destroy the embryo through cloning. Even if life begins at some later stage, the moral question of using the embryo for the welfare of someone else without informed consent is raised. But the debate is more complex than the abortion debate because there are living persons—including children—who could potentially be healed from serious illness and injury through therapeutic cloning, and whose lives could be dramatically improved once—or perhaps if—therapeutic cloning is fully developed. And then, of course, there is the overarching ethical issue in reproductive cloning of whether or not any scientist in any society should be allowed to use a “brave new world” laboratory to create a human being.

Crafting a Cloning Policy makes a major contribution to the understanding of the philosophical dilemmas raised by the intersection of science and public policy. The subject matter lends itself well as a case study of how public policy is made. From that perspective, Bonnicksen might draw on the classic literature in public policy, such as James E. Anderson’s analysis of the policy process in Public Policy-Making (2000), and the important works on agenda setting, such as Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies (1995) by John Kingdon and Participation in American Politics: The Dynamics of Agenda-Building (1983) by Roger Cobb and Charles Elder. Moreover, the analysis of the scientific issues and methods presents a challenge to the lay reader. In this regard, a simplistic description of the steps in the cloning process, including illustrations, would be beneficial, as would a glossary of terms and acronyms and a chronology of major events.

This book is perhaps the most comprehensive discussion available of U.S. efforts to develop a cloning policy. It provides a sophisticated synthesis of the scientific and public policy dilemmas created by a technology that races ahead of government action. Bonnicksen impresses upon her readers that the cloning train has left the station, with scientific route and policy destination unknown. While the book is important reading for academics and the general public, it should be mandatory reading for policymakers who will decide both the direction of the train and its ultimate destination.


— Eric Schickler, University of California at Berkeley

David Brady and Mathew McCubbins have put together an engaging volume that showcases the value of historical evidence for evaluating contemporary theories of congressional institutions and behavior. The book is organized around three general questions: What role do congressional party organizations play in policy-making? What are the sources of change in congressional institutions? Finally, how do congressional institutions affect policy outcomes?

The first section includes contributions by several leading participants in the heated debate over congressional party government inspired by Keith Krehbiel’s repeated challenge to scholars to demonstrate that congressional parties affect outcomes once one accounts for individual member preferences. John Aldrich, Mark Berger, and David Rohde extend earlier research on conditional party government by tracking the level of majority-party homogeneity and party polarization in the House and Senate from 1877 to 1994. They show that during periods characterized by centralized party leadership, parties tended to be homogeneous and polarized. A surprising finding is the consistently high homogeneity and polarization in the House from the 1870s through the early 1930s, a period that prior scholarship has suggested encompasses immense changes in party strength. As Joe Cooper and Garry Young point out in their chapter, this apparent stability may reflect inadequacies in standard measures of party homogeneity and polarization. They introduce and defend a series of innovative measures of partisan behavior on the floor. These measures reveal previously undetected variation in the extent to which roll call voting occurred along partisan lines both within and across eras.

Gary Cox and McCubbins take an alternative approach to assessing party government: Arguing that the majority party’s ability to block legislation is constant, they show that from 1877 to 1986 the majority party rarely was defeated—or “rolled”—on final passage votes. They find that the modal number of majority party “rolls” per Congress is zero. Andrea Campbell, Cox, and McCubbins show that majority party rolls have also proven rare in the Senate, averaging just 1.7 per Congress. Yet it is striking that the average number of minority party rolls in the Senate—6.6 per Congress—seems somewhat low given the volume of legislation. It might be useful to pair the sweeping approach taken by Campbell, Cox, and McCubbins with a more focused study of specific Congresses to determine whether there are many instances in which legislation is adopted that one party likely opposed absent an observed roll on final passage. Two chapters in this section do hone in on other indicators of party strength in narrower periods: Brian Sala tracks the voting behavior of committee chairmen in the 1920s and 1930s and finds them to be quite loyal to their party, and Barbara Sinclair examines majority party leaders’ strategic use of special rules in recent decades.

The second section of the book focuses on explaining change in congressional institutions. In an analysis of the shift from select committees to permanent standing committees in the House from 1816 to 1822, Jeffrey Jenkins and Charles Stewart suggest that standing committees emerged as a response to social choice dilemmas that are endemic to legislative politics, such as the need to stabilize bargains. The weakness of party organizations in this period made it especially important to find alternative ways to channel deliberations and avoid chaos on the floor. Gerald Gamm and Steve Smith’s chapter on the development of Senate party leadership similarly treats institutions as solutions to collective action problems. Drawing upon novel behavioral measures and detailed case studies, they demonstrate that floor leadership developed slowly over the course of several decades, rather than emerging
suddenly in the late nineteenth century. This is an important corrective to earlier historical scholarship. Timothy Nokken and Sala’s chapter on the emergence of the “Tuesday–Thursday” club in the House also shows how the legislative process—in this case, the timing of roll call votes on the floor—changed gradually in response to member incentives to return to their districts more frequently. Randall Strahan shifts the focus away from how institutions solve member problems and instead asks under what conditions individual leaders can significantly alter congressional organization. He shows that Henry Clay’s expansion of the Speaker’s role and Thomas Reed’s (R-ME) elimination of minority obstruction in the House cannot be attributed to the contextual variables that are usually used to explain institutional change, such as party homogeneity. Where most of the chapters use history to test existing theories, Strahan uses his cases to develop an alternative perspective on institutional change, which juxtaposes periods of equilibrium, “normal” politics (in which contextual variables dominate), with periods of crisis and potential transformation (in which individual leaders play a greater role).

The final section of the book will appeal to scholars in a number of subfields because it aims to connect intrainstitutional dynamics with broad policy outcomes. John Aldrich, Calvin Jillson, and Rick Wilson skilfully show how the rules adopted in the first Congress helped resolve policy issues that had gone unresolved under the Articles of Confederation. The authors show that preference changes fail to account for the outcomes, and thus they are able to isolate the impact of institutions on these critical policy choices. Brian Humes et al. take another institutional feature—the Constitution’s three-fifths clause regarding the representation of slaves—and show how it exaggerated the South’s influence in the House prior to the Civil War. The authors demonstrate that this overrepresentation likely affected many roll call outcomes, although they might have done more to indicate how it likely impacted the more general direction of policy (e.g., the balance between national power and states’ rights). Nolan McCarty, Keith Poole, and Howard Rosenthal take up issues of representation in the context of the admission of new states to the Union. The authors challenge Barry Weingast’s (“Political Stability and Civil War,” in Bates et al., Analytic Narratives, 1998) argument that the 1820 Missouri Compromise institutionalized a balance rule between free and slave states. Instead they argue that the compromise provided short-term balance while making it likely that free states would eventually achieve a majority. They demonstrate how partisan factors shaped admissions decisions in the post–Civil War period, while also rightly emphasizing the long-term uncertainties surrounding such efforts at partisan deck stacking. The chapter by Sean Theriault and Barry Weingast takes up the Compromise of 1850, challenging the contention that proponents’ reliance on a series of separate bills (rather than a single omnibus) reflected a lack of fundamental agreement that foreshadowed the Compromise’s unraveling in the 1850s. They show that current techniques for analyzing roll call votes can be fruitfully applied to resolve long-standing debates about the content and significance of legislative bargains.

Two decades ago, Cooper and David Brady (“Toward a Diachronic Analysis of Congress,” American Political Science Review 75 [December 1981]: 988–1006) called upon congressional scholars to test contemporary theories using historical evidence. Party, Process, and Political Change in Congress contributes significantly to that cause. The chapters on party government provide new ways of evaluating ongoing debates about party influence. The Jenkins-Stewart and Gamm-Smith chapters draw upon existing theories to illuminate the development of committees and party leadership institutions, respectively. At the same time, the Strahan chapter—along with the afterward by Brady and McCubbins—indicate that historical studies may also contribute to the development of novel, dynamic theories of Congress rather than simply providing new data to test existing theories.

The book also succeeds in connecting congressional history with the study of policy outcomes. Future historical scholarship might do even more to move beyond a focus on internal congressional dynamics and explore how Congress has responded (or failed to respond) to such major transformations as America’s industrialization and ascension to world power status, as well as the rise of the modern presidency and national bureaucracy. These transformations may provide leverage both for explaining shifts in internal institutions and for understanding the enduring features of our national assembly.


—Laura Stoker, University of California, Berkeley

Women in America tend to be less politically active than men, even today, 80 years after they were accepted into the polity by the passage of the nineteenth amendment to the Constitution. Although women and men now vote at similar rates, women are less likely than men to engage in all sorts of other participatory endeavors, such as contacting public officials, joining political organizations, working to solve community problems, and contributing to political campaigns. The central undertaking of The Private Roots of Public Action is to explain this participation gender gap.

Nancy Burns, Kay Lehman Schlozman, and Sidney Verba begin by putting the magnitude of the gender gap in participation into perspective. One the one hand, they admit, the gap might appear quite paltry. Using an eight-point participation index, they show that men and women differ by only about one-third of an act, with men averaging 2.27 and women averaging 1.96 acts across a one- to two-year period. This is roughly equivalent to the participation gap dividing blacks and whites, or that dividing individuals with a high school degree from those who have attended college but failed to receive a degree (p. 246). There is not, it appears, really that much of a gap to explain. On the other hand, we are reminded that even small average differences translate into large aggregate ones; each year, men are carrying out millions of more participatory acts than are women in the population as a whole.

The value of the book’s contribution cannot, however, be gauged in terms of the magnitude of the gender gap it seeks to explain. What the book provides is an important, often fascinating, exceptionally careful, deeply researched, and empirically rich story about the routes to participation among men and among women—which, ultimately, culminates in a persuasive explanation of the gender gap.

The central argument is that men’s and women’s experiences in the private realm shape their engagement in the political realm. To establish this argument, the authors examine the extent to which men’s and women’s levels of political participation can be traced to their socialization by parents, their organizational involvement and leadership roles in high school and college, and their educational attainment per se. It asks whether inequalities in the adult family—for example, disparities between husbands and wives in earnings, responsibility for household work and child-care, and control over family decisions—lie behind gender disparities in political participation. It traces how men’s and women’s experiences in the workforce, in voluntary associations, and in religious institutions all affect their likelihood of becoming politically involved.
What is more, the authors strive to understand the causal pathways linking men and women's circumstances in one private domain (e.g., the adult family) to their circumstances in another (e.g., the workforce), tying all of this to political participation. Thus, for example, the book argues that parenthood influences participation indirectly by influencing workforce participation—and does so in different ways for men and women. Having children leads women out of the workforce while spurring men into it. Workforce participation, in turn, shapes political participation by providing resources (money, civic skills) and opportunities for recruitment. But it also influences participation more indirectly through its effect on involvement in civic associations and religious institutions.

Although most of the ideas and analyses concern how men's and women's political participation is fostered by their nonpolitical or private experiences, the book contains one major argument of a very different sort—about how aspects of the political context also play a role. Specifically, it provides evidence that when women hold highly visible political leadership positions—for example, they serve as senator or governor or have just waged a successful campaign for one of these offices—ordinary American women are inspired to higher levels of political knowledge and interest, which, in turn boosts their participation levels. Women typically lag quite far behind men in political knowledge and interest, but these gaps disappear among women and men living in states where women hold major political offices.

Overall, the book builds upon but also extends the Civic Voluntarism Model developed by Verba, Schlozman, and Brady (1995) in Voice and Equality. Like that volume, The Private Roots of Public Action emphasizes how involvement in private institutions can provide one with resources (money, civic skills) though sometimes drains them (time), and can also increase the likelihood that one will experience efforts at political mobilization or recruitment. What is crucial to this book, however, is not establishing that private institutions have these effects, but tracing how this process plays out for men and for women considered separately. This means that the authors must (and do) consider not only the extent to which women differ from men in their propensity to enter the workforce, join voluntary associations, and become active in the church, but also whether these institutions have the same resource- and mobilization-building effects on men and women. This book also goes well beyond Voice and Equality in its treatment of how family characteristics influence participation. In so doing, it draws upon a new and unique data set based on interviews with both partners from 400 couples, sampled from the households represented in the Citizen Participation Study (the primary data set analyzed in Voice and Equality and the primary database for this book as well).

Ultimately, Private Roots draws together many of its arguments and findings about the paths to participation for women and men and focuses squarely on how they illuminate the gender gap in participation levels. To make this connection, the authors develop and employ a general procedure they call "outcomes analysis." The logic of this procedure is straightforward. Any given explanatory variable—such as one's education level, amount of free time, or extent to which one has acquired civic skills through involvement in voluntary organizations—could be implicated in the production of a gender gap in political participation through one or both of two ways. It could matter to the gap because women and men differ in their level on the explanatory variable, or because the effect of the explanatory variable on participation varies for men and for women. For example, women's participation would fall behind that of men, on average, either if women are less educated than men are, or if education provides less of a boost to participation for women than for men, or both.

The outcomes analysis reveals that almost all of the predictors of participation have similar effects for men and women. Education matters, of course, but matters to the same extent for men and women. Amount of leisure time, by contrast, does not matter for either men or women, and so on. What is driving the participation gap is, instead, gender differences in the levels of the explanatory variables—in particular, women's relative disadvantage in terms of education, in participatory factors related to experience in the workforce, and in psychological involvement with politics.

There is nothing formulaic about any of this. The book is constantly following up and probing more deeply into particular findings, as well as extending its analysis in new directions when doing so appears fruitful. For example, one chapter looks at the intersection of gender, race, and ethnicity, while others explore the significance of views on gender roles, feelings of gender consciousness, and perceptions of gender discrimination. Further, the arguments and findings are, for the most part, presented in a clear, nontechnical, and accessible manner. Statistical procedures are carefully explained, and the most complex statistical results are placed in an appendix. Later chapters regularly remind the reader of relevant ideas and evidence presented earlier. As a result, this is a very enjoyable read.

Readers will surely come away with a deep appreciation of the participatory lives of men and women in America. They will also be provided with a valuable glimpse into the broader literature about gender that the project both relies upon and contributes to, which includes the work of sociologists, economists, and feminist theorists, as well as political scientists. For anyone seeking an understanding of how gender plays out in the family, in the workplace, in civic associations, in religious institutions, and, of course, in mass political behavior, this book is a tremendous resource.


— Gayle R. Avant, Baylor University

This volume starts with a well-developed theoretical framework and then applies that framework to the U.S. Post Office (1862–1924) and Department of Agriculture (USDA) (1862–1928). To Daniel Carpenter, the essential precursors of autonomy of large American federal bureaucracies during the Gilded Era were “reputational uniqueness and political multiplicity” (p. 8). Political multiplicity he defines as support from numerous and potentially conflicting interest groups. The advent of a cadre of “mezzo” level of capable and committed administrators was necessary and essential for the emergence of a bureaucracy substantially free from detailed congressional and presidential oversight. His view contrasts with the more widely shared view among historians that the shift from the Jacksonian “clerical state” to relative autonomy for some federal bureaucracies flowed more from the establishment of independent regulatory agencies and civil service reform.

In comparison with the analysis of changes in the post office and USDA, Carpenter’s analysis of the Department of Interior is brief and focuses mostly on reclamation, irrigation, and rural community planning projects in California, Arizona, and New Mexico. These efforts were not well received by local elites, new settlers, or their congressional representatives, resulting in decreasing autonomy of the department from external oversight. One could only wish for a more thorough analysis of activities and change within this department.
About 70% of this text is given to an analysis of the U.S. Post Office and Department of Agriculture of the Gilded and Progressive Eras. Carpenter writes well, has an excellent command of language, and has admirable quantitative skills. The application of these skills makes his treatment of these entities interesting to academics, even those little grounded in American history. He tells a good story!

It is no surprise that the author’s two extensive case studies fit his theoretical framework nicely. For this nonhistorian, his argument is persuasive as to the causes of increased autonomy for the post office and USDA. Even then, other political scientists might apply the “group approach” to politics and find that overlapping interests of lobbies led to increased agency autonomy. Alternatively, other academics might find that the presence of a determined and long-serving top administrator, such as John Wannamaker at the post office or Gifford Pinchot at the USDA’s forest service, was the key to increasing agency autonomy. One suspects that some version of this “leadership thesis” would better explain the relative autonomy and growth of James Webb’s NASA or J. Edgar Hoover’s FBI during a later period of American history.

The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy is a masterful account of the move toward autonomy of two of the larger federal agencies. The concluding chapter admirably fits the entire study into the larger context of scholarship focused on state building. Carpenter’s work is a model for political scientists studying change in large and complex public entities.


— Frances Fox Piven, Graduate Center, City University of New York

**Downsizing Democracy** is about a familiar problem, the low level of collective political participation in the United States. The era of the citizen has passed, Matthew Crenson and Benjamin Ginsberg say, and in its place something they call personal democracy has arisen. They set out to offer an explanation of this transformation of American politics.

Their argument draws importantly on a line of argument originating in the work of historian Otto Hintze (and subsequently developed by, among others, Charles Tilly, Goran Thorbom, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, John Stephens, and Evelyn Huber), positing that democratic institutional arrangements were concessions offered by state elites to a populace on which they depended for the collection of revenues, the raising of armies, and the administration of government programs. So long as state leaders had to turn to citizen militias and the citizen buyers of government-issued bonds, for example, they needed a mobilized citizenry. But a series of reforms gradually eliminated the government’s need for mass support: The Federal Reserve and employer tax withholding satisfied the state’s revenue requirements; the draft reduced the role of a citizen militia; and state administration was bureaucratized.

Once state leaders were freed from direct dependence on a mass populace, the way was cleared for other changes in state structure that had the effect of disaggregating and privatizing popular politics. Legislatures declined in importance, and the role of the courts and of administrative rule making expanded, with the consequence that institutional niches were created that nourished the interest groups that litigate, fund-raise, and poll instead of mobilizing citizens. None of this, the authors tell us, was intended to reduce democracy. Rather, reforms designed to improve the operation of government and the economy had as their unintended consequence the “downsizing” of democratic politics.

This core argument is elaborated with a retelling of the developments that transformed nineteenth-century politics. Progressive-era reforms bartered the parties that had done the mobilizing work, restricting their patronage resources and eliminating the party primary and even partisan elections, with the ultimate consequence that weakened parties came to rely on polling and the virtual representation and manipulation of voters that polling made possible. The New Deal continued the process, as leaders of labor were incorporated into regular relations with government. Insider bargaining by union leaders made the mobilization of the labor rank and file, which was in any case often an inconvenience for union leaders, simply unnecessary. The civil rights movement further extended this pattern of interest-group liberalism, as litigation and bureaucratic lobbying by group leaders over minority rights replaced mass movements, with the inevitable consequence that issues narrowly targeted to benefit the elite strata among these groups, mainly affirmative action and minority contracting, became preeminent.

The New Politics of the 1970s comes in for the most vigorous critique. The McGovern–Fraser rules requiring that convention delegates include proportions of minorities, women, and the young substituted an emphasis on televised identities over actual diversity. Worse, the civil rights and environmental elites, as well as “self-proclaimed” advocates for the disabled, the homeless, and so on, pushed for the reforms that allowed them to litigate and pursue insider bureaucratic strategies, with no need to engage with a popular following (pp. 169–78). Even the tobacco settlement, achieved as it was through litigation and by self-dealing lawyers, is an example of “downsizing democracy” (pp. 157–62).

The overall result is that political parties have morphed into congeries of institutionally ensconced interest groups with little need for mass publics. On the Democratic side, there are the social welfare and regulatory agencies, the nonprofits, and the public interest groups. On the Republican side, there is the military and national security apparatus, and corporate and religious organizations. Instead of mobilizing a grass roots, each side strategizes to extend its colony of interest groups, and to wreck the institutional base of the opposition.

Some of this argument is on the mark. It is certainly true, for example, that the political parties have become indifferent to the growing reservoir of nonvoters, contradicting Maurice Duverger’s optimistic prediction that party competition would result in “contagion from the left.” Still, to make the case for the deterioration of democracy, Crenson and Ginsberg cast a deceptively rosy light on the American past. The nineteenth century is depicted as a time when “all out” voter mobilization was the central strategy through which elites sought to control government (p. 48). This seems to me far too breezy. High levels of electoral participation did characterize the nineteenth century, but voter mobilization was cultivated by the distinctive reliance of the parties on clientelistic—and particularistic—exchanges, as well as by the stressing of ethnoreligious tribal identities. Neither process of mobilization quite matches the democratic mobilization of citizens around the great political issues of the day that the authors evoke. Nor is the large role of the courts a new feature of American politics. Contrary to the authors’ assertion that in the past judicial restraint and a majoritarian culture restrained judges (p. 152), it was in the late nineteenth century that the courts regularly struck down or eviscerated the legislative achievements of mobilized farmers and workers.

There is another and perhaps more serious problem with this account. Most of the book is devoted to a critique of interest groups on the Left. True, the authors know that Republicans work with interest groups as well. But much of the castigation of organizational “elites” is the castigation of environmental or civil rights or labor leaders, for example. Perhaps this focus is explained by the Duverger theorem, since it is
after all from the Left that we should expect the impetus for citizen mobilization. Still, to try to explain the contemporary political demobilization of Americans without taking account of the extraordinary rise of corporate influence, along with the unconstrained use of political doublespeak by candidates taking their guidance from polls and awash in corporate money, and the saturation of media political discourse with corporate-funded messages, seems to me peculiar. Should we not look to contemporary politics as a possible explanation for why Americans have become what we once called alienated? Maybe people are less active in politics because they are so skeptical of their ability to exert influence in the new political terrain. There seems to me to be a big pink elephant in the room that the authors do not want to discuss.


— Jim Gimpel, University of Maryland

Party identification is not opinion. It is identity. This is the fundamental message of this book. What I most enjoy about reading Don Green's work is his courage. He takes the social scientific mandate to rule out alternative hypotheses more seriously than most, challenging all comers with his intimidating confidence. Compared to most tepid academic writing, including some of my own, this volume is intense and combative. If this sounds excessively colorful, just count the number of disciplinary sacred cows that are slaughtered on these pages. The tally runs high.

Green joins with Bradley Palmquist and Eric Schickler, two equally bright and confident colleagues, to challenge several dominant conceptions of partisan identification. The book is far more than an assault on the thesis of party decline, a notion that has been debunked by other scholars. These three open up a much broader front, seeking to establish that partisanship is acquired by those who learn to line up their self-conceptions with their perception of the social composition of the two parties. It is described as a “psychological process of self-categorization and group evaluation” (p. 13) that proceeds in three steps: 1) Citizens learn which groups they are members of; 2) they learn which groups are aligned with each party; and 3) they identify with the party that most completely contains their primary group. Party identification is durable for long periods of time because the social group composition of the parties is rarely altered in dramatic ways. Party stereotypes are remarkably stubborn and party identification is largely impervious to change.

Having staked out a clear position in the party identification debate, the authors then take on the arguments that party attachments are unstable, variable in content, and subject to periodic redefinition. In Chapter 2, they insist that party attachments are remarkably resilient to the contextual effects of campaigns. This is mainly because campaigns are rarely of sufficient duration to alter the group attachments upon which party identities are based. While party identification does undergo change through the early stages of the life cycle, this change merely reflects the developmental process of moving from childhood to adulthood, and does not signal some wild instability in the nature of party identification.

Building from earlier published work, Green, Palmquist, and Schickler challenge the prominent scholarship on macropartisanship, insisting that aggregate partisanship is not highly subject to changing short-term forces, such as presidential popularity and economic trends. Dramatic change can only occur if there are sweeping changes in the social group stereotypes associated with the parties. Presidents and recessions come and go, but seldom do national leaders or unemployment rates cause people to rethink the question “What sorts of people are Democrats or Republicans?” (p. 108). The political psychologists are also wrong. Partisanship is not a cognitive heuristic or time-saving device, or typical partisans would not invest in as much political information as they do. The stability of partisanship is not attributable to biased learning but to the constancy of citizens’ images of who Republicans and Democrats are. Partisan identification among the young exhibits instability only because young people have not learned enough about party and group positions.

Rational choice theorists fail to understand partisanship, too. They commonly assume that partisanship is subject to change through ongoing assessments of benefit differentials, or retrospective assessments, combined with things previously learned about the parties. But the evidence that Green and colleagues presents suggests that these assessments of government performance change markedly while party identification remains mostly unchanged. Opinions about a party's officeholders may be subject to change, but that does not mean that party identification will be.

So can we explain party change in the South? Yes, change on a massive scale can occur when the social imagery associated with the parties undergoes transformation. The Republican image became rehabilitated throughout the South, and especially among whites, as the Democratic Party moved leftward on race and other issues. As these voters learned that conservatives really “belonged” to the Republican Party, they eventually aligned their conservative self-identification with the emergent social profile of the GOP.

An interesting chapter on party identification in multiparty systems leaves us with the conclusion that the stability of party orientations is not simply a product of American political life. European party elites also try to identify with discrete social groups in order to facilitate the connection of social attachment to party attachment. These attachments are frequently narrower and more specialized than in the United States, but they are no less stable, except perhaps in newly emerging democracies, and for extremely small and less familiar parties.

The hallmark of partisanship is that it is so stable in spite of changing circumstances. This is what makes it more like identity that opinion. This is why party identification is usually so incapable of accounting for short-term factors that influence election outcomes: “The group affinities of the electorate tend to endure, whereas the special conditions that helped propel a candidate to an unusual margin of victory seldom do” (p. 227). It is customary near the end of a review to harp on some things that you did not like about the authors' work, to prove you are critically minded and independent, I guess. But instead, I will more constructively focus on the research ideas that my reading stimulated. First, this book has me wondering about political socialization. How is it that people come to recognize the social group underpinnings of the parties, and then adjudicate one of their own group memberships as legislative of their party choice? Most people, after all, belong to more than one social group. This book makes me want to resurrect the political socialization research and go study adolescents and young adults who are in the midst of this learning process.

I wondered about the authors’ apparent assumption that group associations with parties are geographically invariant, and so too is political socialization. I always thought of the socialization process as dependent upon local environmental conditions that shape voters’ distinctive psychological histories. Some social groups barely exist in many locations, and so their recognition could hardly be the foundation for party identity, even if it might be part of a self-conception. Group representation within parties is highly variable from state to state, town to town. African Americans hardly come to mind as the core of the Democratic
Party to a teen growing up in Salem, Oregon, or Bismarck, North Dakota. My Democratically identifying students from Baltimore know nothing of what it means to be an environmentalist or farmer in the Oregon or North Dakota sense. I am willing to be persuaded that these local contextual forces are overridden by some universally penetrating source of political information, but I am not there yet.

I also wondered about the people who self-identify with groups that have no clear party identity. Perhaps these are the ones who wind up as survey nonrespondents or self-identified independents? This is a rather large plurality of people, and I wondered how we might account for nonpartisanship in this self-group party-matching framework. Apparently, the independents and don’t-knows somehow fail to make the match. Where are they failing—at self-conception, or in matching groups to parties? Perhaps it does not matter, but I am still curious.

Finally, if party identification is so stable, it is probably a lot less important to the outcomes we most want to understand than we have previously been led to believe. *Partisan Hearts and Minds* sparked my curiosity about the importance of partisan intensity in models of political behavior and opinion. If party identification is largely unchanging, maybe partisan intensity is not, and that is what we should be studying more closely. Might we find substantive policy and behavioral differences between the very strongest Republicans and the very weakest? Perhaps here is where we can find meaningful fluctuations that follow short-term assessments of policy, economy, and leadership.


— Brian R. Sala, *University of California, Davis*

In the wake of September 11, 2001, little doubt should remain that American politics is shaped by international forces and events. But this is not a new phenomenon, as scholars of American political development can and should remind us. America’s origins as an independent nation depended materially on international politics. Nearly every American generation can call its own some set of major international crises or policy debates.

At the same time, Americans are remarkably ignorant of and indifferent to the world outside our borders. The implicit thesis of this important new volume of research on international influences on American political development is that scholarship on American politics in general and American political development in particular reflects this fundamental disinterest in the outside world. As Ira Katznelson puts it in his opening essay, “high walls continue to separate studies by Americanists of the U.S. politics at home from their study of ‘foreign’ affairs. . . . Conspicuously absent are investigations by Americanists either of international sources of domestic politics or the mutual constitution of international relations and domestic affairs” (p. 4).

Editors Katznelson and Martin Shefter have put together a set of essays that should not be ignored by Americanists. Contributors such as Aaron Friedberg, Peter Gourevitch, Robert Keohane, Theta Skocpol, Bartholomew Sparrow, and Aristede Zolberg add considerable gravitas to this book. Nonetheless, it should come as no small irony that the editors emphasize a need to break down the “high walls” between Americanists’ studies of domestic politics and their studies of foreign policy, yet *Shaped by War and Trade* is dominated by studies of foreign policy. I wonder whether the real problem Katznelson laments is not that Americanists generally have failed to integrate international influences into their study of domestic politics and American political development scholarship simply have not caught up to changes in modern political economy.

Few scholars of American politics try very hard to incorporate foreign actors in their models of domestic U.S. policies and politics. Little of the Americanist literature seems to take very seriously the possibility of strategic interdependencies between foreign and domestic interests. There are several reasons for this. First and foremost, the American electoral system encourages congressional candidates to focus on issues of local interest. Ronald Rogowski’s essay in this volume, “Trade and Representation: How Diminishing Geographic Concentration Augments Protectionist Pressures in the U.S. House,” argues this point forcefully. Rogowski argues that the shift of the United States toward free trade policies over the last 70 years is strongly related to “changing patterns of geographic concentration of economic activity” in the country (p. 182), rather than primarily to changes in the role of the United States in the international system.

Second, the U.S. system of governance tends to separate foreign and domestic policy accountabilities across different political institutions. In her essay, “International Forces and Domestic Politics: Trade Policy and Institution Building in the United States,” Judith Goldstein argues that since 1934, Congress has willingly tied its own hands on trade policy by delegating to the president and the courts. Her argument comes from a growing school of thought in which voters hold presidents more responsible for national welfare and international relations and members of Congress more responsible for local welfare outcomes. Goldstein explains the puzzle of the 1934 Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act—why protectionism-biased congressmen would tie their own hands—by incorporating this division of responsibility in a way that protected the parochial interests of legislators: “[A]lthough there was support in the Democratic Party for trade reform, the inability to get House approval for unilateral tariff reductions and the inability to find Senate [supermajority] support for bilateral trade agreements [via treaties] made tariff reform impossible. . . .” The Roosevelt program finessed these problems by coupling U.S. domestic policy more closely with the policies of our trading partners. After 1934, the United States only reduced tariffs upon negotiating a bi- or multilateral agreement with trading partners” (p. 217).

Third, unlike so many Old World countries, America is a destination rather than a source of diasporas. Americans living abroad have very little impact on American political life. Foreign diasporas residing in America have had impacts on the politics of their home countries—Irish-American funding of the Irish Republican Army, Jewish-American financing of Israel, and the growing trend of Mexican politicians campaigning north of the border being just three obvious examples—but less often dramatic effects on politics in Washington. *The Economist* (“A World of Exiles,” January 4, 2003) recently detailed a variety of modern diaspora-driven political phenomena. Much of this influence is economic, in the form of repatriated earnings. American residents in 2000 remitted a net of $28.8 billion to the rest of the world, constituting between a quarter and a third of the total such annual income transfers in the world (*Statistical Abstract of the United States, 2001*, Table 649). Income transfers from the United States have become so important to El Salvador that its government provides U.S. legal assistance to Salvadorans “who want to claim or prolong political asylum,” according to *The Economist*. An essay addressing the role of diaspora communities in American politics would have been very welcome.

Diaspora communities have been important to American politics largely where they have reached sufficient size and density to become factors in elections. As Sam Popkin
emphasized in his book *The Reasoning Voter* (1991): “Would a Mexican-American voter who saw President Ford bite into an unshucked tamale be wrong to conclude the president had little experience with Mexican-American culture, little feel for it? Would a Jewish voter who saw George McGovern . . . plan to talk politics in a synagogue on a Friday night, be wrong to conclude that the good senator knew little about Jews and Jewish concerns?” (Popkin, p. 2). Popkin’s discourse on the presidential politics of ethnic food points the way to a fourth reason why Americanists discount foreign influences on domestic policy. America is the melting pot of the world. Most immigrant populations assimilate quickly into the American polity even as they retain some aspects of their diverse cultural heritages. Increasingly, congressional and presidential politics are mass media politics. Incumbents and candidates must shape their messages to voters in ways that work through the medium of television. The scale of American politics, where the average congressional district has more than 600,000 residents, seemingly limits the typical candidate’s—and voter’s—attention to the larger world to symbolic acts.

Katznelson and Shefter have pulled together an admirable and informative set of essays on international influences on American political development. This is a worthwhile volume, rich in insights about the roles of war and trade on American political development. But it is only a first step. These essays are better at raising questions about why Americanists seem to undervalue international interests than at showing how such interests should be integrated into the study of American politics.

The study’s design has each project participant assembling a “reconnaissance network” in a competitive district or state. This network was a comprehensive collection of discrete campaign communications by candidate campaigns, parties, and interest groups. These communications included television and radio advertisements, mailings, phone bank calls, and person-to-person contacts. This data was then recorded in a central election advocacy database. The authors supplemented their reconnaissance network data with 94 Washington interviews and many more interviews of local campaign operatives. As a point of comparison with their data, they also integrate information from the Campaign Media Analysis Group media monitoring service that records all campaign advertising from selected media markets. The net result is the most exhaustive accounting of electioneering by outside groups to date.

The first part of the book includes chapters by Magleby and coauthors evaluating the role and sources of outside money across the 17 races. These chapters are a rich accounting of the authors’ data collection efforts. In Chapter 1, Magleby defines the myriad terms that comprise the new campaign finance lexicon. He also describes the political context for the 2000 congressional election while laying out the plan for the book. Chapters 2 and 3 are analyses of party soft money and interest group issue advocacy in the 2000 contests. While the GOP has long enjoyed an advantage in hard money contributions, the parties were pretty much tied in their 2000 soft money receipts, both spending about $250 million in 1999–2000.

In addition to demonstrating the continued climb in soft money, the study reports other trends and innovations from the 2000 election cycle. Magleby reports that parties in 2000 expanded their use of “victory funds,” joint fund-raising committees between candidates and their parties. He also notes greater party committee activity in contested primaries given the small number of expected close House races. The role of issue advocacy campaigns were also expanded, resulting in greater issue congruence with candidate campaign themes compared to the 1998 campaign. The authors also report fewer numbers of “friendly fire” incidents, party-financed media messages that conflict with the candidates’ campaign themes.

The analysis also indicates an increase in “ground war” initiatives, those party, interest group, and labor union initiatives to communicate with selected constituencies while not activating opposition constituencies. Chapter 4 is a very useful examination of the role that independent expenditures and internal communications play across the races. These efforts will likely grow with the passage of the recent campaign finance reforms.

The second part of the book includes eight very engaging case studies of individual races. They allow readers to get a much better feel for the aggregate data and emphasize the irreplaceable value of having good candidates in congressional elections, even with the growing importance of outside money. Smart, charismatic (and well-financed) candidates generally prevail over less politically adept candidates in these competitive races. These excellent case studies demonstrate the general negative tone of outside campaigns. Without direct coordination, candidate and outside campaigns have increasingly adopted different roles and strategies within the collective campaign effort. These chapters provide a good mix of House and Senate races, different regional contests, and varied media market types. They provide many bases of contrast for students to note and discuss patterns. Each chapter carefully details the sources, strategies, magnitude, and campaign stages of outside group activity.

Magleby writes a concluding chapter reiterating the general theme, the across-the-board growth in outside campaign efforts during the 2000 election. The soft money growth was most pronounced for Democrats, and he argues that these outside dollars were pivotal to Senate Democrats’ net gain of four seats. He also offers insights to future elections. While *The Other Campaign* was completed before passage of recent reforms, this closing chapter provides an important benchmark for assessing their impact.

Overall, this is a well-edited volume with a very carefully orchestrated design. It offers new insights to students of congressional elections and campaign finance. Magleby and his associates demonstrate that soft money and issue advocacy dollars were overwhelmingly spent for electioneering purposes in these 2000 races, not for true issue advocacy or party-building in a strict sense. The authors document the breadth and degree of growth in outside campaigns that Federal Election Commission campaign data do not permit. What the future will be for campaign finance in congressional races is uncertain; still, we need to know where we are to understand where we may be heading.


— Diana Deyre, California State University, Chico

Many reformers are pleased that campaign finance reform finally passed in the United States, but...
States. Indeed, the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act (the McCain-Feingold bill) makes significant changes to the rules that govern financing of federal elections, including a ban on soft money and limits on issue advocacy advertising. Jerrold Schneider argues, however, that such reforms will do little to end the corrupt system of quid pro quo that diverts our tax dollars from needed national priorities to wasteful expenditures that reward large contributors who help federal officials get elected. He insists that only comprehensive reform that frees candidates from the need to raise large sums of money can end this corrupt system and revitalize not only the Democratic Party but the party system in general. He proposes full public financing of campaigns, matching funds for candidates to counter interest-group attack ads, low contribution limits, and expanded public broadcasting. He offers convincing arguments for the need for such reforms and a provocative plan for a revived Democratic Party.

In return for their generous contributions, Schneider maintains, powerful interest groups, corporations, and wealthy individuals receive public subsidies, weak regulations, tax expenditures, and federal projects. He links this misallocation of resources to the emergence of "TV-centered election campaigns," and the need for lawmakers to raise huge sums of money to pay for campaign ads: "[O]nce Democratic legislators began chasing money to pay for TV ads, they needed much more money than in the past [and thus] needed to supply large quids pro quo to a growing number of large campaign contributors" (p. 2). It is this money chase, Schneider asserts, that has so weakened the Democratic Party. The Democrats have lost their voter base because they have not proposed popular policies; they have not proposed popular policies because the money needed to fund such programs is going to campaign contributors. He submits that the decline of the party has led not only to a less competitive party system but also to government for the haves at the expense of the have-nots.

Schneider asserts that his recommended brand of campaign finance reform "would transform the congressional Democratic Party, who would then cut federal waste and increase national saving. Waste reduction and increasing saving would make abundant funds available for increasing investment, productivity, and national living standards" (p. 61). Such policies would bring voters back to the Democratic fold, he argues. While of course he cannot prove that this would happen, he does make a convincing case for how a revitalized Democratic Party might come up with the money to fund these new priorities.

For example, he offers up detailed plans for recouping at least $1 trillion per year by reducing government waste. He proposes cutting tax expenditures that mostly benefit the wealthy (such as the home mortgage deduction and the state and local tax deduction), ending questionable corporate tax subsidies and expenditures, going after uncollected tax revenue, and reducing government program waste. Additional funding for popular programs would come from a new national saving [sic] plan. Such a plan, he argues, would "increase the saving rate and thereby increase the supply of capital for investment" (pp. 67–68). The public-sector investments he recommends include education reforms (e.g., reduced teacher–pupil ratios, a longer school day and year, higher pay for teachers, and achievement-based testing), more job training (e.g., apprenticeship programs), and better health insurance.

While Schneider's arguments are intuitively convincing and well supported by reference to a vast amount of economics and political science literature, some important questions remain. Would a publicly funded campaign finance system actually stop the money chase, particularly since it would have to be voluntary to withstand challenge on constitutional grounds? He does take on the argument that powerful interest groups would continue to exert influence in campaigns as well as in Congress, the bureaucracy, and the courts. He counters that publicly financed campaigns with matching funds to combat interest group attacks would allow candidates to fight back and increase the power of parties and voters relative to interest groups, but it remains to be seen if his solution would work. In the epilogue, Schneider outlines what it would take to enact these sweeping campaign finance reforms. His recipe for success is a demanding one that seems to require the Democrats to be in charge in order to pass such reforms, rather than as a result of such reforms.

If these reforms did stop the money chase, would the Democratic Party be inclined or willing to redirect resources to programs that would help it recapture its voter base? As Schneider points out, there are currently many moderate and conservative Democrats in Congress, such as the Blue Dogs. While it may be possible for progressive Democrats to win in the South, as Schneider contends, moderate and conservative Democrats already in Congress are likely to be there for quite some time. Indeed, their numbers have grown in recent elections. Moderate and conservative Democrats are likely to thwart or significantly soften the type of economic reforms that Schneider proposes to revitalize the party.

Finally, absent a significant economic crisis that mobilizes voters to make a choice between the parties’ competing policy options, voters may not gravitate toward the Democratic Party even if Democrats do propose to redirect resources to popular programs. Republicans have successfully focused voters’ attention on social issues in the past, and it may take a severe recession before voters see their choice as an economic one.

That Schneider has not fully addressed these questions in Campaign Finance Reform and the Future of the Democratic Party does not diminish the importance of his contribution. Indeed, it may be impossible to answer some of these questions now. His theories about party decline and resurgence offer a number of hypotheses ripe for testing. And he provides a tremendous amount of material for thought for students of campaign finance, parties, elections, and economic policymaking, as well as for politicians, party leaders, and activists. There may be many who disagree with his theories and prescriptions, but they will also find his approach and conclusions engaging and provocative.

Ratifying the Republic: Antifederalists and Federalists in Constitutional Time.


— Sean D. Sutton, Rochester Institute of Technology

After a year of sharp criticism by the Anti-Federalists, the Constitution was ratified, but as David J. Siemers argues, the problem remained of securing the Constitution’s “high reputation and its central position in American political life” (p. xi). He characterizes this difficulty as “an inherent but unspoken and often unfulfilled requirement of modern constitutionalism,” one of making the “crucial transition from legality to legitimacy” (pp. 3, 193).

Siemers makes the valid point: It was during the immediate postratification era that the authoritative interpretation of the Constitution was established through the conflict between the Federalists and the Anti-Federalists and later the Madisonian-Republicans and the Jeffersonian-Democrats. He concludes that this conflict elevated the Constitution to its authoritative status by establishing the constitutional principle of “strict construction” and the opinion that the national government was only granted enumerated powers. The author follows Herbert J. Storing in his groundbreaking book, What the Anti-Federalists Were For (1981), by recognizing that
the Anti-Federalists are entitled to be counted among the Founders. Siemers and Storing agree that the founding of America did not end with the making of the Constitution. However, Siemers goes further than Storing, perhaps too far, by arguing that “the Antifederalists were as responsible for the legitimation of the Constitution as [were] the Federalists” (p. xvii).

This book is well oriented to the politics of the time. Siemers does not seek to uncover social forces, which underlie “political ideology.” He does not follow the well-trodden path of reducing political motives to economic forces. Rather, he is interested in understanding the issues of the postratification period through the speeches and deeds of the participants. This is underscored by his concept of “constitutional time,” which refers to the variety of constitutional circumstances facing the founding generation. The concept has the advantage of keeping before the reader the political circumstances that guide political action. The core of Siemers’s argument is that ratification was divisive and there was no guarantee that the Constitution would be considered authoritative. For him, the success of the Constitution in making “the transition from legality to legitimacy” depended largely on the actions of the Anti-Federalists. With ratification, the Anti-Federalists found themselves in a new “constitutional context.” For those who are interested in the American founding, this argument of *Ratifying the Republic* must be considered.

The Anti-Federalists feared that the Constitution would fail, plunging the country into lawless turmoil or civil war. Siemers understands that it was this fear, coupled with a concern for the rule of law and a reverence for the “republican political process,” that prompted the Anti-Federalists to publicly acquiesce to the Constitution. But it was not a reverence for the Constitution that prompted such assent by the Anti-Federalists. After losing the ratification debate, the Anti-Federalists were faced with the possibility of political extinction. The author’s discussion of these points is on target: The core issue of the ratification debate for the Anti-Federalists was whether the proposed Constitution adequately limited the power of the national government, thereby providing safeguards against tyranny. The Federalists countered this Anti-Federalist criticism by arguing that the Constitution “granted the national government expressed powers only; any power not specifically written into the document was not to be exercised by the national government” (p. 47). Whether that is a valid interpretation of the Federalist position is open to debate. However, the Anti-Federalists adopted this very argument to dispute many Federalist policies on those constitutional grounds. Siemers recognizes that in these first partisan struggles, the terms “strict construction” and “original intent” were used to determine the constitutionality of policy (p. 68). In this way, the Anti-Federalists positioned themselves “as major players in the contest to define the [authoritative] meaning of the Constitution” (p. 47). It is ironic that the Anti-Federalists endorsed what Willmoore Kendall coined “the Federalist Constitution,” meaning the Constitution as viewed through the lens supplied by Publius, to turn the Constitution against itself.

This brings us to a serious limitation of Siemers’s argument. The question could be asked, does his antipathy towards Hamilton and his sympathy for the Anti-Federalists mislead him? Nowhere does he address the possibility that Hamilton’s National Bank proposal falls within the bounds of the Constitution. Siemers further claims that the Constitution itself was “a cobbled together series of compromises . . . perfectly amenable to none” (p. 18). He infers that the Constitution was inherently incoherent, encouraging divisions and dissatisfaction within the ranks of the Federalists. Madison and Hamilton especially went in different directions when it came to implementing the Constitution. In Siemers’s opinion, Hamilton attempted to make the government more energetic, that is, more national, so that it would not falter due to weakness (p. 74). In contrast, Madison was concerned that Hamilton had overstepped his constitutional authority and aligned himself with the Anti-Federalists to ensure that the Constitution would be viewed as possessing limited and enumerated powers, that is, more federal. Further, Siemers argues that this conflict between Madison and Hamilton was visible in *The Federalist Papers*. So it seems that the authoritative reading of the Constitution was also incoherent.

By emphasizing the partisan attempt to establish the concrete meaning of an incoherent Constitution, Siemers loses sight of the Constitution itself. George Anastaplo in *The Constitution of 1787: A Commentary* (1953) both demonstrate that the Constitution is a principled, coherent whole. By considering the Constitution, rather than “the Federalist Constitution,” they show that the national government was intended to have extensive powers with regard to the matters assigned to it, including the vital matters of the commerce of the country, the defense of the country, and the relations of this country with other countries. Could it be that *The Federalist Papers* was misleading in suggesting that the powers of the national government were limited and enumerated, so that Publius could disarm his opponents during the ratification debate? In this regard, the Anti-Federalists were right; the proposed Constitution created a strong national government with all the powers than government required.


— Joseph M. Bessette, Claremont McKenna College

Theorists of deliberative democracy are almost unanimous in calling for enhanced public discourse on the issues that face the modern state. “[A] minimal standard for [public] discourse,” according to Adam Simons, is “the acceptance of dialogue” (p. 12). Thus, more is required of the participants in a deliberative democracy than simply speaking their minds: They must confront one another’s arguments in a way that will foster the kind of “marketplace of ideas” in which the stronger, or truer, ideas will prevail. Presumably, electoral campaigns in a democracy serve as one important venue for public dialogue on policy issues. Simon’s purpose is to investigate in a systematic way the extent of genuine dialogue in American political campaigns and to delineate the forces that foster or hinder it.

After clearly and succinctly summarizing the relevant literature that bears on his subject, Simon undertakes three kinds of original research: He develops a formal model to predict whether it is rational for candidates to engage their opponents in dialogue; he conducts a case study of the 1994 gubernatorial contest in California, including experiments involving campaign advertisements with 604 California residents; and he analyzes in some detail the newspaper coverage of 49 U.S. Senate races from 1988, 1990, and 1992. All this research points in the same direction: Theoretically, it is counterproductive, or irrational, for political candidates to promote dialogue with their opponents; empirically, not much dialogue actually occurs.

The theoretical argument, which Simon elaborates mathematically in an appendix, can be summarized as follows. There are, in principle, an infinite number of themes that candidates can address during a campaign. For each theme, one candidate is likely to have a position closer to the median voter than does his or
her opponent. It is rational for that candidate to emphasize these themes and to ignore themes for which the opponent's positions are closer to public opinion. It is especially counterproductive to engage the opponent on his or her best issues because raising the salience of these issues is likely to make them even weightier in the public mind. Thus, in most cases it is rational for the candidates to talk past each other and not to engage in genuine dialogue. In 1994, for example, Democratic gubernatorial candidate Kathleen Brown played into the hands of her opponent, incumbent Republican Governor Pete Wilson, by publicly addressing the crime issue when Wilson's tough-on-crime views were much closer to dominant opinion in the state. "[Brown] lost because of her strategic choice" (p. 158) to address crime (and eventually immigration) when her best issues were education and the economy.

Insofar as genuine campaign dialogue is good for the health of the body politic, we are led to conclude that the interests of political candidates lead to behavior harmful to the polity they would serve. This reminds us of the asymmetric relationship between private interest and public good in economics and politics. The pursuit of self-interest by economic actors seems to promote the (economic) good of the whole, whereas the pursuit of self-interest by political actors can be positively harmful to the collective (political) good. Does Simon's analysis lead us inexorably to this conclusion? Several considerations point, perhaps, to a more sanguine assessment.

As Simon himself notes, candidates are sometimes forced into dialogue by the dominance of one or a few issues in the public mind. Although the rare "critical election" presents an obvious case (Herbert Hoover and Franklin Roosevelt were compelled to discuss economic issues in the 1932 presidential election, just as Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas were not free to ignore slavery in the 1858 Illinois senate election), Simon's own data on the U.S. Senate elections of 1988–92 show that in 10 of his 49 races, a single issue (of a possible 32) accounted for at least 30% of the newspaper coverage; and in a total of 19 races, one issue occupied at least 25% of the coverage. In these cases, not surprisingly, dialogue was not so rare. Candidates who gained no benefit from addressing certain issues were not free to ignore them.

This seems the reasonable explanation for why Kathleen Brown voluntarily addressed crime in her 1994 campaign against Pete Wilson. Crime was the dominant public issue in California in 1994, followed by immigration. It was the subject of extensive newspaper coverage and countless radio talk shows. Indeed, over the course of a few months in 1994, the California legislature passed a "three-strikes" law to incapacitate, and perhaps deter, recidivists; a "one-strike" rape law that substantially increased the potential maximum sentence for rape; and an across-the-board reduction in potential good-time sentence reductions for violent offenders. No candidate for the state's highest executive office was free to ignore the crime issue in 1994. It is surprising that Simon implicitly rejects this explanation for Brown's apparently counterproductive behavior.

More generally, the author's analysis posits greater power on the part of candidates to control the salience of public issues than one often (typically?) finds in American politics. The 2002 congressional election, which occurred after The Winning Message appeared, is an obvious case in point. Despite the prominence of the national security issue in the fall of 2002, Democrats tried hard to change the subject to the "kitchen table" (domestic policy) issues where, they believed, they stood closer to public opinion. This campaign strategy proved unavailing. With the attacks of September 11, 2001, still fresh in the public mind and war looming with Iraq, the American people in the fall of 2002 seemed preoccupied with national security matters in a way that apparently no Democratic campaign strategy could undo.

Finally, in assessing the importance and presence of genuine dialogue in political campaigns, it is useful to recall of the main (if not the main) purposes of elections: to select the best individuals to govern. Although "best" can be defined in many different ways, most voters would likely include, at least, good character, competence, appropriate experience, and a broadly compatible political ideology. Every campaign involves the implicit, if not explicit, claim by the candidates that they would make a better officeholder than their opponent(s). It is perhaps not so obvious that dialogue among the candidates is necessary (although it might well be helpful) to demonstrate superiority in character, competence, experience, or ideology.

Nonetheless, the deliberative character of political campaigns is an important subject worthy of careful and serious attention, which is what it receives in Adam Simon's The Winning Message.


— Raymond A. Smith, Columbia University

Given the public policy significance of the AIDS epidemic, surprisingly few book-length treatments of AIDS policymaking in the United States have been published. Indeed, the Library of Congress lists only 35 books under its principal heading for this issue (AIDS [Disease]—Government Policy—United States), many of which are legal guides or government publications. More remarkable still is that this volume is only the third under this heading to have been published since the 1996 introduction of the combination anti-retroviral treatments that drastically cut AIDS mortality and revolutionized the policy arena. Fortunately, Patricia Siplon’s lucid and engaging book makes significant, if selective, advances in filling the gaps in this literature.

The volume opens with an overview of the emergence of AIDS in the early 1980s, which presented the initial policy dilemma of funding research into the causes and consequences of the then-new disease syndrome. Siplon then provides individual chapters on five major policy areas, each highlighting a different dimension of the policymaking process: medical treatment (the issue of "policy definition"); blood policy ("the task of regulation"); HIV prevention ("the problem of competing values"); the Ryan White CARE Act ("the problems of distributive politics"); and foreign aid for AIDS programs ("the policy dilemma of membership"). On each of these topics, the author examines the key elements of the role of organization, the problem of "changing distributions and inflicting costs," and the role of values, the last of which has been particularly contentious in the case of AIDS. Throughout the volume, activist individuals and organizations are front and center, portrayed as actively seeking to shape policy, rather than passively accepting what government agencies and biomedical authorities had to offer them.

The chapter on the contamination of the blood supply makes an interesting case study unto itself, but feels somewhat tangential since it involves a very distinct set of issues and interest groups, as well as policy concerns that have largely been resolved in the United States. The remaining chapters, however, mesh together well to provide a sweeping overview of the key policy conundrums associated with the prevention and treatment of HIV. Given the breadth of this subject, Siplon must carefully select specific illustrative case studies, and those choices are for the most part successful. However, a few selections serve to limit the scope of the book, most notably the decision to focus all three of the prevention case studies on events in New York City or State. Additionally, because most of the case studies unfolded over the same time period, readers who are new to the study of the AIDS epidemic might do well to acquaint themselves with a timeline of the epidemic.
Regarding AIDS treatment, Siplon provides a persuasive explanation of how a lethal clinical trials system, along with pharmacetical company price gouging, led to the launching of the protest group ACT UP, as well as a broader self-empowerment movement that has gone on to inspire numerous other patient groups. Her chapter-length recounting of the authorization (and subsequent reauthorizations) of the main federal funding mechanism for AIDS treatment, the Ryan White CARE Act, demonstrates how the changing demographics of the epidemic have influenced the policymaking process. And a concluding chapter reviews the important struggle, still very much underway, to provide foreign aid for and to promote access to affordable anti-HIV medications in the developing world.

Perhaps the most compelling chapter involves the raging debate between the abstinence-only and harm-reduction approaches to HIV prevention. Whereas the chapters on treatment revolve largely around questions of money, the prevention chapter demonstrates that noneconomic disagreements can be even more hotly contested. Siplon presents three high-profile prevention controversies—safer sex education and condom distribution in schools, needle exchange, and the testing of newborn infants—to illustrate the difficulty of making policy when two sides agree on the end result of reducing HIV infections but have worldviews so different that they disagree vehemently on the means.

One fascinating thread interwoven throughout the volume concerns the ever-shifting coalitions that have influenced AIDS policymaking. Time and again, Siplon teases out the logic by which the policy process creates unexpected enemies and odd allies. The battle over newborn testing pits traditional advocates of women's and children's health against AIDS groups worried about privacy rights. Well-intended proposals for needle exchanges in communities of color are interpreted by local leaders as an abandonment of drug treatment in their neighborhoods. Hemophiliacs originally worried about being associated with homosexuals, and drug users become radicalized and form their own ACT UP—type organizations. And, most astonishingly, radical gay activists find common cause with conservative Republicans in searching out wasteful programs run by government-funded AIDS agencies.

While the focus of AIDS and the Policy Struggle in the United States is on detailed documentation of AIDS-specific issues, readers interested mainly in the policymaking process will also find this a valuable example of a high-stakes and controversial issue area. As the author herself states, a great many important issues are simply beyond the scope of this book, and we must still await a definitive account of AIDS policymaking. In the interim, however, Siplon has filled a major gap in the political science literature with much of the passion and engagement she so clearly admires among the activists she profiles.

The Difference Women Make: The Policy Impact of Women in Congress.
— Terri Susan Fine, University of Central Florida

This book in many ways represents how change in real world politics has contributed to changes in available avenues for political science research. Three significant real-world political events took place in 1992 and in 1994 that allowed Michele Swers's research question to be explored. First, Bill Clinton was elected president in 1992. For the first time in 12 years, Democrats dominated both the legislative and executive branches of the national government. Second, an unusually large number of women were elected to both the House and the Senate. Twenty-eight women held House seats before the 1992 election, while 47 held seats as a result of that election. That year has been dubbed "The Year of the Woman." Most of these newly elected congresswomen were Democrats. Thus, this large cadre of newly elected women enjoyed majority-party membership in Congress and a unified government. The third real-world political change took place in the 1994 election when Republican majorities took over both houses of Congress for the first time since the 1950s. Together, the largest group of women ever elected to Congress experienced both majority-and minority-party status early in their congressional tenure.

These changes created new opportunities for political science research. Women in the House now represented a large enough number of cases to allow for their work in Congress to be systematically and statistically analyzed. Previous systematic efforts focusing on the impact of women in legislatures had been limited to looking at their impact at the state level where their numbers are greater (e.g., Sue Thomas, How Women Legislate, 1994; Beth Reingold, Representing Women: Sex, Gender and Legislative Behavior in Arizona and California, 1992). Alternately, the impact of women in Congress had been limited to either anecdotal evidence (e.g., Jean R. Schroedel and Bruce Snyder, "Partly Murray: The Mom in Tennis Shoes Goes to the Senate," in Elizabeth Adel Cook, Sue Thomas, and Clyde Wilcox, eds., The Year of the Woman: Myths and Realities, 1994) or else a focus on roll-call voting behavior (e.g., Janet Clark, "Women at the National Level: An Update on Roll Call Voting Behavior," in Sue Thomas and Clyde Wilcox, eds., Women in Elective Office: Past, Present and Future, 1998). Swers's research moves well beyond these efforts with systematic and statistical analysis of the impact of women in the House of Representatives. Her research recognizes that policy impact can be realized at every stage of the legislative process. At the same time, material from anonymous interviews with members of Congress and their staffs is included to provide "insight into how members determine their legislative priorities and what strategies they employ to achieve their goals on women's issues" (p. 18).

Material from these interviews adds depth to the statistical findings. The analysis looks at the impact of women in Congress when most of them, due to Democratic affiliation, experienced both majority-party membership (103d Congress, 1993–95) and minority-party membership (104th Congress, 1995–97). The database was developed out of analyzing bills focusing on women's issues. These issues are "defined as bills that are particularly salient to women because they seek to achieve equality for women" (p. 34). She then divided this data set into bills that were classified as "feminist," "anti-feminist," and "social welfare."

Swers's analysis looks at Congress members' behavior on these bills at five stages of the legislative process: bill sponsorship, cosponsorship, amendment in committee, floor debate, and roll-call voting. She explains the meaning of each stage of the legislative process and the nature of women's impact at these various stages. For example, she notes the value of cosponsorship. A member who might otherwise lack the institutional position or seniority to sponsor a bill has the opportunity to cosponsor a bill, which is understood as a "loud vote." Members lacking leadership positions can then refer to their cosponsorship of bills as evidence that they are serving district needs come election time. She also explains well the importance of dividing the women's issue bills into the three aforementioned categories. While all of the bills included in the data set met the initial criterion of being deemed "women's issues bills," members' political, personal, and district characteristics impacted their legislative behavior differently among the three types of these bills.

Swers analyzes Congress members' behavior with an eye toward party, ideology, and gender.
She also looks at these primary variables in the context of institutional (committee membership, committee leadership, incumbency), personal (religion, ethnicity), and constituency (region, district support for Clinton, racial makeup of the district, district urbanicity) factors. She compares women's legislative behavior at the five stages of the process between the 103d and the 104th Congress and finds that it can be better understood in the context of institutional factors, such as committee and subcommittee membership and leadership. Women do make a difference at all stages of the legislative process; however, these differences are not monolithic and consistent between the earlier and latter Congresses. The same women act differently when their party holds the majority. Male and female legislators act differently even if they are members of the same party. Women, whether Democrat or Republican, are more supportive of women's issues than are men.

The Difference Women Make ends by addressing the question of whether diversity in Congress has value. Swers argues that "the personal identity of our representatives does have tangible policy consequences" (p. 126). She notes that institutional constraints, specifically majority/minority-party status and seniority, affect whether women will be included in women's issue debates. She encourages congressional leaders to consider diversity concerns when making committee assignments. The nature and scope of the author's findings move well beyond previous work on women's legislative behavior. The book is well grounded in theories and research about women as political actors and legislative politics, including party politics. The text is well suited for senior-level undergraduate and graduate courses in women and politics and legislative politics.


— Matthew R. Kerbel, Villanova University

National coverage of politics and policymaking has become so distorted by Washington's spin-dominated echo chamber that it is refreshing when someone looks beyond the Beltway for media influences on the political agenda. Jan Vermeer looks to Boise, Fresno, and Lincoln—and with interesting results. In this book, he attempts something that few others have tried: He invokes Tip O'Neill's adage that "all politics is local" to map the content of medium-circulation newspaper editorial pages. Vermeer examined editorials in 10 daily newspapers from small to medium-size cities across the country for 1994, a year that contained "striking" events like the replacement of a Supreme Court justice and the collapse of the Clinton health-care plan, but nothing "so exceptional that the pattern found there would fit only 1994" (p. 15). Although the sample is non-random and covers only one year, it provides a fascinating source of data for Vermeer's rich insights into a form of communication that has been largely overlooked by media scholars. Even if his hunch is incorrect and 1994 was an anomaly, his data are valuable as an initial glimpse into an important form of political writing available to a vast number of small audiences.

The results are not always predictable. Vermeer finds that editorials, particularly in smaller papers, exhibit a tendency to find the local angle in national affairs whenever they can, as one might expect considering the imperative to sell newspapers by making content relevant to the circulation area. However, it is surprising that he finds that the paper exhibiting the strongest local component did so in only 21.8% of its editorials. This speaks to the agenda-setting pull of national over local issues, particularly salient ones like Whitewater and welfare reform, which were broadly discussed despite the absence of a local news peg. And, he applauds editorial writers for signaling the importance of issues like these by devoting more attention to them than to the human-interest dramas of Tonya Harding and O. J. Simpson, both of which were included among the top 10 news stories of the year by the Associated Press.

Although larger-circulation papers are most likely to editorialize about national and international issues, suggesting that readers in the smallest cities will be offered a more parochial agenda, it is striking how much attention local editorials paid to national influences. Nine of 10 newspapers addressed national issues to a modest or great extent; only readers in Lansing, Michigan, were treated to an diet of insular state concerns.

Some of what Vermeer finds in local editorial tendencies reflects what others have found in national media coverage. As in national news reports, the president is a more prevalent editorial presence than Congress, and he dominates items about international politics. The Supreme Court receives less attention than the other branches, and is treated with a reverence and respect that eludes discussion of Congress and the president. The bureaucracy is addressed in stereotypical terms as bloated, anonymous, wasteful, inept, and out of touch.

At the same time, local editorials differ from national reporting in their tone by being more reasoned and reasonable. President Clinton, who had a rough year in 1994, comes across as someone who made a lot of mistakes but had a lot of potential and did some things right, like advancing a peaceful solution to the Haitian crisis. Congress is painted in the same negative light as it is in the national press, but with the important caveat that local members are regarded as bright lights working effectively to keep the out-of-town folks in line. This softens the uniformly harsh treatment of Congress typical of national coverage, permits discussion of congressional accomplishments, and allows for the possibility that, for all its faults, Congress can function effectively. Federal-state disputes validate the relevance of the federal role in local affairs, while placing matters of policy rather than politics at the heart of the discussion.

The issue of how and how much local editorial writing contributes to policy debate is less evident and less well documented. Vermeer tells us that, "[i]ndividually, local editorials are significant to the president's overall media goals. Collectively, however, their editorials may affect how a president is perceived in localities across the nation" (pp. 63–64, emphasis added). He asserts the "strong likelihood" that editorial opinions influence local discourse (p. 132), and it is a sensible position. But on this key point, he offers only the reasonable assertion that editorials shape local discussion of policy alternatives without exploring the claim by drawing direct connections to elite and mass public response. The claim has merit, but as long as it remains an assertion, it is hard to know how much stock to put in Vermeer's interesting descriptions of editorial content.

However, the author's work provides a reason for exploring the importance of local editorials. His portrayal of them as reasonable, considered and sane—adjectives rarely affixed to national news reports—raises the prospect that they may by influential by being informative. He even finds ideological language to be a rarity in editorials, although by their nature one would expect them to be stronghold of partisan advocacy. The absence of sharp left–right distinctions and references to political parties or ideological groups further distinguishes local editorials from mainstream national coverage, which tends to portray much of what happens in Washington through a partisan filter.

This may be Vermeer's most important discovery. Considering the shrill pitch of national news reporting, it is refreshing and encouraging to find a place where people can find reason and balance in political writing. The ramifications for democratic discourse are particularly encouraging, and I recommend
This is an attempt to analyze and explain the decline in American voter turnout in all its aspects, using a variety of data types and methodologies, and to do so in a comparative perspective. The author is quite successful in looking at the various parts of the problem, but less so in ascertaining overall causes or remedies.

As is well known, the United States has long had lower voter turnout than any other developed democracy, save Switzerland. But as Martin Wattenberg demonstrates in Chapter 1, almost all developed nations that do not have compulsory voting have experienced a significant and often substantial decline in turnout since 1960. This fact has been largely overlooked, he suggests, because for most nations, it has occurred only since 1980.

Wattenberg then (Chapter 2) presents an analysis of turnout change in the American states, based on aggregate data and computing turnout on the basis of the citizen population only. Most states had a decline in turnout after 1960, the exceptions being generally the Deep South states, which were the lowest at the start. The author’s multivariate analysis finds that variations in state election procedures have relatively little relationship to the change in turnout. Rather, the decline in turnout is primarily explained by the earlier strength in state political party organization; that is, states that had the strongest parties in 1960 experienced the greatest decline in turnout. This is an important, if not unexpected, finding, but it is essential to keep distinct the difference between levels of turnout and the extent of change in turnout in this analysis.

Wattenberg then (Chapters 3 and 4) to an analysis of the individual correlates of turnout, based on several sources of survey data. While examining the question from various theoretical perspectives, he concentrates on the effects of education and age. It is interesting to note that the correlation between education and turnout, while almost always positive, is substantial only in Switzerland and the United States. Lower turnout among younger citizens, however, seems to occur in many nations. More extensive analysis of the U.S. data demonstrates that the age gap in turnout has been increasing over the years, and the author cites other evidence about newspaper readership by age and the attention that political campaigns give to age-related issues, which may explain some of the age gap.

In Chapter 5, Wattenberg looks at the question on which the relevance of the whole topic of turnout largely rests, that is, whether or not “Who Votes Does Make a Difference.” As he notes, most previous analyses have provided a negative answer to that question, both because the demographic differences between voters and nonvoters are not that great and because attitudinal surveys indicate that enough nonvoters supported the actual winner that higher turnout would not generally have made a difference. He attempts to refute this reasoning by the analysis of two elections: the 2000 presidential contest and the 1994 congressional elections. In 2000, of course, the real issue was the Electoral College; 1994 provided a historically important example of the certainly valid point that in low-turnout elections (i.e., almost all nonpresidential contests), demographic and other correlates of turnout are more apt to produce a difference between public preferences and election results. He is quite right in pointing out this need to look at elections other than those for president, though the point is not particularly original.

Chapter 6, “How Voting Is Like Taking an SAT Test,” considers the point that part of the reason for low turnout in the United States is the length of the typical ballot. Wattenberg provides an extensive analysis of this using “rolloff,” that is, the tendency of voters to fail to register preferences for lower offices and referendum questions on their ballots, based on aggregate, survey, and several sets of individual ballot data. He finds that most of the explanatory variables are those of “information”: that is, voter characteristics related to having less information about their choices tend to produce less participation on less familiar questions. While this seems to be a very valid point, one might question whether it can explain a decline in turnout—presumably, Americans have long been presented with extensive ballots, at least considering the number of state and local offices to be determined.

In Chapter 7, Wattenberg challenges the “demobilization” hypothesis of Stephen Ansolabehere, Shanto Iyengar, et al., that argues that exposure to negative campaign advertising depresses turnout. Using his own analysis of both aggregate and survey data, as well as citing the research of others, he offers a critique of the negative campaigning effect that is quite persuasive.

The final chapter, “How to Improve U.S. Turnout Rates: Lessons from Abroad,” is perhaps Wattenberg’s least satisfying. The difficulty lies in his reluctance to advocate potentially valuable reforms, such as compulsory voting and proportional representation, simply because he feels that their adoption would be too unlikely. This leaves him with the proposal that national elections be held on a legal holiday, possibly one in early November combined with Veterans Day. While this modest change would doubtless have some positive effect on turnout, one might have hoped for some stronger or more innovative prescription—and possibly some estimate of the magnitude of the effects of proposed reforms.

Where Have All the Voters Gone? has much to recommend it. The topic of turnout is covered in almost all of its facets, usually with original analysis by the author, as well as appropriate summaries of the work of others. The writing is both effective and interesting. Particularly noteworthy is the presentation of data analysis that is adequate to support the argument without being so detailed or abstruse as to lose the interest of the less quantitatively inclined reader. One still regrets that Wattenberg was not able to find a more impressive explanation for the decline in U.S. turnout or a promising solution. But since, as he demonstrates, many countries seem to have emulated the United States in their recent turnout trends, it may be the case that, as in so many things, we just get there first.


— Harry C. Boyte, University of Minnesota

Richard L. Wood’s book is an original contribution to a growing body of scholarship that treats the practical and conceptual lessons of citizen organizing over the past generation. Recent works in this vein (e.g., Harry C. Boyte and Nan Kari, Building America, 1996; Mark R. Warren, Dry Bones Rattling, 2001; Carmen Sirianni and Lew Friedland, Civic Innovation in America, 2001) constitute a scholarship of contemporary citizen politics. The most culturally rooted of citizen groups form a contrast, Wood points out, with more transient mobilizations that are more visible. “One of the most powerful resources of faith-based organizing,” he writes, “[is] political vision rooted in ethical values and commitments that transcend politics narrowly understood” (p. 274). He contrasts such political vision grounded in thick cultural traditions with citizen “movements [which] connect their politics only anecdotally to those strands of
American culture that are morally and politically robust” (p. 266).

The accounts of Wood and others detail citizen efforts of sophistication, sustainability, and impact sufficient to constitute an early counter narrative to more widely known accounts of democracy’s declension (e.g., Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots*, 1983, and Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 2000). Indeed, the plausibility of democratic hope is one of Wood’s key arguments.

Wood’s focus is narrower than some, like Sirianni and Friedland’s, but impressive in its detailed examination of concrete practices. *Faith in Action* analyzes community organizing, especially the faith-based community organizing network associated with the Pacific Institute for Community Organization (PICO). He especially analyzes the Oakland Community Organization affiliate (OCO), with comparative material from other affiliates and from an examination of People United for a Better Oakland (PUEBLO), an Oakland-based affiliate of the Center for Third World Organizing, which uses a race-based organizing strategy.

Wood is familiar with all four major faith-based organizing networks, including the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF); he and Mark Warren conducted an overview, *Faith-Based Organizing* (2001), for the Interfaith Funders consortium. Together these networks include 133 “federations,” made up of approximately 4,000 member institutions in every major metropolitan area. Eighty-seven percent are religious congregations in low-income, working-class, and minority communities across different faiths. They also include schools, unions, and neighborhood organizations, involving more than two million families, addressing such issues of concern to low-income and lower-middle-class populations as schools, policing, working-class wages, and medical coverage. In some cases, these groups have dramatically transformed local public policy. In others, especially in California and Texas, they have achieved policy successes even during budget cutbacks.

Wood takes issue with what he calls “the profound pessimism” of Manuel Castells about the democratic potential of urban social movements. He argues that “partly due to their sophistication in working with grassroots institutions and drawing on the social capital embedded there . . . and partly due to having recently developed a more sophisticated political culture . . . some versions of contemporary urban organizing have transcended the limits that Castells saw” (p. 16).

Wood’s analysis of strengthening social capital and developing political culture makes noteworthy contributions. He shows how OCO strengthens public relationships both within and among its member institutions. Moreover, through sophisticated engagement with political officeholders based on recognition of different self-interests, including both collaboration and conflict, groups like OCO improve the broader political culture. *Faith in Action* thus helps reframe the debate between advocates of “participatory” and “representative democracy.” Citizen politics in these groups does not replace representative government; it rather enhances the performance of politicians who are flexible. Although there are tensions between strong, independent citizen groups and politicians, both sides can benefit, as New Orleans Mayor Marc Morial acknowledges.

Wood’s other major contribution is to show how political culture is, in significant measure, not given but rather constructed. Thus, he contrasts three congregations in OCO: a Catholic church, St. Elizabeth’s, where the minister reinterprets scripture in ways attentive to the ambiguities, diverse self-interests, and strategic challenges of public life, and two other congregations that are much less effective. The minister at St. Elizabeth’s “rejects both unquestioning subservience to authority and unthinking rebellion against all authority as illegitimate and coercive” (p. 210). The framework Wood develops for analyzing public culture making—examining questions such as how well organizations generate “symbols and interpretative frameworks sufficiently flexible enough to encompass an ambiguous political environment” (p. 261)—holds real promise.

The limits of Wood’s study lie in his insufficient theorization of “citizen politics.” Like the citizen organizations he studies, the author conceives of politics as distributive struggles about questions of justice, sustained by disciplined anger at the treatment that poor, minority, and working-class communities receive from mainstream institutions. Such organizations, in the biblical terms that they often use, draw on the Exodus narrative of the Bible, a story of liberation from oppression. Yet in ways that are less explicitly acknowledged, they also draw on stories like Nehemiah, the Old Testament book in which the Jewish leader brought disparate groups and tribes among the people of Israel together to undertake the “public work” of rebuilding Jerusalem’s walls, reestablishing the Jewish commonwealth in the process. Faith-based organizing, like other sophisticated citizen action, includes not only zero-sum distributive fights. It also has a productive, generative side solving problems, creating goods of broad public benefit. Stressing the productive side of politics illuminates a hidden fact about faith-based organizing: Its success depends, in large measure, on change in the professional work of the clergy. Through a variety of means, such groups add energizing, politically educative dimensions to “expert practice,” which otherwise is about delivering pastoral care as a service.

Democratic change in the work of the clergy is a model for organizing elsewhere. Resources for hope are greatly expanded when we conceive the whole terrain of social and economic life as sites for democratic organizing in an information age, with as a pressing task the reinvigoration of citizen politics in mediating institutions where its practice has radically eroded.

### COMPARATIVE POLITICS


— Carol Wise, *University of Southern California*

Admittedly, the question of central bank autonomy in the developing countries is not one that would surface in even the broadest literature search on transitions from authoritarian rule. Usually relegated to economic concerns with regard to a given country’s ability to maintain macroeconomic stability and “signal” credibility to international investors, central bank autonomy has heretofore been studied from these rather narrow vantage points. In this book, however, Delia Boylan brings this particular institution to life, and in doing so readily shows that central banks in the developing country context are much more than neutral conduits for economic policy: The timing and content of central bank reform can have much broader implications for future domestic policy choices, especially for countries in the midst of a transition from authoritarian rule.

The book focuses on two main cases, Chile and Mexico, and the core arguments unfold as follows. From the economics literature, Boylan challenges the notion that central bank autonomy in developing countries constitutes an unconditional public good. Yes, there are
confirmed links between such autonomy, defined as the extent to which the central bank carries out its various functions (monetary, financial, regulatory) independent of executive and legislative control and, for example, low inflation or overall economic stability. But the legislative “locking in” of such functions by outgoing conservative authoritarians can also restrict the ability of posttransition policymakers to deliver on the distributional promises (progressive taxation, health and educational reform) that helped usher them in. According to public opinion data in both Chile and Mexico, it was, in fact, the tendency for authoritarian policymakers to turn a deaf ear on their constituents’ pleas for distributional relief that finally triggered these transitions.

What political motives would outgoing authoritarians have for restricting the menu of future policy options that await their successors? Here, Boylan pushes past the usual explanations that focus on the uncertainty of the democratic process itself, and the tendency for policymakers of all political stripes to resist the institutionalization of bureaucratic autonomy and, hence, their own control over policy, until the very end of their tenure in office. In the case of central bank reform in Chile and Mexico, outgoing authoritarian elites had the added incentive of protecting their own distinct legacy, which in each case entailed the implementation of deep market reforms and the virtual overhaul of the political economy based on an aggressive export-led development strategy. At heart, such reforms reflected the commitment that each of these regimes had made to a new generation of outward-looking asset holders in the domestic private sector, and one that outgoing authoritarians were determined to uphold.

Thus, in both countries, the political stakes were not just a matter of the transition to democracy. Also at stake was the authoritarians’ concern that greater political competition would open new avenues for the pursuit of more populist policies, as incoming democrats would find themselves overwhelmed by those pent-up social demands that were also part of the authoritarian legacy. In each country, the struggle over autonomous central bank reform became the prime institutional venue for efforts to foreclose populist options, and to preserve earlier private sector commitments. These battles over efficiency versus redistribution played out somewhat differently in Chile and Mexico, as the former opted for a fully autonomous central bank and the latter a partially autonomous institution. What accounts for these variations on the dependent variable, that is, the generation of more formal/legal measures in the areas of credit, monetary policy, and the rules surrounding appointments and tenure on the central bank’s governing board?

To get at this question, Boylan hypothesizes two main independent variables: the intensity of the threat that authoritarians will be displaced by a democratic opposition, most likely with a more interventionist set of policy preferences; and the proximity of that threat. In Chile, for example, a long-standing military regime had its time horizon quickly truncated when a 1988 plebiscite vote rejected any further extension of authoritarianism and instead ruled that democratic elections would be held just a year later. With the end clearly in sight, outgoing authoritarians enacted a sweeping central bank reform that rendered Chile’s central bank one of the most autonomous in the world—so much so that incoming democrats “protested the enormous concentration of power that the initiative conferred to the central bank” (p. 122). In essence, despite the fact that authoritarians had been given their walking papers, radical central bank reform enabled them to impose their own conservative economic policy preferences. In doing so, they also constricted the ability of their democratic successors to engage in more distributive and welfare-oriented policies.

In regard to Mexico, Boylan attributes the implementation of a less binding package of central bank reforms to the lower levels of political threat and a much longer horizon for the survival of a seven-decade single-ruling party. As in Chile, Mexico’s ruling authoritarian elite had every intention of protecting its private sector allies by legislatively embedding a low inflation–low fiscal deficit bias in the country’s central bank. Yet the actual threat of displacement by the democratic opposition was rendered more remote because of the single party’s time-worn ability to manipulate electoral outcomes in its favor. By the time that single-party hegemony had met its most credible threat ever, outgoing authoritarians could no longer muster the legislative control to fine-tune their own loosely wrapped reform package along more Chilean lines. The result was a more lenient set of rules around the central bank’s ability to extend credit to the executive, and the continued sharing of various monetary policy tasks with the finance ministry. In the end, overconfidence on the part of the ruling party rendered the central bank legislation more fluid, “a series of ‘escape valves’ . . . for the president” (p. 206).

Boylan’s use of central bank reform as a lens for understanding the opportunities and constraints that shape political and policy choices in the postauthoritarian phase makes for an imaginative and intriguing study. Defusing Democracy constitutes comparative political economy at its very best.


— Daniel H. Levine, University of Michigan

In this monograph, Damarys Canache examines the nature of political support and review methodological and measurement issues. This exercise is put to use in the presentation of data on political support from the author’s multi-level survey of public opinion in Venezuela, conducted in 1995. Canache provides a thorough review of the relevant theoretical and comparative literature on support and a critique and evaluation of alternative methodologies. Data from the survey are situated in a theoretical context defined as political support in “fragile democracies,” and set insofar as possible in longitudinal and comparative context.

The first two chapters lay out the author’s ideas about fragile democracies and the nature and proper measurement of political support. Although Venezuelan democracy is long-lived by Latin American standards, recent years have witnessed a steady erosion of trust in government, confidence in leaders and institutions, and commitment to democracy itself. Canache takes off from David Easton’s delineation of specific and diffuse kinds of support, and he extends this to encompass attitudes not only to regime but also to democracy itself. Support is conceptualized as a hierarchy: “a set of interrelated attitudes—favorable or unfavorable—directed toward various objects with varying levels of generalization of the political system” (for example, the incumbent government, the political institutions, and the system of government) (p. 52). Chapter 3 situates the Venezuelan case in historical and regional perspective, and shows the steady decline, beginning in the mid-1980s, in support. The author’s central claim is that declining support for democracy “gave rise to mass support for political violence and provided an early base of support for Hugo Chávez” (pp. 65–66).

The core of the book follows with three chapters on “the antecedents of political support” (4), “social influence and political support” (5), and “the consequences of political support: explaining attitudes to political violence” (6). The overarching goal is not startling: “to assess whether individuals’ attitudes toward the political world affect their judgments regarding actions that may lead to political change” (p. 122). These chapters are dense and technical and can be summarized as...
follows: 1) Attitudes to democracy per se play an important role in the evaluation of political objects; 2) Adult socialization to politics has fostered cynicism in Venezuela, in line with growing corruption and governmental incompetence; 3) Local context shapes political attitudes (a measure of neighborhood ideology is constructed); and 4) Declining support for democracy opens the way to protest and violence. The unifying thread is that “support for democracy and not support for the country’s political system ultimately constitutes the ‘reservoir of good will’ that prevents individuals from favoring and possibly becoming involved in actions that challenge the system’s survival” (p. 126). The concluding chapter presents some general comments on the proper conceptualization and study of political support, as well as brief thoughts on the rise of Hugo Chávez to power.

Over the past fifteen years, Venezuela has experienced massive political decay along with growing polarization and protest, including three attempted coups, the impeachment and removal of one president, the destruction of a party system once legendary for its strength, the rise of a new political movement around Hugo Chávez with the creation of a new constitutional order, and a political landscape marked by continuous demonstrations and counterdemonstrations, often on a truly massive scale, and growing violence. Canache provides some elements for making sense of the process, but this monograph is perhaps of greater interest to those concerned with defining and measuring political support than to those interested in making sense of political change in Venezuela, or in thinking about likely or possible futures.


— John S. Klemanski, Oakland University

While the notion of sustainable development encompasses a variety of issues (quality of urban life, urban sprawl, smart growth, new urbanism, brownfields development, urban growth boundaries), the movement in general seeks to balance economic growth, environmental protection, and social equity. Much of the early response toward sustainable development seemed to focus on the top-down efforts by international organizations, such as the United Nation’s Commission on Sustainable Development or the World Business Council for Sustainable Development. These produced initiatives, such as Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration, and Kyoto Accords, all of which have attempted to address the global problem of economic growth that also may contribute to social injustice and environmental degradation.

In the United States, there have been national-level efforts, such as the President’s Council on Sustainable Development, but also regional, state, and local activity (Sustainable Seattle, Sustainable San Mateo County, the Joint Center for Sustainable Communities). Locally, cities such as Portland, Oregon, and Grand Rapids, Michigan have imposed urban growth boundaries in order to cope with urban sprawl and reduce the public costs and problems associated with sprawl.

Livable Cities? adds to this important dialogue in a unique and intriguing way. The book’s research on sustainable development centers on cities in developing countries, such as Seoul, Bangkok, Taipai, Sao Paulo, and Budapest. Also, one of the book’s unifying themes is that efforts toward sustainable development have included important roles for average citizens of all socioeconomic classes and a common finding that grassroots community-political mobilization can occur around quality-of-life issues. But one quickly realizes that the issues of sustainable development in these cities are different from those in Seattle or Portland. Many of the neighborhoods investigated have no infrastructure—roads, power, or sewers. A number of these neighborhoods are squatters’ areas. They are built in less desirable areas that flood often or are otherwise unappealing. Without legal title to the land, residents of these neighborhoods sometimes have received accommodations, such as piped water, but more often than not are without power (electric and political). Despite this status, some communities have formed groups, become active around environmental degradation problems, and developed coalitions with others.

A common theme in all of the chapters is the identification of nongovernmental actors (citizens groups, nongovernmental organizations, political party organizations) as a major factor in efforts toward improving quality of life in the case cities studied. Governments are important too, but governments—and specific agencies within government—can both participate in addressing policy solutions and make matters worse.

The book’s research focus ranges from small slums and illegal neighborhoods, such as the fewer than two hundred households of Bangkok’s Wat Chonglom community to the more than 15 million residents of Sao Paulo, many of whom do not have proper water and sewer services. However, the examination of these grassroots efforts tends to identify citizen activity over a specific project, rather than as something that constitutes a larger political movement. For example, one citizen action in Taipai emerged in response to the proposed construction of a nearby power station built to meet the electricity demands of a newly opened department store, which featured its own Locally Unwanted Land Use (LULU)—the store planned to rent its basement out to a brothel. While other actions against unwanted developments have occurred in the city of Taipai, overall citizen activity in Taiwan, as described, tended to be limited to neighborhood-specific problems. When combined, these various actions comprise a substantial record of grassroots mobilization, but they tend to remain more ad hoc project-specific expressions than a larger political movement.

All of the chapters provide interesting studies, but a good example is the research on six cities in Vietnam. Vietnam presents a daunting challenge to community activists seeking policy influence because there is no official political party competition (so no voter or interest group leverage), and political protests are illegal. Nonetheless, this chapter extends the book’s general community mobilization theme by offering a “community-driven model” of environmental regulation. The model attempts to analyze the various interactions among the possible actors in sustainable development or environmental regulation. The actors include community members, relevant business firms, and “extralocal” actors (including the media, nongovernmental organizations, and consumers), in addition to state agencies, which remain key factors in Vietnam’s case.

Can average people make a difference? The lessons from this book suggest that they can. However, part of the lesson also to be learned is that making a difference takes considerable time and effort, requires organizational and political skills, requires leadership and the help of other groups, forces citizens to challenge institutional power, and can be frustratingly slow. The fact that the book’s title includes a question mark indicates that the authors believe that the achievement of a meaningful quality of life for urban residents in the new global economy is a question that remains to be answered. The book’s emphasis on grassroots activity and coalition building suggests that the question is being answered in these case cities through the efforts of citizens in collaboration with other organizations and government agencies. But readers also are likely to conclude that global corporations cannot meaningfully pursue sustainable development.

— Ross E. Burkhart, Boise State University

Robert J. Franzese, Jr., has written an excellent book that is part of the informative Cambridge Studies in Comparative Politics series. From this series, his book is a good companion to Carles Boix’s (1998) Political Parties, Growth and Equality: Conservative and Social Democratic Economic Strategies in the World Economy and Geoffrey Garrett’s (1998) Partisan Politics in the Global Economy. Franzese’s book needs to be read by political economists, as it will make a significant contribution to the field.

Franzese endeavors, with a satisfying level of success, to answer the general question of why 21 advanced industrialized economies varied to the extent that they did in their macroeconomic performance and macroeconomic policy outcomes during the 1947–98 period, focusing on three issues: social insurance, public debt, and monetary management. The 21 countries examined include 14 of the 15 current European Union members (except for Luxembourg), Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Switzerland, and the United States. This large pooled data set allows him to make substantial and powerful statements aiming to account for four prominent macroeconomic patterns during the post–World War II period: an increase in transfer payments, an increase in the amount of fiscal activity, a sharp rise in public debt after the first OPEC oil shock of 1973–74, and the shift by the 1980s in nearly all of these industrialized countries toward deflationary policies.

Yet some countries behaved differently from others. For instance, Belgium and Italy had a dramatic increase in public debt throughout the 1980s, but the United Kingdom did not. Toward explaining the variance, Franzese tests several theories of macroeconomic policymaking within democracies by using various statistical techniques that are appropriate for pooled cross-sectional time-series data. The theories that he tests fall within three general categories: institutional, constituency interests, and the environment in which institutions and interests interact. Institutional explanations involve such matters as whether the country is presidential or parliamentary, the extent to which federalism is present in the polity, and central bank independence. Constituency interests consist of such aggregates as the voting public, labor union members, and fiscal systems. The environment in which these two interact is made up of the extant domestic and international economic conditions and how they shape constituency interests and institutions, and vice versa in an interactive manner. This latter class of explanation of variance in macroeconomic policy and performance is the author’s main contribution to this literature, and it is a substantial contribution.

Within this theoretical framework, Franzese first seeks to explain the varying provisions of social insurance, expressed as transfer payments and taxation rates. He cleverly brings out the manner in which political agendas change with the prevailing economic conditions and expectations. Focusing on public demand for transfer payments that necessarily affect taxation schedules, he hypothesizes that the median voter will be placed in between left and right governments, and that the median voter further will wish for more transfer payments (and the attendant taxes that provide for them) if that voter perceives him- or herself to be less likely to be the median voter in the future. Governments are hypothesized to react to the median voter concerns, especially at election time, and increase transfer payments.

This theoretical innovation brings together cross-national survey work on economic voting (for instance, Michael Lewis-Beck’s 1988 Economics & Elections: The Major Western Democracies) and neoclassical economic theory in an interesting way. In all, Franzese places 26 variables in his model of social insurance. The results of model estimation indicate, among other findings, that there are mild median voter uncertainty effects on social insurance provision. An even more interesting political economy finding is that there are distinct election-year increases in the provision of social insurance. This suggests that there is still saliency in considering the presence of a “political business cycle,” à la Edward Tufte’s Political Control of the Economy (1978). In fact, Franzese finds pronounced election-year swings in boosts in outstanding public debt as a percentage of GDP.

Finding a multivariate explanation of public debt levels proves to be more of a challenge (the $R^2$ for the 42 variable model is .53), but the political explanations of presidentialism (as opposed to parliamentaryism), federal system (as opposed to unitary), and central bank independence all significantly work to reduce public debt levels. However, in the instances of presidentialism and federal system, “the mechanisms of these relationships remain uncertain” (p. 175).

Finally, monetary management, meaning the setting of monetary policy and keeping a watchful eye on wage trends, is found by Franzese to be dramatically affected by the interaction of central bank independence and wage and price bargaining. The inflation-unemployment trade-off is alive and well. The extent to which either inflation or unemployment dominates depends upon the extent to which public sector employment dominates the economy.

This discussion touches on only a few of the noteworthy findings throughout Franzese’s analysis. Overall, he impressively marshals available data from several sources for the two dozen and more variables in his data matrix. His careful use, and painstaking documentation, of appropriate methodological tools such as vector autoregression, pooled cross-section time-series parameter estimation, and unit roots estimation will please methodologists. For those with less of a taste for quantitative methods, the results and implications of the findings are presented in a standard format at the end of each chapter that can be read for profit. Readers may wish for more discussion of countries’ historical experience with macroeconomic policy, in the manner of Douglas Hibbs’s (1987) The American Political Economy: Macroeconomics and Electoral Politics, a book from which Franzese clearly has taken inspiration. Such discussion would add to a contextual appreciation of the cross-national macroeconomic variance. Yet it may be asking for too much to have the post–World War II macroeconomic historical events of 21 countries presented within the covers of a book that seeks, impressively, to bring some generalizability to our understanding of the variance in the macroeconomic performances of the advanced industrial democracies. Macroeconomic Policies of Developed Democracies has great merit in aiding scholars toward obtaining a better grasp of this complex phenomenon.

— Terry D. Clark, Creighton University

There has been considerable debate on the advisability of testing hypotheses derived from theories of democratic consolidation in post-communist systems. The most common objection raised by Valerie Bunce, among others, is that existing theories of democratic consolidation were inductively constructed on the basis of the experience with democratization in Latin America and southern Europe and that the transitions in these regions are qualitatively different from those in eastern and east-central Europe (e.g., see Valerie Bunce, “Should Transitiologists Be Grounded?” Slavic Review 54 [no. 1, 1995]: 111–27, and Valerie Bunce, “Comparing East and South,” Journal of Democracy 6 [no. 3, 1994]: 87–100). Among other things, she notes that the role of civil society has been considerably more pronounced in the latter than the former. As a consequence, Bunce, in particular, has called for scholars of postcommunist systems to develop theories of democratization more appropriate to the region.

Graeme Gill’s book can be seen as a response to this challenge. Engaging in a cross-national analysis of why some of the postcommunist countries of Europe have become democracies while others have not, he locates the answer in the strength of civil society. His thesis is that where civil society was strong, democracy emerged. Where it was weak, it did not. In those cases where civil society was largely informed by exclusivist nationalism, facade democracy emerged. The opening chapter places the countries of postcommunist Europe in one of three categories—democracy, facade democracy, and nondemocracy—on the basis of procedural and substantive rights enjoyed by their citizens. In the second chapter he identifies six patterns of regime transformation that have occurred in postcommunist Europe. Following the tradition of the Wilson Center studies of democratization in Latin America, Gill develops these patterns inductively. Ensuing chapters review the history of civil society in the precommunist era for the countries in each of the patterns of regime change developed in Chapter 2 (concluding that the better the development of civil society in the earlier period, the greater the likelihood of democracy emerging), and they note a correlation between a number of indicators of civil society (NGOs per capita, vote turnout, feelings of political efficacy on the part of citizens, trust in political institutions) and the success of the democratization project.

While it is tempting to argue that Gill (in response to Bunce) is engaging in an exercise in inductive theory building using the experience with democratization in eastern and central Europe, there are several points at which this is uncertain. For instance, in the third chapter, Gill identifies a number of factors that are critical to civil society’s capacity for influencing the course of regime transformation. Among them is the existence of a state, urbanization, and capitalism (pp. 86–88). In the ensuing chapter he asserts that a free press is crucial to the development of civil society (p. 112). In neither case does he make the theoretical case for why this is so, which suggests that he is indeed concerned with inductive rather than deductive theory building. However, this is brought into doubt by what appears to be an effort to test a set of hypotheses intended to further substantiate the book’s thesis, rather than to demonstrate the theoretical point. Similarly, instead of relying upon evidence to establish that there is a correlation between certain types of developments (for instance, the emergence of a free press) and civil society, he instead asserts that there is one and then establishes a correlation. This seems to confuse deductive with inductive theory building.

A further problem is the generally weak case that Gill makes for a correlation between civil society and regime transformation patterns. In the conclusion to the second chapter, he states that “the tendency is clear: the greater the involvement of non–old-regime civil society forces in the negotiations at the initial stage, the greater the prospects for democracy” (p. 81). While the point is important to his argument, he in fact barely discusses civil society forces in some of the patterns.

Most puzzling is what appears to be a misinterpretation of the Latin American literature on democratic consolidation, which substantially de-emphasizes the role of civil society, focusing instead on the strategic decision made by political elites (e.g., see Guillermo O’Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, eds., Transitions from Authoritarian Rule, 1986). This is one of the points in the democratization literature most criticized by Bunce. Gill, however, asserts in the concluding chapter that the differences between the two regions are not substantial enough to warrant their being treated separately: “[T]he basic dynamic at work in all cases has been the same: the relationship between civil society forces and political elites. This was the key in the case of democratization in Latin America and Southern Europe” (p. 201). While he is quick to qualify his assertion by noting that this is the case “despite the failure of much of the writing on these areas to appreciate that fact” (p. 201), he offers no evidence in support of such an interpretation.

Despite these criticisms, Democracy and Post-Communism nonetheless makes a number of important contributions. Among these is Gill’s observation that the degree to which “insiders” seize control of the privatization process is critical to the emergence of democracy. This point is largely missing in the literature on democratic consolidation and one that the democratic transitions in postcommunist systems have brought to light. Gill also observes what appears to be a significant problem with presidential systems. In comparison with parliamentary and premier-presidential systems, they are associated with weak party systems. This would appear to be an important factor that those studying the effect of electoral law on party fragmentation in eastern and east-central Europe have failed to take into consideration (e.g., see Robert G. Moser, Unexpected Outcomes: Electoral Systems, Political Parties, and Representation in Russia, 2001). The book’s most significant contribution, however, is that it focuses scholarly attention on the importance of civil society as an actor in its own right during the democratization process. This is a much-needed corrective to the literature on democratic consolidation.


— John P. Willerton, University of Arizona

Understanding the collapse of the Soviet system and emergence of a putatively democratic replacement in Russia requires attention to both macro- and microlevel developments and forces. Predictably, much attention has been given to the powerful centrifugal forces that overwhelmed the Soviet polity, with understandable focus on such historical figures as Mikhail Gorbachev and Boris Yeltsin as political struggles evolved. While few would characterize the Soviet collapse as entailing a “revolution from below,” national and societal tensions within the Soviet federation have commanded scholarly attention, as have the complexities of accomplishing a genuine perestroika policy program.

Gordon Hahn approaches the Soviet collapse and emergence of a postcommunist Russia from a different perspective, arguing that a bureaucrat-led, state-based “revolution
from above” was responsible for this most dramatic of late-twentieth-century political transformations. Relying on a wealth of detailed institutional, policy, and elite information, Hahn presents a magisterial study that fills a significant void in our understanding of the USSR’s destruction. While readers may at times feel overwhelmed by the amount of institutional and personnel detail presented, they are richly rewarded by a thorough illumination of that Russian decision-making environment within which the Soviet transformation was launched. In the process, readers are presented with a conceptual approach that can be useful for appreciating ongoing institutional changes and often subtle elite maneuverings in the post-Soviet era.

Hahn takes issue with many explanations of late-Soviet-period change (e.g., those drawn from rational choice and other formal theoretic approaches), arguing that the focus should be on the Communist Party–state bureaucracy and the nomenklatura ruling elite. He diverges from many in understanding the role of modernization, institutional decay, systemic disequilibrium, class conflict, and macrostructural factors to be causal factors for revolutionary situations, rather than for revolutions themselves. His interest is in illuminating the mode of the demise of the ancien régime, arguing that the nature of the revolutionary demise has important implications for the institutional and political arrangements to follow. Sensitive to dynamic contingencies that mold revolutionary actions and outcomes, Hahn posits an “interacting constraints” theory of revolution intended to encompass both institutional evolutionary patterns and subjective factors as he develops a more comprehensive explanation of elite-driven system transformation.

The creeping bureaucratic revolution that would bring down the Soviet ancien régime was led by nomenklatura officials, and unlike other revolutions both within the communist world and elsewhere, these politicians relied on established state institutions, parliamentary laws, presidential decrees, and administrative orders to accomplish their ends. It is to these party-state institutional arrangements that Hahn gives utmost attention, and his extensive archival work, careful perusal of the print media, and interviews yield considerable fruit. Exhaustively supported by well over a thousand endnotes, he meticulously analyzes the genesis, evolution, and ultimate failure of the Gorbachev perestroika program, with special attention given to the changing institutional arrangements that accompanied the policy reforms. The book’s cover page referring to the years 1985–2000 is rather misleading in that the detailed analysis of Russia’s revolution from above covers the Gorbachev period of 1985 to 1991, and not 1985 to 2000. Attention to the post-Soviet era comes only in the last of the book’s 11 chapters, with a comparable detailed analysis of the 1992–99 Yeltsin period likely requiring at least a thousand pages in addition to the more than five hundred pages of text and notes presented here.

For all of his intensive efforts, does Hahn’s analysis add substantially to our understanding of the late Soviet period and the USSR’s collapse? I think it does, and on many counts. In our rush to appreciate the dilemmas of post-Soviet system building, we have tended to hold to certain broad generalizations about both the Soviet system and the “logic” of Gorbachevian reformism without carefully examining important institutional and elite details. Hahn’s examination of what he terms late-Soviet-period “crypto-politics” illuminates the composition and nature of the conservative bureaucratic establishment, an elite establishment that he reveals continued to influence system building and policymaking in the Yeltsin period. We are provided a more complete view of the intricate maneuverings of different reformist elements, while the Gorbachev-Yeltsin rivalry is explored in its nuanced evolving phases. Meanwhile, by carefully tracking the political-institutional changes that came with the evolving perestroika program, the author can conclusively demonstrate the impossibility of squaring traditional Soviet democratic centralism with pluralism and democracy.

A valuable by-product of this comprehensive study is an illumination of particular decisions and events of the Soviet collapse that have not been easily understood by interested observers. Hahn offers a valuable look at Gorbachev’s so-called turn to the Right in the fall of 1990, while meticulously tracing the maneuverings of conservative opponents more than six months before the failed August 1991 coup effort. Numerous important politicians of this period (e.g., Yurii Manaenkov, Ivan Polozkov, and Oleg Shenin)—seemingly forgotten in the aftermath of the Soviet collapse but central to the struggles of the late 1980s—are given overdue attention. Overall, we are provided with a balanced and seemingly complete account of the institutional and elite politics of the Gorbachev period, with important insights drawn for appreciating the system-building struggles of the 1990s.

Hahn’s final chapter reveals that the demise of the USSR through a revolution from above has had profound implications for the structure and “logic” of the post-Soviet system, most particularly through the continued impact of ancien régime institutional arrangements, decision-making norms, and officials. The rich history of political-institutional struggles of the 1992–99 Yeltsin period is not explored in the book, but the author’s broad overview of the evolving composition of the Yeltsin-period governing elite is suggestive. He produces evidence that revolutions from above do tend to produce both unstable, illiberal democracies and often-corrupt state capitalist economies. Having effectively examined the Gorbachev period and Soviet collapse, Hahn, one hopes, will apply his analytical approach in earnest to the Russian system-building setting of Yeltsin and Putin, exploring the implications of ancien régime institutional and elite norms as they adapt to postcommunist political and economic conditions.


— Mark Ungar, Brooklyn College, City University of New York

This is a definitive account of the impact of human rights pressures on Chile’s 1973–90 dictatorship. With thorough detail and clear analysis, it advances understanding of the overlooked but critical impact of human rights standards on government policy and in a period of changing international politics. In its emphasis on the concern for legitimacy, however, the book’s theoretical model neglects its variables’ broader political and historical context, which in turn limits its comparative value.

To explain how human rights norms affected the junta of Augusto Pinochet, Darren Hawkins argues that a country’s desire for international legitimacy is the most fundamental catalyst for its adoption of human rights concerns. Such desire is mediated by crisis levels, elite factions, and normative fit. Rights pressure, first of all, has little resonance in a government determined to use repression to end a crisis. During the first two years following Chile’s 1973 coup, in fact, high levels of violence and instability kept rights off the agenda. The government addressed rights issues as the crisis dissipated in the late 1970s, but ignored them after the 1982 economic collapse generated more turmoil. As rule-oriented elites within the governing circle rose in influence, second, the government incorporated rights language into its policy and developed a legal basis for its legitimacy. In particular, a backlash against the violent tactics of the Directorate of National Intelligence (DINA), led to DINAs elimination and paved the way for adoption of legitimacy-strengthening measures. Third,
human rights pressures must have a “normative fit” with national standards—that is, “the congruence between international norms and widespread domestic beliefs” (p. 6). Since the international human rights community was in sync with Chile’s tradition of democracy, its strategies were effective. Against the backdrop of the need for legitimacy, Hawkins asserts, these three factors together explain variation in government action and strategy on human rights.

The book, then, applies this theoretical approach to a chronology of the changing policies of Chile’s military regime from its takeover in September 1973 to its electoral defeat in October 1988. In the first two years of the regime, rights norms had little impact on a government convinced that it was fighting a civil war with the backing of its citizens and that rights pressures were politically motivated. But as opponents were killed off, the economy rebounded, and the international rights reaction coalesced, the government did begin to incorporate rights norms. Hawkins provides a fascinating description of the heated government discussions—replete with behind-the-scenes arguments by competing officials—over the wisdom of altering security agencies and of formulating a constitution. As with his discussion of “democracy,” he carefully unpacks the use of words to provide insight into the government’s thinking. For example, junta officials and advisors all agreed that their three Constitutional Acts in 1976—which spelled out government powers and certain rights guarantees—“would establish the legal bases of the government’s legitimacy, sometimes even using the word legitimacy though more often using the language of image or prestige” (p. 90).

These developments culminated in the 1980 Constitution, which defined Chile’s political landscape in the 1980s and ultimately became the platform for the regime’s demise. Hawkins describes how the “rule-oriented” faction convinced Pinochet that this legal foundation was central in the efforts to shore up badly depleted international legitimacy, as well as to rebuild democratic institutions that, in their view, had been “destroyed beyond repair” (p. 109). Such detail provides valuable insight into an otherwise closed government.

The following chapter then covers a revival of repression after the 1982 economic crisis, when, Hawkins says, concerns about legitimacy “simply vanished as the government faced threats to its survival” (pp. 142–43). But its violent crackdowns, combined with stepped-up efforts by the international human rights community, led to an emboldening of the opposition and the 1988 plebiscite over continuation of military rule. Hawkins rightfully devotes considerable attention to the internal debates leading up to the plebiscite, explaining how the overarching concern for legitimacy made the regime back off from electoral manipulations to help ensure its victory. “In short,” he concludes, “human rights pressures caused the military government to pursue legitimacy to such an extent that the government unintentionally scarified Pinochet’s presidency to attain it” (p. 150).

The book’s analysis of Chile’s authoritarianism, however, loses sight of its broader context. While it addresses post–1973 economic questions and changes, for example, it does not systematically describe Chile’s economic structures or long-term conditions, which were central to the authoritarian project. Pinochet’s radical overhaul of the economy was intended to definitely settle perennial economic questions, such as those over foreign investment and control of copper and nitrate extraction. This effort to alter the economy was intrinsically linked to its rights and political policies. Similarly, the author addresses the attempts to reconstruct democracy, but he does not describe the specific parties, shifting alliances, and popular divisions characterizing Chilean politics. The ways in which the government dealt with the opposition cannot be fully understood without explanation of the country’s political history. The failure of reformist governments in the 1920s, the fracturing of the centrist Christian Democrats in the 1960s, the formation of the Left’s winning electoral coalition in 1970, and other historical developments are necessary for an understanding of Pinochet’s attitude about politics and his views of democracy.

Theoretically, the author could have subjected the book’s analysis to a more rigorous comparative examination. The final chapter uses the case studies of Cuba and South Africa to show, as in Chile, the relative impact of domestic structures, normative fit, crisis level, and the power of rule-oriented factions in the government on human rights. But both Cuba and South Africa are unusual cases; the influence of the United States on Cuba and the extraordinary attention on South Africa heavily shaped the impact of these four factors. A more appropriate and useful comparison would have been with the majority of authoritarian regimes in Latin America and Africa, where the range of violations and the policies of the governments were similar to those in Chile. Such a comparison would have revealed some undeveloped variables in the book’s model. For example, Hawkins argues that domestic structure of the state has little influence on the impact of human rights pressures, but he does not discuss the different structures of the state, from the judiciary to federalism. Do provincial governments in federal states allow for additional entries for human rights pressures? This question could have been the basis of comparison between unitary states like Chile and federal states like Brazil. Do common law judiciaries allow for opportunity by judges to promote rights? Such a question could have been an interesting comparison with most African states.

Despite these flaws, International Human Rights and Authoritarian Rule in Chile is a thoroughly engaging and well-crafted analysis of one of Latin America’s most durable authoritarian governments. It furthers our understanding of how international human rights standards can shape even such a powerful regime.


— Cyrus Ernesto Zirakzadeh, University of Connecticut

Over the past decades, several scholars and pundits have worried that the European Union is insufficiently democratic in its policymaking procedures. This allegedly has contributed to a legitimacy crisis in which EU institutions fail to command the respect from states and citizens necessary for controversial decisions to be accepted. According to some writers, this shortage of legitimacy can be solved, in part, through the greater use of democratic procedures, such as referendums, in the development of major policy proposals. Referendums, it is argued, would foster greater awareness of European-wide interests and needs among political elites and masses whose loyalties at present seldom extend beyond the borders of their nation-states. Through referendum campaigns, knowledge about, interest in, and allegiance to the EU would gradually flourish.

Simon Hug provocatively argues that the calls for referendums are shortsighted and overlook important political costs. He bases his judgments on a mixture of historical and game-theoretical arguments. The first half of the book looks at approximately two dozen recent national referendums over the expansion of EU membership. Hug notes that in those countries that held national referendums on EU expansion, the referendums often served as votes of confidence on the performance of incumbent national governments. Apparently when casting ballots in referendums involving EU integration, many citizens

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have been more interested in punishing and rewarding national parties than in addressing international issues. This was especially true in countries where the referendum either were not legally required or were nonbinding. Referendums, moreover, appear a relatively costless way of expressing dissatisfaction with one's rulers because one can vote against a referendum that the incumbent national government is endorsing without worrying about actually replacing the government. A referendum thus functions as a midterm report card—an advanced warning, short of actual removal from office.

In a discussion of nonelite socialization, Hug argues that partly because EU referendums are so seldom held, they cannot have the educative impact that their proponents suggest. According to the author, much more is needed before citizens and politicians feel greater affection and concern for Europe as a whole, enough to overlook national interests. At a minimum, cross-national political parties must be established if voters are to be sufficiently exposed to European matters to see themselves first and foremost as citizens of the continent rather than as parochial nationalists.

The game-theoretical chapters allow Hug to contemplate the hypothetical consequences of different methods of holding EU referendums. What would happen, for example, if a single referendum were held across the entire continent, as opposed to a series of national referendums? What consequences would follow, furthermore, if either member states or citizen groups were given the right to formulate and initiate referendums? He considers other complicating conditions, such as the size of majorities needed to make a referendum binding and the combining of referendum results with policy approval by member states.

Through a series of mathematical formulas and rational-actor assumptions, Hug concludes that referendums, regardless of format, would almost always add a significant hurdle to policymaking. A new veto actor would be constructed, for voters would have the power to block proposals by the European Parliament, the European Commission, or other governing bodies. He contends that by making policy innovation significantly more difficult, referendums would reinforce current exasperation with the EU as a solution to the problems generated by cross-national economic trends. A frequently impotent EU would further delegitimize Europe's already weak regional international institutions.

Voices of Europe is interesting because it systematically confronts the enthusiasm that some reformers have for referendums as a democratic solution to political problems. Hug's arguments compel us to reexamine one commonly advocated policy position, which arguably is the proper aim of all serious political science scholarship.

The book's weaknesses are its brevity and its sometimes overreliance on technical, rational-choice vocabulary. Hug's empirical chapters are sometimes too condensed and too short of contextual details to illuminate. He describes the positions adopted by major parties and government and leaders, but ignores the roles of mass media, labor groups, business associations, ethno-nationalist minorities, and other groups that participate in referendum campaigns. As a result, the historical chapters lack drama, and readers do not see how choices by different political actors affect the tenor, issues, and nationwide salience of EU referendums. His game-theoretical chapters are written for a small, technically proficient audience who will find his metaphors—such as preference "volks," "convex hulls of ideal points," and "Pareto-frontiers"—illuminating. These chapters may confuse political scientists who do not typically think in quantitative terms. The chapters definitely are not well suited for undergraduates or for nonacademic practitioners. This is unfortunate because both audiences would benefit from understanding the provocative line of argument that Hug is developing.

By systematically challenging a body of conventional scholarly wisdom, Hug's book advances our thinking about the ambiguous costs and benefits of one democratic-sounding mechanism. The occasionally abstruse language limits the book's potential audience, and its historical narratives are sometimes too brief. But the topic is exciting, and Hug's findings are stimulating. He seldom pulls punches in his critical assessment: "Assessing proposals for referendums in light of the theoretical and empirical results presented in the previous chapters clearly shows that some of them are ill-considered" (p. 112). Political scientists interested either in further democratizing Western politics or in the construction of international organizations ought to read Hug's study and wrestle with its conclusions.


—Sunhyuk Kim, Korea University

The literature on East Asian political economy has witnessed an unmistakable change in tone since the Asian financial crisis in the late 1990s. Eulogies of the economic "miracle" have been swiftly replaced by obloquies of the economic "meltdown." Most of the facts that were previously believed to have facilitated development and growth are now considered to have debilitated them. The end result is a field in bewilderment: The field of East Asian political economy stands largely inconsistent, if not schizophrenic.

David Kang's book gives excellent succor to the field of East Asian political economy, squarely dealing with both development and crisis and presenting a balanced analysis of what went right and what went wrong. The central question is: "How can we reconcile rapid growth in East Asia before 1997 with reports of extensive money politics in those countries in 1998 and 1999?" (p. 3). The author's answer is a captivating story of "revival of fortune," featuring Korea and the Philippines.

The book argues: 1) that both Korea and the Philippines experienced significant corruption throughout the postindependence era (p. 3); 2) that the balance of power between political and business elites in Korea ("mutual hostages") reduced transaction costs and promoted growth, while "bandwagoning politics" in the Philippines increased transaction costs and obstructed growth (p. 11); and 3) that in coping with the Asian financial crisis, however, the Philippines fared better than Korea, because it had been able to carry out significant restructuring reforms to dismantle cronyistic ties in the previous period (p. 156).

In three respects, Crony Capitalism is iconoclastic. First and foremost, it refutes a general consensus in the literature that Korea and the Philippines are vastly dissimilar. Despite contrasting colonial legacies, differing levels of external threats, and varying economic performance, Kang demonstrates that Korea and the Philippines are in fact quite similar. In particular, Chapter 2 (pp. 21–60) offers a cogent comparative analysis of similarities between Korea and the Philippines in terms of political oligarchies, social networks based on school ties and intermarriages, and family-based business conglomerates.

Second, the book convincingly shows that the Rhee regime in Korea (1948–60) was not as faulty as conventionally depicted in the existing literature on Korean development. In fact, the Park regime (1961–79) was not starkly different from the Rhee regime in terms of clientelism and corruption. Kang asserts: "To conclude that Rhee's personnel policies were consciously clientelistic is unfair. . . . The evidence does not reveal that Park was interested in reform" (p. 69). The book illustrates how corruption was prevalent and ingrained under
Park, an allegedly incorruptible, if not ascetic, autocrat (pp. 104–6).

Third, the book also disputes the prevalent notion in some literature on Korean development that business conglomerates were only a subsidiary partner to Park's authoritarian regime in pursuing rapid economic development. Kang argues that chaebol (South Korea's big family-owned business conglomerates) was powerful enough to construct and maintain a relationship of “mutual hostages” with the ruling politicians: “Even at the beginning of the Park regime, capitalists realized that they were not entirely vulnerable to the state but that both had a certain ability to sanction the other” (p. 119). With neither able to fully gain the upper hand, “state and chaebol were forced to work together” (p. 120).

Each of these challenges to the existing theories encapsulates the book's contribution to the field of East Asian political economy. Yet, the greatest contribution consists in its attempt to overcome a serious division in the literature between the theories of development and the theories of crisis. Kang's detailed analysis of how money politics operated under Park in Korea (p. 109) successfully generates a powerful explanation for the 1997 crisis by showing how the “too big to fail” mentality aborted most of the earlier reform efforts and ultimately resulted in the crisis.

In terms of analysis, however, the book squats rather uncomfortably between a highly parsimonious 2 × 2 typology based on four types of business-government relationships (p. 15) and an inclusive laundry list (p. 187). On the one hand, the author shows a strong attachment to the initial typology in explaining changes after democratization, even risking an excessively unidimensional understanding of democratization—that is, democratization merely involves a shift from a “coherent” to a “fractured” state (p. 152). On the other hand, the author concludes that “devastating but transformative war in Korea, an enduring and severe external threat, different initial conditions and historical legacies . . ., and contrasting U.S. policies and attention all combined with different patterns of domestic government–business relations . . . to cause different economic outcomes” (p. 187). Indeed, as the author himself unambiguously admits, such a “stew of reasons is not satisfying, and it is not easily generalizable.”

Furthermore, the choice of the book title, Crony Capitalism, remains quite puzzling. Throughout, there is no serious discussion on “crony capitalism”—for example, its definition, conceptualization, typology, and measurement, among other things. Are both Korea and the Philippines cronies capitalisms? Or is only one of them a crony capitalism? What about the other cases mentioned, such as Taiwan, Indonesia, and Japan? How do we know whether a capitalism is crony or not? Does it depend on the level of corruption? If so, how can we measure corruption? With no answers to these crucial questions, it is unclear and unconvincing how and why the author reasons that the contemporary United States—with Enron, WorldCom, and so forth—can avoid the opprobrious label of “crony capitalism.” The inconsistent and unsystematic usage of term, together with the above-mentioned “stew-of-reasons” approach, considerably limits the generalizability of Kang's otherwise very interesting theoretical conclusions.

Despite these few limitations, this book is a welcome addition to the field of comparative political economy. It forcefully refutes some of the long-standing theories in East Asian political economy. Moreover, unlike most of the previous works on either development or crisis, it provides a synthetic and integrative analytic framework for explaining both success and failure, both miracle and meltdown, with well-researched and well-organized case studies of Korea and the Philippines. Crony Capitalism will surely be required reading for understanding East Asian political economy in the years to come.


— Daniel C. Levy, University at Albany, State University of New York

Toward the end of the last century, Mexico became a prominent participant in the world's democratic tide. Mexico's democratization is a subject of interest because of the country's inherent importance and because its experience can shed light on democratization elsewhere. Chappell Lawson argues that the media played a key role in Mexico's democratization and that a study of this role is suggestive for comparative analysis of the media and democratization. He deals with the media's role under the old regime, during that regime's breakdown, and in the emerging democracy.

Lawson solidly and intelligently analyzes the change from media that largely reinforced an authoritarian regime to largely independent media. He identifies in detail the key players and their actions. Content analysis, while yielding few surprises, provides a quantitative supplement for the author's interviews and other information gathering. The introductory and concluding chapters point to intriguing information about the media in democratization elsewhere, although a more ambitious approach might have pulled the comparative thread through the book's chapters. The organization and writing are clear. Lawson has an eye for attractive quotations and perspectives, and the 209 pages of text make for a rather easy read. Each chapter ends with a short conclusion, really a summary more than a large statement related to broader considerations.

Not putting into question the book's value, certain debatable issues are worth raising. Lawson's depiction of Mexico's media today may be a bit too positive. Perhaps it exaggerates the degree of professionalism while giving insufficient attention to several problems the author himself notes, including increased violence against reporters, the domination of big business along with concentrated media ownership, and the commercial pandering associated with the increased market competition; on the other hand, Chapter 8 provides fresh information about rising sensationalism. Lawson covers diverse media and is especially strong regarding the printed press (as perhaps the book's subtitle indicates), although television is the general public's chief news source. A clearer and more disappointing focus concerns the time period. The interviews run from 1995 to early 1997, and few works published after 1997 are cited. But decisive democratization occurred in the subsequent few years, and so it would be interesting to pursue the media's role in this achievement or "consolidation." Readers would have benefited from an epilogue or at least an acknowledgment of the omitted time period and how that might have affected the analysis.

Lawson is familiar and sure-handed with literature on democratization and injects some useful judgments from his own case (e.g., on the role of "human agency" in democratization, p. 191). He might have engaged more in debates prominent in the literatures on democratization and on Mexican politics. For example, the media case might favor one major school of thought over another regarding civil society's role in Mexico or beyond. A similar point holds regarding the literature on "liberalization" (given surprisingly little attention) and its much-debated relationship to democratization. Lawson's approach, valuable in itself, is more to fill in the neglected media role. Thus, the treatment of the media under the old regime does not provide original or controversial perspectives about that regime; additionally, the treatment understates what has already been written about the media role during that period (why Marxist dissent was possible, what appeared in lieu of real news, and so forth).
Some Mexicanists may choose to skip through Chapters 2 to 4.

Alongside plausible specific assertions, Lawson's main thematic assertion is that the media contributed significantly to the crumbling of the old regime and the building of democracy. He juxtaposes this theme to a "default" hypothesis, which he believes is widely held, that media freedom results simply from changes in the political system (p. 3). But for the most part, he is admirably eclectic. He acknowledges and nicely lays out multiple influences, which are intertwined in ways difficult to untangle for purposes of declaring exactly what causes what. Beyond its portrayal of that mix, the analysis appears a bit strained in pursuit of an eye-catching thematic assertion. One repeated point (e.g., p. 134) is that media change and impact preceded regime change. But this line sometimes downplays the degree of regime openness and change prior to the late 1990s. Identified realities, such as continued government harassment (p. 178), are in fact compatible with a secular trend of diminished government control, especially as the regime became increasingly shaky and subject to internal contradictions. To conclude from the Mexican case that the macro political space required for free media to emerge "is not especially large" (p. 184) may again underplay how open Mexican politics was compared to that of most authoritarian regimes, although the claim does merit cross-national exploration. Lawson himself notes that in 1997, the government-boosting Televisa "confronted a highly mobilized civil society that was carefully scrutinizing its every move" (p. 109). In this connection, he cites the Federal Electoral Institute, which deserves greater attention in a study of Mexican democratization and the media. So the media led but also lagged. Notwithstanding such reservations, he provides sufficient evidence for the significant if not startling conclusion that the Mexican media have promoted, protected, and reinforced democratization.

In assessing what led to media independence—whatever its effect on broader political change—Lawson is again mostly eclectic. His emphasis on the impact of a vibrant market is persuasive (more so than his claims about media professionalization, not demonstrated to be cause more than effect). Whereas he basically treats the market separately from civil society and democracy, it would be interesting in this media context to explore how and how much the market is intertwined with society and democracy. Additionally, whereas he pointedly minimizes globalization as a cause of media transformation, it is difficult to separate the market from globalization, and more weight should be given to the penetration and "model" of U.S. media, a reflection of the broad U.S. shaping of Mexican democratization. Analysis of the U.S. role could ultimately strengthen some of Lawson's arguments about both the market and media professionalism. All in all, what is most convincing for explaining increased media independence is the interrelationship of the market, rising competitive politics, and U.S. influence.

Reservations about approaches and conclusions should be subordinated to praise in evaluating Building the Fourth Estate. It would have been difficult to accomplish much more than Lawson has without a longer and more complicated work. This is now the best book available on the media's role in Mexican democratization. As such, it represents a valuable contribution to the literatures on democratization, the media, and Mexican politics.


By Pauline Jones Luong. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 344p. $60.00

— Ilter Turan, Istanbul Bilgi University

The demise of the Soviet Union and the emergence of several independent states on its territory have provided scholars of political transitions, change, and state building with a unique opportunity to study these phenomena in near laboratory conditions. Travel to these lands, collecting information, and doing field research there have also become much easier than they ever were during the Soviet times. The intellectual fruits of this drastically transformed academic research environment have now begun to appear. In this context, Pauline J. Luong's book on institutional change in post-Soviet Central Asia, focusing on Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan, is a well-designed comparative study, motivated by strong theoretical concerns.

The author is interested in studying the origins and change of political institutions. She notes that standard explanations of regime change focus either exclusively on structural conditions or on the contingent choices of individual agents; she argues that what motivates elites to adopt political reform is their desire to acquire or retain as much power as possible given their perceptions of how present changing circumstances are affecting their previous ability to influence the distribution of goods and/or benefits (p. 3). Emphasis here is on the "perception" of shifts in the balance of power. Structural and contingent factors both play roles in determining elite perceptions of shifts in their relative power, "particularly the degree to and the direction in which their relative power is changing due to the instability and uncertainty generated by the transition they face" (p. 11). Under these conditions, the shaping of political institutions may be modeled as a "transitional bargaining game in which elites interact strategically to design institutions such that they attain as large a share of the distribution of goods and/or benefits as possible, given their perceived change in power relative to the other relevant actors—both established and emergent" (p. 11).

The particular area of institutional change chosen to test the argument is the crafting of new electoral systems in the three Central Asian states. Why the electoral systems? Because, argues the author, the "struggle to define the nature of electoral systems is at the very heart of transitional politics" (p. 4). Furthermore, the institutions established during transition periods "are known to have a long term impact on subsequent political and economic development because they inaugurate a cycle of 'increasing returns' whereby the probability of further steps along the same path increases with each move down that path" (pp. 3–4). While not denying the importance of electoral systems, it may be remembered that these are usually not a part of the constitution of a country and can be changed with greater ease than constitutional provisions. In fact, reading through the case studies, we discover that the devising of the electoral system in each country was not a one-time-only affair and that in a relatively short time many changes were made in the initial design. Can we be sure that these systems will not be changed soon again? I suspect that in addition to other reasons, what makes the study of electoral system design interesting may be the relative ease in identifying the preferences of each side, probable outcomes of change, and the degree of success each party achieves in the outcome.

In each of the three countries, two sets of actors—the central leaders and the regional leaders—have negotiated, with different outcomes, four core issues: "the structure of the parliament, the nomination of candidates, supervision over the elections, and the determination of candidates" (p. 8). Why the difference? Chapters 3 and 4 discuss, respectively, the Soviet legacy (the source of continuity) and the sources of change (the transitional context). In all of these countries, the same historical-structural context—the Soviet legacy—characterized by strong regionalism prevailed. There were however, "particular features of the immediate strategic setting" that rendered the transitional contexts different. These "had a direct effect on actors' perceptions of the degree and direction of change in the basic parameters of the previous system" (p. 103). Chapters 5 to 7 study the specific contexts of
Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Kazakhstan, in that order, discussing the differences in the immediate strategic setting and how the electoral system emerged and got modified. They make fascinating reading for those interested in the politics of those countries. The comparativist, without regional expertise, may find those parts of the book less exciting.

The author has used an open-ended questionnaire and conducted reasonably long interviews with 152 national, regional, and local leaders. In the four pages allocated to methodology (pp. 19–23), the choice of countries is convincingly defended, the aims of the interviews and contents of the survey instrument briefly explained, the sample described, and finally, the problem of bias treated. The author has tried to control for situational bias and unreliable responses by interviewing the same subjects and asking them the same questions in different contexts, noting differences in responses. How biases are controlled this way is unclear. Which were the answers that were free of bias, and why? Also, did the subjects remember many of the questions they were asked the first time and answer them the same way next time around simply to be consistent?

Despite such minor problems, "Institutional Change and Political Continuity in Post-Soviet Central Asia" is an outstanding piece of research. The first two and the concluding chapters are devoted mainly to the elaboration of theoretical considerations. Possibly, they may be read independently from the rest of the book by students of comparative politics and political change, who may be interested in the theoretical arguments, the methodology, rather than in Central Asia. Scholars interested in Central Asia will have the pleasure of reading about the politics of the region and how what happens there is related to the broader phenomena of politics. Finally, I feel that this is obligatory reading for students of electoral systems so that they may appreciate once more that the adoption of electoral systems is not a technical but a political question.


— Kenneth M. Roberts, University of New Mexico

Few scholars are bold enough to try to explain 150 years of political development in five different countries, and even fewer succeed at such an ambitious undertaking. James Mahoney admirably pulls off such a feat in his masterful study of postindependence political evolution in Central America. His basic objective is to explain why the five Central American republics developed durable yet distinct types of political regimes in the middle of the twentieth century: liberal democracy in Costa Rica, traditional authoritarianism in Honduras and Nicaragua, and military authoritarianism in El Salvador and Guatemala. To explain such divergent outcomes, he argues that it is necessary to retreat historically to the period of liberal reforms in the nineteenth century and investigate the different developmental trajectories that were spawned by this "critical juncture."

Mahoney’s path-dependent analysis offers a powerful demonstration of the theoretical leverage provided by the comparative historical method. Building on the critical juncture framework developed by Ruth Berins Collier and David Collier in "Shaping the Political Arena" (1991), Mahoney argues that long-term patterns of political development are heavily conditioned by the institutional and structural legacies of watershed periods, or critical junctures. Like the Colliers, he contends that nations at comparable stages of political and socioeconomic development are likely to pass through similar structurally induced critical junctures, but to experience different dynamics and outcomes that are determined by national-level antecedent conditions and political agency. Unlike the Colliers, who worked primarily on more economically advanced Latin American countries, Mahoney does not trace twentieth-century regime dynamics back to the process of labor incorporation and the onset of mass politics during the early stages of industrialization. Instead, in Central America’s more agrarian societies, he argues, regime dynamics throughout the twentieth century were driven by elite efforts to reconfigure state institutions, agroexport economies, and rural class structures during major episodes of modernizing liberal reforms in the nineteenth century.

Liberal rulers in all five Central American nations sought to enhance state power and commercialize agriculture by promoting private landholding and coffee exports, but they adopted different models of liberal reform. In Costa Rica, a gradual, reformist model of liberalism was implemented after independence was achieved in 1821, resulting in a sociopolitical formation “in which small farms were gradually extended across the country and in which the state played a supportive—but noncoercive—role in solving land and labor problems of coffee and other export crops” (p. 142). With relatively low levels of social polarization and state militarization, the legacies of reformist liberalism were highly conducive to the eventual development of Costa Rica’s regionally distinctive democratic regime and social welfare state. In contrast, liberal critical junctures in El Salvador and Guatemala were delayed until the 1870s, and they were associated with more rapid, radical, and coercive projects of socioeconomic and political transformation. Liberal elites moved aggressively to insert their nations in an expanding international market for coffee exports; communal lands were privatized, large estates consolidated their dominance of the agrarian economy, and central states strengthened their military institutions to enforce coercive labor practices and contain the potential for rebellion that was intrinsic to such highly polarized rural class structures. The structural and institutional legacies of radical liberalism produced highly repressive, institutionalized forms of military rule in the twentieth century, with the armed forces serving as guarantors of a social order that was increasingly threatened by popular demands for political democracy and social reform. Finally, liberal reforms were aborted in Nicaragua and Honduras by U.S. political/military and economic intervention, respectively, “which served to distort and minimize domestic changes” (p. 165). The legacies of aborted liberalism were traditional, patrimonial forms of authoritarian rule that were conducive to the exercise of U.S. hegemony.

The case studies in this book are well grounded in the historiographic literature on the five countries, and Mahoney’s systematic comparative framework sheds new light on common patterns and individual idiosyncrasies that are poorly illuminated in conventional, country-specific accounts. One of the most important contributions of this book is to demonstrate how secular patterns of political development are shaped and constrained by the initial process of state building, particularly with respect to military and other coercive state institutions. Mahoney avoids the pitfalls of both economic determinism and political voluntarism by skillfully integrating socioeconomic structures, political institutions, and political agency into his path-dependent model of development. Institutions clearly matter for reproducing power relationships, yet they are embedded in constraining structural conditions (both domestic and international) and crafted by the strategic interaction between political agents who embody competing individual or collective interests and objectives. The result is a highly compelling explanation of political evolution and divergence in five nations that are otherwise strikingly similar in their historical backgrounds, cultural makeup, resource endowments, and structural locations in the global economy.

However compelling, Mahoney’s account is still subject to the questions that surround
any path-dependent causal analysis. To be truly decisive, a critical juncture requires that differences in antecedent structural or institutional conditions be minimized (or inconsequential for subsequent evolutionary patterns), and that political agency in the aftermath period likewise exert little or no independent effect on the eventual political outcome. With respect to antecedent conditions, Mahoney concedes that Costa Rica “did emerge independent with a distinctive colonial heritage” (p. 77) that weakened conservative forces and facilitated an early consolidation of liberal reforms. Clearly, then, part of the causal chain that produced Costa Rica’s democratic welfare state in the twentieth century cannot be attributed to political agency during the liberal critical juncture, as this critical juncture was itself conditioned by structural patterns established during the colonial era. As such, the Central American nations were predisposed (though surely not predetermined) to follow divergent paths of political development even before the postindependence critical junctures analyzed by Mahoney. On the other side of the critical juncture, the reader cannot help but ponder to what extent Guatemala’s military authoritarian denouement was preordained by its liberal critical juncture, rather than contingent upon subsequent patterns of political agency. In particular, the decision by President Arbenz to extend social reforms to the agrarian property structure in the early 1950s was integral to the chain of events that culminated in the destruction of Guatemala’s short-lived democratic experiment, not to mention the paranoid delusions of a U.S. administration that was intent on subverting capitalist modernization in the name of containing communism. Nevertheless, Mahoney is sensitive to these constraints on the explanatory power of his critical juncture framework, and he is appropriately cautious in his theoretical claims. His work is to be commended not only as a seminal study of Central American politics, but also as a major contribution to scholarly understanding of critical junctures and path-dependent political development.


— Paul Kubicek, Oakland University

Numerous assumptions pervade the literature on democratic transitions. Among them are the vital role assigned to civil society, the importance of international assistance, and (implicitly at any rate) the notion that international efforts can facilitate the growth and maintenance of civil society. This volume critically engages all three ideas, but especially the last one, and thus makes an original and important contribution to understanding how international efforts can help and impede the growth of civil society and democratization. Indeed, this volume is offered as a “corrective to the many stories that scholars [and policymakers] have focused on” (p. 8). By pointing to successes and failures of external democratization assistance, the editors have compiled a volume that should become essential reading for those in the scholarly, governmental, and NGO communities.

This volume documents the experiences of Western and local NGOs in a number of postcommunist settings. Chapters consider women’s organizations in Poland, Hungary, and Russia; the media in Slovakia and the Czech Republic; environmental groups in Russia and Kazakhstan; civil society support in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan; and NGO efforts to rebuild and democratize Bosnia. Each chapter describes NGO strategies (e.g., targets of assistance, type of involvement, goals) and details the effect (or lack thereof) that external assistance has had on local NGOs and on democratization more broadly speaking. While there are examples of NGO success—mainly in financing organizations to keep many groups afloat and when their “strategies are derived from local ingredients, rather than a global cookbook” (p. 235)—what stands out are the shortcomings of international assistance. Many accounts emphasize the disjuncture between international and local expectations and norms, the failure of Western NGOs to adapt to the local political and economic environment, and the fact that assistance tends to “ghettoize” local NGOs so that their efforts become “donor driven” and consequently lose touch with their ostensible local constituencies. Instead of building horizontal ties across groups in society, outside assistance creates dependency and competition among local NGOs, and the drive to obtain financial assistance overtakes the mission of advocacy and furthering democratization. At one point, Sarah Mendelson suggests that assistance programs become “troughs at which local elites feed” (p. 6).

The conclusions of James Richter’s study on women’s groups in Russia deserve to be quoted at length and can apply to several of the case studies. In some cases, Richter finds, external assistance “has widened the gap between activists and the rest of society. Institutionalizing and professionalizing civic associations frequently transforms them into hierarchical, centralized, and corporate entities that value their own survival more than their social mission. Their dependence on Western assistance often forces them to be more responsive to outside donors than to their constituencies, removes incentives to mobilize new members, and fosters interorganizational competition that discourages open communication” (p. 56). Elsewhere, one finds that while civil society groups may exist on paper and constitute a part of the much-ballyhooed “transnational networks” of activists, they have had “negligible to nonexistent” effect on elites and decision makers (p. 233), even on discrete issues such as environmental protection and women’s rights.

The most important and generalizable conclusion of this volume is that democratic norms do not neatly transfer to all environments, even with the good intentions of foreign democracy promoters. External assistance may not strengthen local NGOs; it can, in profound ways, weaken them. The local environment and preexisting norms, as well as the willingness of outsiders to sincerely engage local activists and not merely impose their values, interests, and priorities upon them, heavily condition success or failure. Collectively, the cases also make the point that NGOs and their financiers must move beyond evaluative techniques that measure simply the dollar amount of assistance, the number of donated computers, or the quantity of personnel “trained” at seminars led by Western activists who may or may not have any idea about the environment of the country in which they are training local activists. These conclusions, which are derived from qualitative, context-rich assessments, would hardly surprise many observers familiar with the region. Nonetheless, they belie many of the facile assumptions guiding assistance programs in the region and should make several organizations rethink their strategies. It also should compel many scholars to reassess their assumptions about international–domestic linkages on questions of democracy assistance and the difficulties of spreading international norms and transferring Western experiences to postcommunist countries.

The one critique I offer is that I would have liked to see these studies nested in a broader comparative context. Surely, one would suspect, investigators have examined assistance programs elsewhere (e.g., Latin America, Africa) and drawn similar conclusions. If so, one then wonders why many were so optimistic that Westerners could somehow draw upon their own unique experiences and teach citizens in postcommunist countries how to construct civil society.
After reading *The Power and Limits of NGOs*, some might be tempted to conclude that foreign assistance is not worthwhile, that at best it will “influence developments only at the margins” (p. 236). This would be a mistake. While the overall tone of the volume is critical, all the authors are quick to make suggestions about how democracy promoters can learn from past mistakes and adapt their strategies in order to become more successful. One hopes that this book gains an audience that will influence not only academic discussion but also important policy debates on how to promote democracy in the postcommunist world and beyond.


— Bo Rothstein, Göteborg University, Sweden

Democracy comes in many forms and qualities. Figuring out why is how most political scientists make a living. There is certainly no non-normative way of defining the qualitative dimensions for democracy. Some would favor broad participation, others the possibility of demanding responsibility of leaders; yet others would point at different types of policy outcomes. In *Civic Literacy*, Henry Milner argues that because governing a society is a complicated affair, a high-quality democracy needs well-informed citizens. Without a substantial amount of knowledge of public affairs, citizens can neither make the “right” choices in the elections nor know what to do when participating in other sorts of political activities. Many would argue that this is too idealistic a view of how modern democracies actually work, dominated as they are by “spin-doctors” and systematic manipulation of information by political leaders. In contrast, Milner’s argument starts from a strong normative conviction about the importance and the possibility of informed choice by the people. However, to be able to make such choices, people need resources.

The central concept in this book is *civic literacy*. This is defined as “the knowledge required for effective political choice” (p. 13). The concept is applied both at the individual and the societal level. It is not to be understood as “knowledge” that can be “stocked” by individuals or societies, but as an “either—or” concept. Milner’s point is well taken when he states that one cannot build a “stock” of literacy in a society “by having a very-literate minority” (p. 54). This should not be taken to the extreme—after all, people do read more or less well. Still we speak about the percentage of the population in different societies that are literate. The question in this case is, of course, if there is such a precise level of knowledge of civic affairs where we can feel confident that citizens have the necessary amount of knowledge to make informed choices. This is the theoretical weakness of the concept. What would be the required level of civic literacy for Swedish citizens in the soon-to-be referendum if the country should give up the krona for the euro? The long-term consequences of this decision for the individual and for the society are very difficult to understand. Examples such as this can certainly be multiplied. Nevertheless, I think civic literacy is a useful addition to the stock of important concepts in political science, partly because there must be some level of knowledge below which choice in politics is meaningless, both at an individual and an aggregate level.

As can be readily seen in the title, the book takes issue with Robert Putnam’s well-known theory that what makes democracy work is “social capital.” The author’s critique of the social capital approach rests on two grounds: a) that not all networks and voluntary associations are good for democracy, also known as the “Hell’s Angels problem,” and b) the validity of the way social trust is measured in surveys. While the first criticism certainly is valid, the other is more problematic because interpersonal trust may still be very important for “making democracy work” despite the measurement problem. The critique of the social capital approach is theoretically not very convincing. One could easily imagine a society with a reasonably high degree of civic literacy but where deep distrust between different ethnic groups would make democratic rule impossible.

Nevertheless, Milner has found a comparative data source that works very well as an operationalization of his main concept. This is the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) that measures the extent to which people in 20 different Western countries possess the literacy needed to function as effective citizens. The survey measures such basic things as the ability to understand editorials and news stories in the media, the capacity to use information from public documents, and some simple mathematical knowledge. Here, Milner struck gold. First, there is great variation in this measure of adult literacy among the countries surveyed, with the United States at the low end and the Scandinavian countries, Germany, and the Netherlands at the high end. Second, it correlates strongly with a number of important qualities of a well-functioning democracy, such as political participation (turnout), knowledge of the United Nations, spending on social programs, and economic equality. The argument is not that there is a simple causal link from civic literacy to those other variables. Instead, Milner argues for the existence of complicated causality with lock-in effects and feedback mechanisms, that is, in plain language, “vicious and virtuous circles.” To support his argument, Milner has collected a very impressive amount of data from 15 different countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In addition, two countries are dealt with in more historic detail, namely, New Zealand and Sweden, the former serving as an example of a vicious and the latter of a virtuous cycle.

As with social capital, the question then becomes: If civic literacy is so important for making democracy work, then how can it be generated? One this point, Milner is very clear, namely, that the level of civic literacy should not be understood as resulting from some culturally deterministic traits. On the contrary, he argues that political leaders can actually create civic literacy by doing four things. The first is to go for electoral systems with proportional representation instead of two-party systems. The second is to work against the commercialization of television, and especially the use of political commercials. Third, political leaders can create systems for adult education. Lastly, civic literacy is strongly connected to extended welfare state policies. While he presents evidence for all four arguments, I’m still doubtful on how to understand the causality. Is it an informed citizenry that makes demands for extended social protection, or does it work the other way around? The historical material for the case I happen to know best (Sweden) is far from convincing on this question. To make just one point, Milner presents strong support for the type of economic policy launched by the central trade unions in the 1950s. But I wonder how many workers in Sweden actually understood the implication of this economic model.

To summarize, this is an empirically rich book with a new argument about one of the most important questions in political science. If valid, the implications for public policy are significant. While not without problems, the argument about civic literacy deserves to be taken seriously, and Milner’s book serves as a good start for such a discussion.


— Daniel Lee Kleinman, University of Wisconsin—Madison

As one of the engines of the new knowledge economy, the biotechnology industry has...
attracted a great deal of attention from social scientists. Scholars have looked at the character of the industry, studied biotechnology-related policymaking, and explored the likely socio-economic effects of new genetic technologies. There is now a significant literature in which a central focus is the likely impacts of different agricultural biotechnologies—from recombinant bovine growth hormone to genetically modified crops—on the structure of agriculture. And while researchers have considered possible effects of agricultural biotechnologies in developing countries, as well as in the nations of the Northern Hemisphere, studies of agricultural biotech policymaking focus largely on Europe and North America. The limited literature on agricultural biotechnology-related policymaking in developing countries makes Robert L. Paarlberg’s new book a valuable contribution.

On the basis of documents and interview data, Paarlberg describes the development of policies toward genetically modified crops (GMCs) in Kenya, Brazil, India, and China. For each country, he covers five policy areas: intellectual property rights (IPRs), biosafety, trade, food safety and consumer choice, and public research investment. To capture the specificity of policy in each country and to permit comparison across cases, Paarlberg provides a system of classification according to which policy in each area for each country can be assessed. He describes a scale of four policy postures a country may take toward GMCs and GM foods. Policies can be promotional, permissive, precautionary, or preventive. At one end, promotional policies “are designed to accelerate the spread of GM crop and food technologies” (p. 9). At the other extreme, preventive policies aim to “block or ban entirely the spread of this new technology” (p. 9).

Overall, Kenya’s policies fall into the precautionary category, according to Paarlberg. In the area of intellectual property rights, he describes Kenya’s policy as relatively weak because farmers are permitted to “replicate and replant protected seed varieties on their own farms” (p. 47), and consequently, private companies may have a reduced incentive to undertake GMO research or to introduce valuable proprietary GM crop technology into the country. Kenya’s precautionary biosafety policies mean GM crops receive a higher level of scrutiny than do non-GM crops when assessed for potential as well as documented biosafety risks. Paarlberg views Kenya’s trade policy as precautionary because it uses import restrictions to keep most GM commodities out of the country, and because the Kenyan government does not provide substantial resources for GM crop research, he contends that it is appropriate to view the country’s public research investment policy as precautionary also. Finally, food safety and labeling policy is an exception to Kenya’s generally precautionary approach. Because the country does not yet have a separate food safety or labeling policy for genetically engineered agricultural products, its policy is, according to Paarlberg, by default “nominally promotional” (p. 58).

If Kenya falls toward one end on Paarlberg’s continuum, China fits near the other. The country’s research investment policy is highly permissive, meaning that the government allocates substantial resources to GM crop research. China’s biosafety, trade, and food safety policies are similarly permissive. Only the country’s intellectual property rights policy should be categorized as precautionary, according to Paarlberg, reflecting China’s “lack of trust of market institutions” (p. 127).

The value of the wealth of information the author provides on the policies in each of his four countries cannot be understated. At the same time, what I found most interesting about the volume was his explanations of the different policy orientations of the countries he studied. While the causal factors he points to vary by country and, to a degree, by policy, for Kenya, Brazil, and India global influences are prominent. Thus, for example, Paarlberg attributes China’s precautionary biosafety policy to the influence of Dutch funding for drafting the policy and the associated use of Dutch and Swedish policies as models for Kenyan regulation. Following the U.S. model, by contrast, India ended up with a relatively permissive approach to biosafety issues. In Brazil’s case, he explains the country’s relatively permissive intellectual property rights policy in terms of internal efforts to open the economy to foreign investment and to comply with the World Trade Organization’s Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights.

Paarlberg also points to characteristics internal to his countries as important factors in understanding policy orientations. Particularly important, in this context, are social movements. In India, for example, antcorporate activists were a powerful force, according to the author, in shaping intellectual property rights policy. Nongovernmental organizations opposed to GM crops have played a similarly important role in Brazil, pushing, in particular, for a highly precautionary biosafety policy.

For China, the relative immunity of the state from the pressures of civil society has had a profound influence on the character of that country’s GM policy. Although Chinese policymakers are aware of the views of foreign critics of GM crop technologies, unlike in the other countries that Paarlberg studies, to take but one example, the characteristics of GM crop biosafety policy in China reflects, in part, “the near total absence of powerful independent environmental nongovernmental organizations (NGOs)” (p. 133). But if internal Chinese opposition has had little impact on agricultural biotech-related policy, even China has been affected by the globalization of the economy in recent years. Cuts in import duties, for example, according to Paarlberg, reflect China’s desire to benefit from World Trade Organization membership.

Paarlberg’s primary aim was to describe and categorize GM crop-related policies in the countries he studied, and in this regard, The Politics of Precaution is a rich source for social scientists interested in agricultural biotechnology. At the same time, with an emphasis on description and classification, his consideration of the factors that explain the policy profiles of his countries is not systematic or sustained. It is, however, highly suggestive, pointing in particular to the complexity of the influence of globalization on national policy. Here, we have a great deal to learn, and a more thoroughgoing analysis of the variables that shaped the agricultural biotechnology-related policies Paarlberg describes would have strengthened his book.


— Holli A. Semetko, University of Amsterdam

I had the good fortune to be reading this book in Berlin during the final week of the German 2002 Bundestag election campaign, in which, as an election observer, I had an opportunity to talk with the campaign professionals from the two major camps. I visited headquarters of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) one afternoon with a group of American political scientists and a few journalists who work for U.S. publications. Most of them were guilty of assuming that what this book argues has been wrongly assumed by many U.S. political consultants: that election campaigning has become “Americanized” in countries around the world. The authors would have been delighted to hear how the SPD’s campaign manager responded to one of the professors when he was asked the “Americanization” question. The “Kampa” manager denied outright the applicability of the term to the German case. He pointed to the obscure meaning and argued that modern campaigning techniques simply do not equal “Americanization.” His hardline tone was later linked by some in the group to “anti-American
I agree with Fritz Plasser and Gunda Plasser who state that the concept of Americanization is, at best, "elusive." The generalization does not discriminate between different theoretical approaches to understanding these developments, such as the perspectives of diffusion theory or modernization theory, which the book’s first chapter illustrates nicely. Diffusion theory sees Americanization as a result of the “transnational diffusion and implementation of US concepts and strategies of campaigning,” whereas modernization theory sees Americanization as “consequence of modernization of media systems and voter-party relationships” (p. 17, Fig. 2.1). The discussion of the worldwide proliferation of American campaign expertise is supported by the findings of an in-depth survey with 24 leading U.S. political consultants who are operating globally. The authors conclude: “Contrary to the confident attitude expressed by US-overseas consultants, who believe that American campaign techniques can be transferred to foreign contexts with only minor modification, we found in fact severe constraints and limits for an outright ‘Americanization’ of campaign practices in other parts of the world” (p. xviii).

The book provides a rich and useful overview of system-level features in 52 democracies, outlining the key characteristics of electoral and party systems alongside other country-specific contextual data on legal regulations pertaining to campaign practices, as well as an overview of the regulations governing free and paid political advertising in 67 countries. Almost all of the countries studied provide at least some free airtime for parties or candidates (financed by the state or by the broadcasters themselves). The United States, however, is the largest among those countries without free TV airtime provisions (alongside Belarus, Ecuador, Honduras, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, Switzerland, and Austria).

The authors then turn to the core data to discuss the role definitions and attributes of a global sample of campaign consultants interviewed between 1998 and 2000 (N = 592 in 43 countries). This was a difficult sample to obtain in many countries there are no professional associations for political consultants, and snowball methods were therefore used in those cases. So it is difficult to know how representative the sample actually is for societies in transition, such as Russia, Eastern and Central Europe, South Africa, Asia, and India. The distinction between external consultants, or external campaign experts, and internal party people, such as leading party staffers or politicians, is also important because it appears that the majority of Indian, South African, and East Central European respondents fall into the internal category. There is no analysis to address questions about the impact of this internal status on perceptions of the importance of the party organization for campaigning, and it appears to be more important in many of the countries in which internal consultants are the respondents (see Table 12.3). I would also have been interested in the party affiliation of the respondents and self-placement on a left–right scale, and whether there is any relationship between political leaning and attitudes or role definitions, but there is no information in the book about this or whether these items were included in the questionnaire.

Among many other findings, this impressive survey reveals that the U.S. approach is only one of several ways to approach a campaign, which is further evidence of the circumscribed reach of U.S. consultants’ influence abroad. Chapter 11 in the third part of the book, for example, illustrates how the responses of U.S. political consultants differ from their counterparts in other parts of the world, when it comes to 1) naming what is more important in recent elections (issues or the candidates image and personality), 2) measuring the success of a political candidate, and 3) selecting the most important media for campaign advertising, which, though television-centered everywhere, also continues to remain somewhat newspaper-centered outside of the United States. The next chapter shows how parties have diminished in importance in the minds of campaign professionals in the United States, Western Europe, Latin America, and East Asia, but have apparently become more important in the minds of campaigners in East Central Europe, CIS countries (Commonwealth of Independent States), Australia, India, and South Africa (p. 316, Table 12.3). And whereas less than 10% of U.S. political consultants say that “a strong and effective party organization” or “unified support of the party” is “very important” for the success of a campaign or a candidate, elsewhere in the world the response ranged from a low of 20% to a high of 81%, with Latin America, Western Europe, East Central Europe, and East Asia below 40%, and CIS countries, Australia, South Africa, and India at 40% or above (p. 318, Table 12.5).

The concluding chapter identifies a number of macrotrends, across different countries and cultures, including “the concentration of the campaigns on the electronic media, especially television; professionalization of campaign management; campaigning based on surveys and focus groups; personalization of campaigns; televised leader debates as the culmination of election campaigns; the advent of virtual parties,” and last but by no means least, “increasing negativity of campaigns” (pp. 343–48). The authors conclude that there is some evidence to support both modernization and diffusion perspectives, and they argue that there is “strong evidence for a hybridization—or a merger of traditional country- and culture-specific campaign practices—with select transnational features of modern campaigning” (p. 350).

Overall, Global Political Campaigning is an impressive study. It creatively summarizes the literature in this growing field of research, provides very useful global overviews of campaign characteristics and their contexts, and presents findings from unique sets of survey data. The wealth of information can be of use in both undergraduate and graduate courses. It is also important reading for political consultants who may want to look beyond their own cultures or borders for new clients.

The book also provides much food for thought for those studying news and information and their effects on election campaigns in democracies and societies in transition. We can assume that information sources in many countries reflect the global trend of “increasing negativity” in campaigning styles. Scholars concerned about the short- and long-term impacts of negativity in developing and established democracies around the globe will find that the U.S. literature on the effects of negative campaigning and negative advertising is far from conclusive (see, for example, the December 1999 APSR forum), and so there is much research to be done in the future.


— David Samuels, University of Minnesota

This volume addresses a critical issue: the potential relationship between political institutions
and conflict management in divided societies. It contains several “must-read” theoretical chapters, as well as helpful case studies. In particular, readers will find the two leading chapters most useful. They present Arendt Lijphart’s and Donald Horowitz’s competing views on institutions and conflict management. These leading scholars reflect on years of accumulated research—theirs and that of others. Not surprisingly, Lijphart and Horowitz continue to agree. Lijphart’s chapter summarizes his position and its practical implications for constitutional design, and reflects on the events of the past decade. Horowitz summarizes his views and also discusses why real-world politicians are unlikely to actually adopt suggested constitutional designs. This discussion is intriguing, for Horowitz ultimately questions the very notion of constitutional design. This skepticism pervades many of the essays in the book.

Steven Solnick’s chapter on the relationship between federal bargains and state building supports Horowitz’s conclusion, adding more fuel to the skeptics’ fire that constitutional design is a chimera. Solnick concludes that “even when an optimal constitutional design can be articulated, participants may be unable to agree on it ex ante or enforce it ex post” (p. 204). Yash Ghai’s chapter draws a similar conclusion. Ghai confronts the issue of whether political recognition of ethnic diversity promotes or hinders ethnic conflict. He finds evidence to support both arguments, which implies that neither “side” in the debate is right or wrong and that outcomes depend more on contingent factors and unintended consequences than on institutional design.

Pippa Norris’s chapter empirically tests the consociational hypothesis that greater proportionality in the ratio of votes to seats, typically obtained through the use of proportional representation electoral systems, leads to greater overall ethnic minority support for the political system. Norris finds no support for the hypothesis (p. 233), but she is circumspect about her conclusions and suggests that the true relationship between institutions and regime support is more complex than her model allows. She suggests that scholars take into account intervening conditions, including the geographic clustering of ethnic minorities, their level of politicization, and any special relationships between ethnic groups and parliamentary representation, such as reserved seats. These factors imply that scholars may be unable to capture ethnic groups’ level of regime support through standard classification of electoral rules.

The book has three flaws. First, three of the chapters (by Olga Shvetsova, Timothy Frye, and José Antônio Cheibub) are not clearly related to the stated main theme of the book. Second, the book lacks a synthetic introductory chapter that summarizes the main lines of the various debates about the hypothesized relationships between institutions and conflict management in democratic societies and connects the theoretical and empirical chapters. Lijphart’s and Horowitz’s chapters read like “capstone” essays, and they could have been treated as such, but most of the chapters do not build on these two scholars’ long-standing debate. Since the authors in the volume, all leading scholars in the area, express varying degrees of skepticism about constitutional design, in terms of both whether appropriate constitutional designs can be implemented and whether constitutional design can in fact help manage conflict, an introduction would also have helped the reader assess the research program, as well as its practical implications.

The third flaw follows from the second: Most of the six case-study chapters are not well linked to the broader theoretical literature on the relationship between institutions and ethnic conflict, nor are they linked to Horowitz’s and Lijphart’s chapters. The case studies provide welcome empirical material, but the chapters on Fiji, Eritrea, and Indonesia, in particular, are poorly integrated into any body of theory, leaving the reader to attempt to figure out the comparative implications of the messy events in those countries.

Brendan O’Leary’s chapter on Northern Ireland does clearly associate the 1998 Belfast Agreement with a “consociational” outcome. The Belfast Agreement conforms to most of Lijphart’s consociational criteria, except for the adoption of the single transferable vote (STV) system—Lijphart prefers a closed-list proportional representation system. O’Leary concludes that STV is superior “where the relevant ethnic communities are internally democratic rather than sociologically and politically monolithic” (p. 312). This is important and merits further theoretical and empirical cross-national exploration, perhaps using counterfactual thought experiments: Would tinkering with the electoral system in various divided societies result in different (better) outcomes?

Rotimi Suberu and Larry Diamond’s chapter on Nigeria argues that radical decentralization of power is the key to peace. No matter how national-level institutions are designed, “desperate competition to win or maintain power inevitably inflames the fissures inherent in a plural society” such as Nigeria (p. 422). By decentralizing power, the stakes “at the top” will be lowered, thus reducing the likelihood of ethnic violence. However, decentralization could also lead to Nigeria’s breakup, and the authors express pessimism about the country’s future because of the “pathological” nature of the incentives in the current political system (p. 424). Notably, their suggestions for reform focus on institutions and agencies of “horizontal” accountability, such as the electoral commission, the judiciary, and countercorruption institutions, which are not often as central to debates about the relationship between institutions and ethnic conflict.

The best case study in The Architecture of Democracy is by David Stuligross and Ashutosh Varshney on the role of institutional factors in conflict management in India. Somewhat in tension with Lijphart’s conclusion that India is an example of a consociational democracy, the authors conclude that the “consociational” aspects of India’s institutions are not the best explanation for the occurrence or nonoccurrence of ethnic conflict. These authors focus on four different ethnic divisions—religion, language, caste, and tribe—and conclude that institutional design has only helped resolve tension surrounding linguistic divisions. On all other categories the “record is mixed” (p. 430). This is especially the case regarding the management of religious conflict, where they conclude that local “civic” factors matter much more than national-level institutions (p. 455). That is, religious violence in India is a localized phenomenon, and its occurrence depends more on whether Hindus and Muslims are integrated into local-level organizations and institutions than on whether national institutions promote harmony or not (p. 455). This argument contradicts the notion that engineering national-level institutions is the best way to promote interethnic peace, and has important implications for the cross-national study of conflict management.


— Harvey F. Kline, The University of Alabama

In this very good book, Nazih Richani argues that a “war system” is formed under three conditions, all of which are present in Colombia—1) the failure of institutions to mediate conflicts among antagonistic social and political groups; 2) the antagonists’ success in adopting themselves to conflict through the accumulation of political and economic assets that make the condition of war the best possible option, given the balance of power and the higher costs of peace; and 3) a balance of forces among the conflicting groups that results in a comfortable
impasse. Richani uses theories of economic utility, cost-benefit analysis, rational choice, and political economy (thankfully without all the jargon) to demonstrate his main thesis: “The convergence of these three variables leads to a war system that tends to perpetuate itself; where any of these conditions is lacking, conflicts are likely to terminate faster” (p. 4).

Richani collected information for this book on five trips to Colombia between 1994 and 1998, during which he collected relevant primary and secondary printed information and interviewed some two hundred people. The interviews came from business groups, labor unions, coca growers, miners, guerrillas, paramilitary officers, military personnel, and state officials involved in the peace process. That he had to travel to some of the more dangerous places of Colombia to conduct these interviews also is to his credit.

He presents the information in a logical fashion, beginning with the institutional failure of the Colombian state (Chapter 2), in which he centers his analysis on the land tenure question. While this surely was a good focus, he might have been well advised to give more emphasis to the tradition of violence brought to the political arena by the liberal and conservative parties in the nineteenth century.

The third chapter is probably Richani’s best since he substantiates an argument not commonly made: that the military accepted a “comfortable impasse,” which allowed it to accumulate significant resources that could not have been obtained either under peace or a high-intensity conflict. That statement, however, is based on two assumptions: that more resources were potentially available and that, if the military had been given those resources, it would have been able to win the war against the guerrillas.

In Chapter 4 Richani turns to two major guerrilla groups, with a brief mention of the third major one. After a thorough analysis of the historical and social factors that led to the emergence of the guerrillas, he argues that both the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) decided that local and regional control was more important than national-level control, especially given the drug money to be made in certain locations. Once again, of course, he assumes that national control was a plausable option.

Chapter 5 deals with paramilitary groups (paras) and “organized crime.” Although it is not completely clear, the latter apparently means drug dealers. This is probably the weakest chapter of the book since in his historical analysis, Richani does not give enough attention to the paramilitary groups before the emergence of the drug trade. When the author states, as he does on page 78, that paras undermined the “bipolar” nature of the struggle in the last half of the 1990s, he shows a weakness in his knowledge about the earlier period.

Richani ends his analysis of Colombia by turning to the “Dominant Classes.” Strong points include the discussion of the traditional agrarian basis of this group, as well as the recent emergence of a new group based on globalization. Yet, he rightly points out, land is important for the newer group also, albeit for different reasons. He states, no doubt correctly: “[S]ectors of the dominant class are contemplating the deconstruction of the default hegemony, the war system, and reconstituting in its place a more ‘encompassing hegemony’ . . . by granting them [the peasant-based guerrillas] some concession as a price to accept a new basis of their [the dominant class] authority and stabilizing property rights. The price of maintaining the war system has become too high and does not measure up to the opportunities that peace could offer to important sectors of the dominant class” (p. 151–52).

The final chapter of the book places Colombia’s civil war in comparative perspective, with short sections dealing with Italy, Lebanon, and Angola. While such a viewpoint is provocative, clearly a detailed study of those three countries, comparable to the one just admirably done by Richani for Colombia, would be necessary for firm conclusions.

Although somewhat reluctant to raise negative points about such an important book, I nevertheless do so in ascending order of importance. Many of the smallest problems could have been avoided by acceptable editing. The most annoying include saying that Colombia is fourth in population in Latin America when it is third; giving three different dates for the mid–twentieth-century violence between the liberal and conservative parties, none of which would be accepted by most Colombian violen-
tólogo; twice incorrectly giving the name for the Muerte a Secuestradores paramilitary group; and naming Carlos Castano’s late brother “Rafael” instead of “Fidel,” among others. Figures 5.1 and 6.1 are not clearly presented. The last column of Table 5.3 is not labeled.

Slightly more important is the lack of maps to assist the reader. While this is not likely to be a problem for the colombianista, it might well be for the person who reads this book out of interest in civil wars. In addition, a table giving the number of interviewees from the different groups would have been helpful.

Of most importance are the statements made about the relationship between the Colombian military and the paramilitary groups. For example, there is the question of sources. On page 55, Human Rights Watch—hardly an objective party—is the only source given for statements that half of the commanders of the military are investigated for human rights violations. On page 103, Richani states that collaboration between the army and the paras is an “established fact” since 1993 (with no source indicated), while on page 126, he seems to contradict this when he states that in the 1990s the paras reinvented themselves “from a mere satellite of the army and its intelligence services to forces with their own momentum and needs for expansion and a political agenda.” I am not saying that Richani is wrong—he might well be right. Yet since this is the subject of big debates in both Bogotá and Washington, DC, statements like the latter should not be made without unequivocal substantiation.
his work to include comparisons of tobacco control as an issue in both countries. In accomplishing this, he moves his work from a good book to an important book, with greater relevance for a society in which policy ideas are flowing across North America’s borders as quickly as goods and services.

Studlar begins his book with a discussion of the remarkable similarities between the United States and Canada in terms of tobacco. In this chapter, the reader learns that the roots of the comparison reach into a history of tobacco production and deaths from tobacco-related illnesses that vary across the two countries by less than 1% in many cases. He ends this discussion by asking four pertinent questions: what has influenced tobacco policy; how that influence has changed over time; whether and why the policies in Canada and the United States have converged; and how 40 years of tobacco policy can best be explained. In the remaining chapters, Studlar answers these questions by synthesizing the research of many public policy scholars and adding his original case study research, which includes fascinating interviews with the leading players in tobacco policy. At times, his book reads like a novel of political intrigue (albeit one written for policy wonks), as he weaves a story of industry interest groups battling to clean up tobacco’s sullied image, constantly thwarted by those seeking to ban tobacco outright.

Overall, in the midst of the stories of policy cross-fertilization and political drama, Tobacco Control makes the argument that tobacco policy in the United States and in Canada can be alternately viewed as a policy centered around three arenas: federal politics, state and provincial politics, and interest group politics. Indeed, Studlar presents a convincing argument that any one of these is in fact the driving force behind tobacco control.

In the author’s discussion, the federal role is not painted as one in opposition to state controls, but rather as the locus of activity. Specifically, hollow laws, credit claiming, and activity outside the legislative arena dominate the history of tobacco regulation at the federal level in the United States. The convoluted federal approach taken in the United States was also followed in Canada, where advocacy for change arose not from within the ruling government, but rather through the persistence of maverick members of parliament and others. For the most part, federal controls in both countries moved toward voluntary agreements with the increasingly shielded tobacco industry. However, this changed dramatically in the late 1980s and early 1990s when the informal voluntary agreements moved toward formal regulation, oftentimes resulting in increased taxes and new advertising prohibitions.

Studlar’s discussion of the role of the states and provinces is, in many ways, where he shows that in spite of the acknowledgment that Canada “will steal ideas from anyone” (p. 246), the flow of policy information does indeed cross the border in both directions. For example, because the Canadian provinces were not as tightly controlled by Canada’s federal regulations on tobacco, they were able to innovate in the 1990s in ways that were not possible for states, presenting an opportunity for the states to steal taxing strategies and other policies targeted at tobacco control. Nevertheless, the event that changed tobacco policy in the United States most dramatically—litigation by the state attorneys general—was eventually adopted as a strategy in Canada.

As Studlar shows, the efforts of the federal, state, and provincial governments did not take place in a vacuum. Rather, the changing nature of tobacco control is a story of the changing nature of advocacy and interest groups. Indeed, of the 27 significant tobacco “policy lessons” between 1964 and 2000 that Studlar lists, approximately 50% are the result of interest-group advocacy at some level. This information clearly shows the importance of interest groups in the policy process at all levels of government. What is perhaps most interesting is that Studlar is able not only to show the cross-fertilization of public policy between the United States and Canada, given that these 27 policies exist (almost) simultaneously in both the countries, but also to provide convincing evidence that advocacy groups may indeed be the agent of that fertilization.

Overall, the three areas of control, like the tobacco control policies of the United States and Canada, are inseparable. The forces driving tobacco control are at once unique political and public policy ideas, but, like the countries in Studlar’s study, they are inextricably intertwined—probably for the better. In the end, Studlar not only takes the reader on a voyage that gives a greater understanding of tobacco policy in the United States and Canada, but also gives the reader a greater appreciation of politics in these countries. Indeed, the reader learns that Canada and the United States truly are undeniably similar at some important level but that at other important levels, each country is unique. Studlar uses these comparisons to assemble a mosaic that shows the important political and cultural linkages that exist between the countries and how those linkages have influenced tobacco control. Overall, Studlar has written a book that is ostensibly about comparative tobacco policy, but is in reality a book of great interest to scholars of Canadian and American politics and, of course, public policy.


— Salvatore Pitruzzello, Tulane University

Duane Swank provides the most sophisticated investigation to date of the post–World War II evolution of the welfare state under the impulse of financial globalization. The research addresses two questions that are central to the research area of comparative political economy of globalization and welfare states. The first, concerning temporal evolution, is informed by the debates on “diminishing democracy,” specifically, whether financial globalization—best captured by capital mobility—weakens the welfare state. The second, concerning cross-national variations in dynamic patterns, is how political-institutional arrangements shape the adaptation of countries to the imperatives of financial globalization. Empirical findings provide clear answers. On the temporal dimension, the hypothesis of negative effects finds no support: Financial openness is associated with welfare expansions. However, negative effects are detected on the cross-national dimension: Financial globalization leads to welfare retrenchment only in countries with liberal-residual welfare regimes with non-inclusive political institutions, which are those where welfare retrenchment has gone further. These are the polities with weak forms of corporatism, weak inclusiveness of electoral institutions, and high dispersion and decentralization of authority. These findings lend significant corroboration to the rich research in comparative political economy, which claims that domestic politics and institutions shape how globalization affects the evolution of welfare states.

The contribution of Swank’s research is as much on the substantive conclusions concerning the link between financial globalization and the welfare state as on crucial theoretical and methodological decisions guiding research. Indeed, Swank addresses in novel, and creative, ways three problems concerning how financial globalization affects the long-run evolution of welfare states.

First is persistence, which stems from the nonstationarity of the historical processes driving the evolution of the welfare state. Concern with persistence, captured by trending dynamics, emerges clearly in both the univariate and the multivariate domains. In the univariate domain, graphs of time paths of key historical processes, together with their averages of subperiods, are meant to provide descriptions of
persistent trending dynamics, for example, i) financial globalization (pp. 16–19, 131–32, 169); ii) social policies (pp. 69, 127, 165–66); iii) social institutions (pp. 64, 259); and iv) partisanship (p. 155). Both graphs and shifts in mean suggest that persistence takes the form of nonstationary random walks, mainly with drifts. In the multivariate domain, Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression modeling with a first-order autoregressive—AR(1)—component is meant to control for the historical persistence driving the coevolution of financial globalization and welfare states (p. 87). Such concern with persistence emerges more explicitly in alternative ECM (Error Correction Model) estimations, which more appropriately handle nonstationarity of historical processes (pp. 296–97). The clear conclusion is that long-term dynamics are the crucial dynamics linking international financial integration and the evolution of social policy.

Second is complexity of dynamics, which derives from the multiple economic, social, and political processes driving the evolution of the welfare state. Concern with complexity is evident in four areas. First is the inclusion of multiple dimensions of globalization, for example, capital liberalization, total capital flows, indirect investments, capital markets, and interest rates differentials (pp. 76–77, 87, 93). Second is the careful modeling of a host of variables that serve as controls in order to efficiently capture the effects of financial globalization on the welfare state, for example, unemployment, inflation, economic growth, affluence, population aging, and trade openness (pp. 76–77, 87). Third is the meticulous examination of several dimensions of social policy, for example, total expenditures and income maintenance captured by cash transfers, social wage, public health spending, and nonhealth social services (p. 69). Fourth is the treatment of political-institutional variables that capture the ideology of party governments—for example, left, Christian and conservative—and parliamentary and corporatist institutions (pp. 60, 96, 99). The richness of the models strengthens—given the appropriate statistical controls—the rejection of the hypothesis of a negative link between financial globalization and the welfare state.

Third is the distinctiveness of dynamics, which originates from differences in political institutions. Concern with distinctiveness is clear in two major areas. One is the careful treatment of domestic political-institutional variables that capture cross-national variations in the multiple dimensions of social expenditures, for example, social corporatism, inclusiveness of electoral institutions, dispersion of authority, and decentralization of authority. The other is in the research design, which combines pooled time-series cross-sectional designs with qualitative case studies that exemplify specific types of welfare regimes. The pooled design aims at capturing general dynamic patterns common to all countries, while the political-institutional variables, singly and in interactions, describe cross-national differences. The case studies (Chapters 4–6) provide rich insights into the distinctive effects of political-institutional arrangements across welfare regimes. This two-dimensional research design provides a much-needed link between the quantitative approach, which in pooled form tends to slight the distinctiveness of historical experiences, and the qualitative approach, which maximizes such distinctiveness but lacks the rigor and generality typically associated with quantitative approaches. The combined findings lend significant support to the hypothesis that globalization has negative effects in politics where welfare state retrenchment has been more significant. Undoubtedly, these contributions represent the most significant effort to more rigorously advance the political economy research on financial globalization and the welfare state. Yet the research also shows its limits, which are general to the field, in the investigation of the three dimensions of the dynamics. First, the treatment of persistent, nonstationary dynamics that are central in the long-term evolution of welfare states remains highly problematic. In the univariate dimension, nonstationary processes have no sensible time-independent means. drifts better describe the growth patterns. In the multivariate domain, OLS regressions controlling for persistence with the inclusion of AR(1) components might avoid spurious regressions but are ultimately noninformative about historical persistence. The alternative ECM estimations allay some of the concerns with the AR(1) strategy as the ECM findings for the effects of financial globalization appear to support the general pattern of OLS regression. However, and secondly, reliance on single-equation ECM modeling slight complexity by obscuring the feedbacks that dynamically link the economic, social, and political processes involved in the evolution of welfare states. Modeling the coevolution of processes that are historically related in a multidimensional vector ECM (VECM) cointegration framework would provide more complex, and empirically more realistic, insights into the coevolution of financial globalization and the welfare states. And third, pooled designs and techniques slight the distinctiveness of long-run dynamics stemming from different political institutions. Pooling imposes common dynamics on all the countries in the sample and tends to obscure typological differences. The inclusion of institutional indicators, whether singly or in interactions, in order to capture such differences, only partially minimizes the problem: The inclusion necessarily assumes, and is built upon, the common structure imposed by pooling. Rather, the VECM modeling of single countries, clearly in the explicit comparative framework, would better capture the complexity and distinctiveness of the persistent dynamics driving the coevolution of financial globalization and welfare states.

Such modeling, which represents a shift from qualitative to quantitative case studies, would allow the investigation of cross-national differences in four dimensions of long-run dynamics: i) the number of common stochastic trends driving persistence; ii) equilibrium relations; iii) adjustment dynamics to disequilibrium shocks; and iv) forces driving the common trends. Inferences about general patterns, either global or specific to types, would be derived from the investigation of the historical evolution of countries. Such approach, foreshadowed in the case study chapters in Global Capital, Political Institutions, and Policy Changes in Developing Welfare States promises to push further Swank’s already lucid and sophisticated research.


— Philip Mauceri, University of Northern Iowa

Neoliberal economic reforms have been ascendant in Latin America since the early 1980s. The promise of economic growth, increased productivity, reduced debt levels, and an efficient but limited state were held out as the ultimate outcomes by proponents of neoliberal reforms, both domestic and international. By the end of the 1990s, however, citizens in several countries were beginning to express frustration with the lack of improvements in their daily lives, and with politicians who appeared more responsive to international financial institutions and multinational corporations in the midst of an economic downturn than to their own needs. The rise of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, the ouster of Alberto Fujimori in Peru, the forced resignations of four Argentine presidents in five weeks, and most recently the election of the former labor leader Luís Ignacio da Silva to the presidency of Brazil all suggest that the political sustainability of neoliberal economics, at least as practiced in the last two
decades in Latin America, may be coming to an end.

There is a significant literature in the social sciences noting the tensions between market liberalism and democratic politics, from Joseph Schumpeter’s *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (1942) to Robert Dahl’s recent reflections on “Equality versus Inequality” (*PS: Political Science and Politics* 29 [no. 4, 1996]: 639–48). Most of this literature points out how the demands of capital accumulation and efficiency clash with such democratic values as equality and accountability. Finnish scholar Teivo Teivainen’s well-timed book offers a provocative theoretical framework for examining the impact of neoliberal reforms on democratic governance, focusing on Peru during the presidency of Alberto Fujimori (1990–2001) as an instructive case study. Eclectically and fairly haphazardly borrowing from world-systems theory, standard international political economy (IPE) approaches, and neogramsian historical materialism, Teivainen questions the boundaries used in most analyses of economic reforms between “politics” and “economics,” as well as between “domestic” and “international.” His central thesis is that the socially constructed sphere of the economic, both domestic and foreign, is growing and taking over some of the social relations that were previously considered under the control of institutions that constitute the political sphere (p. 3). This “economism” removes decisions regarding distribution issues from the democratic arena and transfers them to the realm of economic experts, who are supposedly “above” politics and need to be beyond accountability, so as to better ensure their own efficiency.

Most of the book, however, focuses on the specific case of Peru, where economic failures in the 1970s and 1980s laid the groundwork for the rise of Alberto Fujimori. Teivainen makes the case that the Fujimori administration stands as one of the region’s best examples of creeping economism during the 1990s. In Chapter 3, Teivainen locates the origins of economism in Latin America in the debt crisis of the 1980s, and particularly in the “conditionality” and “neutrality” principles laid out by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Both principles resulted in a redistribution of power within the state, shifting economic decision-making power away from accountable institutions, such as legislatures, toward executive agencies, especially Central Banks, that are largely unaccountable to the electorate. The failed economic policies of the Alan García administration (1985–90), which attempted to resist the growing encroachment of economism by adopting a debt ceiling and a strengthened role for the state (efforts examined in Chapters 5 and 6), paved the way for Fujimori’s program of international “reinsertion” and an expansion of the economic sphere over the political.

In his analysis of the Fujimori regime (Chapters 7–11), Teivainen argues that economic policy was removed from the political arena. Privatizations and the growing power of both the Ministry of Economy and the Central Bank were complemented by a new constitution in 1993 that strengthened private property rights. In addition, the constitution weakened the oversight capacities of the legislative and judicial branches, limited the power of labor unions, and generally reduced the rights of citizens. A concentration of power in the executive branch led to what Teivainen terms the “Monarchization” of democracy, in which all decisions are made by the emperor-like president, with little or no consultation. The strong authoritarian tendencies of the regime, especially after the 1992 “autogolpe” (self-coup), allowed it to silence its critics using the military and intelligence apparatus of the state.

As often happens in case studies with an ambitious theoretical agenda, the empirical analysis offered is not well integrated into the theoretical framework, making for disjointed reading. More importantly, alternative explanations of events are not fully evaluated, and the selection of empirical examples from the case study can be questioned as to bias. For example, there is an extensive literature on the rise of “technocrats” in Latin America that predates the neoliberalism of the 1980s and 1990s and locates their origin in such factors as the socialization of elites, which is not discussed. In the specific case of Peru, the Fujimori regime’s authoritarian practices are seen as an outgrowth of its economic needs and interests, but those practices would not have been possible without its reliance on the military. Unlike a “monarch,” Fujimori governed in collusion with the commands of the armed services and the National Intelligence Services (SIN), ultimately becoming as dependent on them as they were on him. When the rampant corruption of his advisors became known, he was forced from power.

Throughout the book, politics, and more specifically democratic control, are posited as the alternative to creeping economism. Nonetheless, there is little discussion as to what precisely would constitute greater democratic control of economic policymaking, or whether that is actually the real alternative in most Latin American countries. More often than not, when economic decision making is in the political arena, it has been monopolized by business elites to serve their sectoral interests or by party bosses to serve their clientelist practices, as largely occurred during the García administration. It is doubtful this outcome could be considered more democratic than having the Central Bank making important economic decisions. Ultimately, the main contribution of *Enter Economism, Exit Politics* can be found not so much in the analysis of Peru’s politics or in the review of the relevant theoretical literature, but in merely pointing out disturbing trends in the region and in raising questions that challenge traditional ways of viewing them.

Islam Between Culture and Politics.
By Bassam Tibi. New York: Palgrave, 2002. 256p. $68.00 cloth, $19.95 paper.

— M. A. Muqtaded Khan, Adrian College

This book is Bassam Tibi’s second attempt after *Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change* (1991) to show how Muslim failure to cope with the demands of modernity has resulted in the politicization of Islam and the creation of political Islam. The author begins by announcing his ability to detach himself from Islamic tradition while simultaneously confessing his attachment to the tradition of German modernity (p. xiii). He seems to be laboring under the impression that remaining loyal to the tradition of modernity does not constitute a cultural bias. His entire project suffers from an uncritical submission to modernity. He accepts the sociopolitical organization of modernity as the uncontested destiny of humanity and sees all departures from it as aberrations that need to be reconstituted. He therefore rejects not only contemporary manifestations of Islam but also contemporary manifestations of modernity (the postmodern condition), which he rejects as cultural relativism. Any attempt to understand Tibi’s analysis must take cognizance of this philosophical peculiarity.

*Islam Between Culture and Politics* is divided into four parts. The first part discusses the Islamic worldview and develops the idea that Islam is a civilization. The second describes how Islamism has emerged as a defensive response to the systemic-level restructuring that has taken place due to the globalization of modernity. In Part 3, Tibi describes the pathways to Islamism. He describes how Islamic law—the Shariah—is appropriated as the central principle of political Islam and also discusses the Islamization of education as the means to the politicization of Islam. In the final section, he discusses the possibility of mediation between Islam and the West.
through the emergence of a European Islam.

For Tibi, that which needs explanation is the distinction between Islam and political Islam, and in order to do so, he argues that Islam is a cultural system and a civilization without any given political dimension. He makes these assumptions explicit in several places (pp. 3, 29, 118). Since this is the cardinal purpose of the book, I think it begs critical scrutiny. Tibi claims that Islam is a faith and a culture but not a political idea. He divides the space that we call civilization into three exclusive cultural, religious, and political spheres. He also assumes that culture and politics are mutually exclusive domains. This is highly problematic compartmentalization of life and, in spite of its Habermasian pedigree, untenable.

This erroneous assumption is especially troubling in an area where culture is often used as an independent variable to explain political structures. For example, many political scientists of the comparative persuasion argue that the authoritarian nature of Middle Eastern culture may explain why democracy has not triumphed in the Arab world. If Tibi disagrees with this line of inquiry, he should engage with it and expose its limitations. It would be an interesting exercise because like him, this particular line of inquiry, too, takes European modernity as a cultural standard by which other civilizations are measured.

When Tibi explores the dynamics of Islam and the West, he calls them both civilizations. If Islam has only cultural and religious dimensions and not a political element, then is it fair to compare it with the West, which has three dimensions, religion, culture, and politics (democracy)? From Tibi's standpoint, Islam should not constitute a civilization but only the religio-cultural element of some other, say, the oriental, civilization. Perhaps he should step back and concede that while Islam does include a political theology as part of its discourse, the contemporary Islamist narrative is new and not necessarily authentic in its Islamic character because it is merely a defensive response to modernity and not a natural progression of Islamic intellectual tradition. He does not need to deny the inclusion of politics within the Islamic realm in order to brand political Islam as a postcolonial artifact. But if he does try this gambit, then he must deal with political Islam as a postcolonial artifact. But if within the Islamic realm in order to brand progression of Islamic intellectual tradition. He claims that Islam is a faith and a culture but not a political idea. He divides the space that we call civilization into three exclusive cultural, religious, and political spheres. He also assumes that culture and politics are mutually exclusive domains. This is highly problematic compartmentalization of life and, in spite of its Habermasian pedigree, untenable.

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Finally, Tibi discusses the possibility of a hybrid Islam, a European Islam that accepts the constitutive principles of European modernity—democracy and laicism—and treats Islam as a cultural attribute. It is interesting to note that even though he is working with a frozen and essentialized notion of Islam, without which he cannot distinguish between traditional Islam and political Islam, he is willing to accept a European Islam that is essentially a thin shell with European values at its core. Here again, his uncritical submission to the idea of modernity biases his analyses. He demands accommodation from Islam, a supposedly rigid and not-so-open tradition, but does not make a similar demand of Europe, which brags of openness and tolerance. This analysis also suffers from a lack of critical evaluation of Europe and its long history of Islamophobia, religious intolerance, and racism. Perhaps if Europe remains true to its values, Muslims may have to make very little adjustment. Tibi perhaps should ask why Europe, especially France, demands that Muslims culturally mutate in order to assimilate. His call for a Euro-Islam accepts uncritically the intolerance and inhospitality of Europe to the cultural and religious diversity that Islam brings.

In spite of some critical problems, Tibi does make an insightful attempt to bring sociological and anthropological theory to bear on a subject that is often studied only in geopolitical context. This perhaps is the book's most important contribution.


— Yi-min Lin, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology

In the past two decades, the private sector has grown from an obscure element to an important pillar of the Chinese economy. This fundamental change has taken place despite serious restrictions and discrimination faced by private economic activities under the communist state. Perhaps no other segment of the economy better illustrates such obstacles than the financial system, which has until recently denied most private entrepreneurs access to formal sources of credit. How have private entrepreneurs managed to overcome state-imposed financial constraints and expand their activities beyond the limit of family savings?

In her book, Kellee Tsai addresses this question with a detailed account of diverse arrangements of informal finance and an insightful analysis of the role of local political forces in the evolution of these arrangements. She shows that private entrepreneurs have developed a variety of largely illegal practices, ranging from rotating credit association to private money house, in order to finance their activities. Moreover, she argues that to understand how and why private entrepreneurs have been able to defuse government restrictions, one needs to pay close attention to local political actors, especially officials in subprovincial governments that directly regulate private economic activities. Many of them have bent centrally defined rules on banking, making it possible for informal financial markets to develop and grow.

There are, however, considerable regional variations in the form and scope ofinformal finance and in local government policy toward private banking. The bulk of the book is devoted to revealing and explaining these variations. The investigation draws on two major sources of information: a questionnaire survey of private entrepreneurs in 18 research sites located in three provinces, and a series of interviews with officials, bankers, and academics. Tsai finds that the various informal financing arrangements used by private entrepreneurs have different degrees of institutionalization. The choice and magnitude of these arrangements vary greatly among different localities, including some within the same province. Even within the same locality, what was widely adopted in the early years of reform may not remain so afterward.

What leads to these variations? Tsai sets out her analysis by questioning two alternative hypotheses. One correlates the development of informal finance with the level of private demand for credit, whereas the other emphasizes the effects of regional variation in the central government’s capacity to influence local financial policy. Neither has a close fit with evidence presented in the book. More relevant than these factors, Tsai argues, are individual characteristics of private entrepreneurs (i.e., business experience, gender, network ties, etc.), which may influence the structure of demand for informal financing practices. But how and to what extent such influence is played out hinges greatly on what happens on the supply side, which ultimately depends on what the local government allows.

To account for the vital role of the local government, Tsai examines three policy orientations toward private banking: supportive, ambivalent, and nonsupportive. The “supportive” orientation is found in places where the
local economy had experienced extensive commercialization before 1949 but subsequently languished due to lack of state investment under Mao. The “ambivalent” orientation is common among localities that received significant state investment under central planning but have faced deteriorating performance among state-owned enterprises during the reform. The “nonsupportive” orientation is found in two kinds of localities: those that had an early start in rural industrialization through collective enterprises in the 1970s and have built on that legacy during the reform, and those that are trapped in extreme poverty dating from the Mao era and tend to rely primarily on out-migration to alleviate their economic plight.

What these different policy orientations have in common is that they are all driven by a calculation of the costs and benefits that private economic activities pose to the self-interest of local officials. In particular, the policy toward private banking hinges greatly on the extent to which the private sector is perceived as conducive to what matters most to local officials’ financial and career rewards—revenue generation and social stability. Such perception varies spatially due to differences in local resource conditions and institutional legacies from the Mao era. In response, private entrepreneurs have adapted their financial strategies to the different local political realities they face. Some make extensive use of legal or quasi-legal financial institutions; others fake themselves as public entities; still others rely heavily on bribes to evade centrally and locally imposed restrictions. As Tsai puts it, private entrepreneurs have conducted their banking “behind the state, with the state, and despite the state” (p. 264).

These findings illustrate significant inconsistency in the state’s policymaking and implementation process—between different levels, between different agencies/branches, and between formal and informal agendas. They provide a powerful reminder of the need to avoid a monolithic view of the state. What, then, explains the inconsistency in state action? Relatedly, why have local officials been able to contain the political risks associated with their rule-bending behavior? Although the book does not offer a systematic analysis of these issues, it does point to some clues. A central theme of the book is path-dependent diversity in local development. While all local governments are required to focus on economic growth during the reform, their initial institutional and resource conditions vary, making it difficult to introduce and sustain uniform reform policies across space. The uncertainties concerning how to carry out the “developmental” mandate locally leave open opportunities for local officials to use the cover of “reform with local characteristics” to justify policies that best serve their collective and individual interests. The outcomes of these policies may not only vary greatly but also contradict centrally defined goals. The actions taken by many local officials to allow or facilitate private entrepreneurs to compete with state banks for savings and channel credit away from state-designated users in the public sector, for example, have run counter to their formal role as the guardians of public ownership and accelerated its decline. In revealing the local political logic behind such unintended consequences of reform, Back-alley Banking makes an excellent contribution to the study of Chinese political economy.

This book relies on an incredibly rich set of data, which has been “put together in collaboration with Steven Wilkinson” (p. 321). For the first time, the figures concerning the number and location of the Hindu-Muslim riots in India between 1950 and 1995 have been compiled in a fully professional manner. This time series reflects the increasingly violent tensions between both communities in the late 1980s–early 1990s. It shows that “the share of rural death in overall communal rioting is minuscule” (p. 95) and that only eight cities account for 49% of all urban deaths. Hence, the project of the author: to explain why some cities are riot-prone areas whereas others are not. Ashutosh Varshney points out in Chapter 2 that none of the available theories can really help in this endeavor, either because they essentialize communal identities, proceed at a high (national) level of aggregation, like the institutionalists, or develop too-mechanistic approaches, like the instrumentalists. His main hypothesis derives partly from the views Robert Putnam developed in Making Democracy Work (1993): associational and quotidian forms of civic engagement “promote peace; contrariwise, their absence or weakness opens up space for communal violence” (Varshney, p. 3). To make this point Varshney has identified three pairs of Indian cities with very contrasted records: Aligarh/Calicut, Hyderabad/Lucknow, and Ahmedabad/Surat.

This survey is very systematic. In each city, the author examines the local history of Hindu-Muslim relations and how civic links developed from the 1920s, a turning point in the making of intercommunal organizations because of the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and the Congress Party. Varshney’s interpretation is especially convincing in one case, that of the last pair: in Ahmedabad and Surat, Hindu-Muslim riots have multiplied in the context of the gradual dismantlement of intercommunal, Gandhian associations and the decline of labor unions because of deindustrialization, and then reindustrialization with a new, instable proletariat coming from all over India.

But the situation is very different in the two other cases. Calicut has not escaped the kind of established system of Hindu-Muslim riots one could see in Aligarh simply because of intercommunal civic engagements but, rather, because the “master narrative” (p. 141) of the city was based on caste conflicts instead of religious conflicts: Untouchables revolted and mobilized in such a way that the Hindus became deeply divided, with caste groups—high and low—aligning with different religious minorities (Muslims or Christians). Hence, this contrast: “In Aligarh a politics of Hindu-Muslim communalism was instituted; near Calicut, Hindu-Muslim violence did erupt, but a politics of caste cleavages and social justice was stabilized” (p. 132). Similarly, the contrast between the strife-ridden Hyderabad and the peaceful Lucknow is not primarily due to the unevenness of civic engagement but to the degree of unity in one of the two communities at stake, this time the Muslims. While the Muslim minority has always displayed a strong sense of solidarity in Hyderabad, it is deeply divided in Lucknow between Shias and Sunnis. As a result, the former made an alliance with the Hindus, and the prospect of communal conflict was hereby defused, whereas Shia-Sunnis sectarianism became routinized. Bracketing the two pairs together, Varshney emphasizes: “If in the first comparison Hindus were badly divided along caste lines in the city of Calicut, it is the Shia-Sunnis conflicts in the city of Lucknow that have been functionally equivalent. By identifying the main enemy within the Muslim community, Shia-Sunnis conflicts facilitate Hindu-Muslim integration” (p. 171). Such a reading of these two sister situations is very convincing, especially because it relies on four fully researched chapters, but where has the initial hypothesis gone? What about the key role of intercommunal civic engagement?

One may take the argument further. If caste and sectarian conflicts represent two
alternative master narratives to communalism, it might have been interesting to scrutinize them in each city. In Surat, Varshney highlights that “there were sectarian differences between the Sunni Muslims on one hand and the Bohras and Khojas, who were largely Shia, on the other” (p. 237). But do these divisions play the same part as in Lucknow? A few pages later, the author emphasizes that in this city of Surat, a survey has shown that “caste was still the single most important identity: twice as many people gave priority to caste as to religion” (p. 245). In Gujarat at large, indeed, caste identities have gained prevalence in the wake of the antireservation riots of the 1980s, when upper-caste students fought against the increase of quotas in medical colleges for Untouchables. These riots have been especially bloody in Ahmedabad. Such developments tend to challenge Varshney’s interpretation about the capacity of caste conflicts to neutralize communal conflicts. It might have happened in Calicut, but one could argue that in Gujarat and elsewhere in northern India, caste conflicts have fostered communal conflicts. In reaction to the growing caste divisions among Hindus, the Hindu nationalist movement intensified its mobilization campaign—its very social basis and raison d’être were at stake. As a result, the Hindu activists singled out the Muslim as the common enemy of all the Hindus and triggered off riots that were intended to solidify the majoritarian community in the street. This relationship between caste riots and communal riots was especially obvious in 1990 when the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) relaunched the Ayodhya movement in response to the Mandal reservation riots.

Varshney deliberately set aside such mobilizations—Advaní’s Rath Yatra, for instance—since he was focusing on local issues. But in doing so he certainly underestimated the interaction between the national scene and the local level, at a time when mass mobilizations around one unique issue like Ayodhya have tended to create new communal pan-Indian movements. This development has taken place in an obviously instrumentalist perspective since antireservationism and electoral politics overdetermined the timing of the Hindu campaigns.

In spite of these observations, Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life is bound to become a classic, since it provides the most comprehensive data on communal riots in India and is a fascinating attempt at disaggregating the national scenarios by comparing local situations. The clarity of Varshney’s exposition needs to be emphasized, too: He manages to make social theory without any jargon.

State Making and Environmental Cooperation: Linking Domestic and International Politics in Central Asia.
By Erika Weinthal. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002. $60.00 cloth, $25.00 paper.

— Holly Sims, SUNY Albany

Although few might expect the rough-hewn new states of Central Asia to cooperate in addressing what may become the century’s most critical problem, water scarcity, Erika Weinthal contends they have been notably successful. She gives credit not so much to state leaders but to international actors, including aid agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). But while such external forces have induced unexpected regional cooperation, their “payoffs” to national and regional elites have served to reinforce long-standing power structures, rather than mobilizing new constituencies into the political process. Part of the stasis in political leadership is attributed to the enduring legacy of Soviet-era cotton monoculture.

The study is timely because of the strategic impact of Central Asian states due to their oil reserves and support for the “war on terrorism” led by the United States. Also, global water scarcity and regional water disputes have recently drawn mounting attention in trade publications. Weinthal’s efforts to advance middle-level theory building by integrating domestic and international politics also are welcome. In pursuing the latter objective, however, she gives the former short shrift. The Central Asian states appear only as silhouettes, while international organizations, especially the World Bank, command the spotlight illumining center stage.

Attention to a region largely unfamiliar to Western audiences is useful, and Weinthal’s descriptions of the Soviet legacy in the former eastern provinces may well be the strongest suit of State Making and Environmental Cooperation. (The text could be pared down considerably, however.) Her saga begins with the tragic desiccation of the Aral Sea engineered by officials of the former Soviet Union, who diverted two Central Asian rivers to create an irrigated cotton plantation in a semidesert as large as Western Europe. Her book may well be cited by “free market environmentalists” disdainful of government regulation as a prime example of official stupidity. Well-documented works by Marc Reisner (Cadillac Desert, 1993) and Patrick McCully (Silenced Rivers, 1996) have illustrated that grandiose and environmentally destructive projects are more a global phenomenon than simple examples of Soviet obtrusiveness, however. Weinthal fails to convincingly explain water and irrigation mismanagement as specifically Soviet or socialist problems.

The author’s account of the elaborate patronage system linking Moscow to its Central Asian hinterlands is insightful, as is her analysis of the social and economic impacts of cotton monoculture. In the Soviet aftermath, however, the Central Asian states are lumped together in a manner that might satisfy international relations specialists more than colleagues in comparative politics. The former specialization is clearly more engaging to the author, who abruptly (p. 10) shifts from state building to the “side payments” or the “financial and material assistance” (p. 41) that she argues made unexpected interstate cooperation possible after 1991. Despite the likelihood of water wars, states cooperated, and the international community—specifically, multilateral aid agencies such as the World Bank and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), bilateral aid agencies, and NGOs—helped them to do so.

While references to the states are sparse, the World Bank emerges in generous and favorable light. The author twice (pp. 138, 146) refers to “the greening” of the Bank, without reference to Robert Wade’s seminal work (1997) on the Bank’s tempestuous relationship with the natural world. She draws a Hallmark card of its cooperation with the NGOs that are supposed to be in close contact with the world’s grass roots. Jude Howell and Jenny Pearce’s study of donor agencies and NGOs (Civil Society and Development, 2001) might have added depth to the view that the international community extended “a politics of inclusion in order to offset the various interests and capabilities that were emerging across states and across sectors” (p. 133).

The Bank’s image is burnished by its proactive role in bringing about the cooperation of Central Asia’s impoverished countries to share a diminishing resource essential for life on earth. It is seemingly ready to shovel away the gritty debris inherited from decades of Cold War, not to mention that left by international relations theory’s realists.

Weinthal contends the Central Asian leaders accepted external aid “because it enabled them to placate the short term interests of their regional hokims and akims [sic; defined on p. 240 as regional leaders] and because it provided these leaders with means to pay off other local constituencies” (p. 133). The belated use of vernacular terms recalls Orientalist fantasies juxtaposing farsighted, sagacious Westerners against squabbling potentates in pint-sized fiefdoms, vying for spoils as their territories confront environmental and fiscal meltdown.
Where is this altruistic international community? And why did it perform such miracles in Central Asia? Weinthal notes poetically that motives “were not solely tied to humanitarian reasons” since “there were other post Cold War geopolitical concerns,” namely: 1) the West’s interest in integrating post-Soviet states into a liberal economic order; 2) making Central Asia a strategic buffer region fronting on Russia, China, Iran, and Afghanistan; and finally, 3) their “substantial oil and gas reserves,” mostly unexplored during the Soviet era (p. 134).

Her analysis sharply contrasts with Ahmed Rashid’s study (Jihad, 2002) of Central Asian states and what he sees as a revitalized “great game” for oil resources that plucked oil- and mineral-rich states from a geostrategic backwater. Against Rashid’s disheartening account of generally oppressive and corrupt Central Asian states (with Kyrgyzstan as a notable exception), Weinthal simply notes that side payments from the international community (that is seemingly accountable to no actors in this picture) had unintended consequences: They propped up Communist party political leaders recycled from the former Soviet Union. Fortunately, she emphasizes that very important point, and highlights national and international actors’ role in shaping a world of flawed states. The latter insist on trappings of textbook democracy before strong political parties and institutions take root. Further, donors’ prescribed economic austerity programs exacerbate unemployment and socioeconomic inequalities.

Lessons from Weinthal’s study may well become more important as low-income countries’ populations soar and regional demands for potable and irrigation water intensify. Central Asia’s water problems are by no means resolved. Viktor Dukhovny, one of the region’s most knowledgeable water officials that she cited, told the New York Times in an interview published on December 9, 2002, that if they worked together, all five states had enough water for survival, even if Afghanistan sought a share. Then he paused and added, “Of course, not forever. Only up to 2025.”

The book is less successful in establishing a causal effect of public opinion on Russian foreign policy. Zimmerman’s argument is that there is an indirect, but clear, causal path. He argues that the opening of Russia’s political system has increased the diversity of its foreign policy elite, which contributes to the capacity of Russia’s voting public to develop reasonably coherent views of foreign policy, linked to their preferences for domestic policy. Russian voters, he shows, were able to link their preferences for policy to candidates, and could therefore make informed choices. When they preferred good relations with the West, they preferred markets and democracy. They knew that Boris Yeltsin, and not Communist Party candidate Gennadi Ziuganov, held these views. The election of Yeltsin over Ziuganov in 1996, he concludes, is evidence that public opinion of foreign policy has an impact on the outcome of elections:

“Knowing a Russian’s core dispositions toward the outside world contributed substantially to knowing that person’s preferences with respect to the political system. That preference, in turn, constituted a robust predictor of the results of the July 1996 runoff between Yeltsin and Ziuganov” (p. 124).

However, it is not clear that a citizen’s views of foreign policy had an independent effect on his or her decision. As Zimmerman shows, Russian voters in the mid-1990s had generally consistent domestic and foreign policy views. If voters were primarily concerned about the choice before them on the domestic dimensions (market and democracy versus state control and autocracy), and if the average Russian voter was relatively uninformed about the outside world, as Zimmerman himself shows to be the case, a given voter’s foreign policy views may not have been causal, but coincidental. That is, a voter chose Yeltsin for


— Celeste A. Wallander, Center for Strategic and International Studies

When Western science during the Soviet period was limited to squeezing meaning from Pravda articles for insight into Soviet foreign policy and politics, William Zimmerman was the leading Soviet scholar committed to using empirical methods as close as possible to those used in other fields of political science. His work set the standard for several cohorts of graduate students, and arguably laid the basis for the field’s capacity to recognize the significance of Mikhail Gorbachev’s new thinking for the transformation from Cold War confrontation in the late 1980s. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that Zimmerman leads the field in bringing that most Americanist of approaches—public opinion and survey research—to the study of Russian foreign policy in its first post-Soviet decade.

It also comes as no surprise that the resulting book sets high standards and asks important questions. Zimmerman asks 1) whether the opening of Russia’s political system has effects on its foreign policy, 2) what the substance of Russia’s elite and public foreign policy beliefs are, and 3) whether patterns of mass and elite beliefs about foreign policy documented in the study of American foreign policy characterize Russian elites and publics as well. On the basis of surveys he designed and commissioned in 1992/1993, 1995/1996, and 1999/2000 (supplemented by public opinion surveys conducted by other scholars, by the U.S. government, and by Russian opinion research firms), Zimmerman explores differences in mass and elite views, the relationship of Russians’ view of democracy and market to their attitude toward relations with the West in various dimensions, awareness of the outside world, the internal coherence of foreign policy views, and the range of preferences and beliefs in his samples.

Zimmerman’s most robust findings lie in documenting variations in Russian foreign policy views, systematic differences between elite and mass views, and the strong relationship between views about the outside world and Russia’s proper domestic system (at least through the mid-1990s, an important point to which I will return). He finds (not surprisingly, but noteworthy for its consistency with studies of U.S. foreign policy opinion) that Russia’s elites are much better informed than its mass public, and have more consistent and coherent views. As in U.S. studies, he finds that Russia’s average citizens nonetheless have a reasonable level of coherence in their views, shaped primarily by taking cues from elites. Russian publics were able to link their policy preferences to political figures and the policies they advocated, primarily in the 1996 presidential election. These findings, Zimmerman argues, justify concluding that the study of Russia can contribute to the comparative study of public opinion and foreign policy, and is quite substantially consistent with findings in the U.S. case. On substance, his results present a comprehensive picture of the shape of Russian public opinion in the 1990s. They demonstrate a clear hardening of Russian elite and public views of the West. Whereas, for example, 20% of elites and 40% of the mass public identified the growth of U.S. power as a threat to Russian security in 1993, by 1999 the results were 40% and 73%, respectively. This seems to reflect a generalized growing anxiety about the outside world: The percentages of elites identifying conflict with other countries (not including the countries of the former Soviet Union) as a threat grew from 22% to 52% over the same period, while the percentage of the mass public fearing such conflicts grew from 52% to 78% (see Table 3.2 on p. 92 for these figures). The book is rich with insight and documentation on such questions and on the complex relationship of issues and change over time.

The book is less successful in establishing a causal effect of public opinion on Russian foreign policy. Zimmerman’s argument is that there is an indirect, but clear, causal path. He argues that the opening of Russia’s political system has increased the diversity of its foreign policy elite, which contributes to the capacity of Ru
his commitment to market and democracy (or the voter opposed Ziuganov because the latter sought to reinstate a Soviet-style state and economy), not for his stand on good relations with the West. This, of course, does not mean public opinion did not impact Russian foreign policy in the 1990s. But it does mean that it is just as plausible (and probably more so) that preferences on internal questions of market and democracy were the basis on which Russian citizens cast their ballots.

This might be hairsplitting were it not for the 2000 elections. Since Russian citizens’ domestic and foreign policy preferences were correlated in the 1996 elections, we cannot determine which was primary. In the 2000 presidential elections in which Vladimir Putin defeated Ziuganov, public opinion was much messier, as Zimmerman shows. Ziuganov clearly lost because the majority of Russians opposed a return to the Soviet past. But Putin won largely because Russians believed him to be tough on issues of order, particularly the war in Chechnya, and to be more likely to improve their economic lives. Voters were unable to link their foreign policy preferences to a vote for Putin, because Putin was largely silent on foreign policy issues, as Zimmerman shows (pp. 142–43).

Therefore, it is not quite justified to conclude that Russian public opinion on foreign policy has a direct impact on the conduct of Russian foreign policy. Insofar as domestic systems and foreign policy are linked (with market democratic systems resulting in a Western-oriented foreign policy), and as long as elections provide Russian citizens a meaningful choice (a condition which Zimmerman notes is questionable as Russia approaches its 2004 presidential elections), then public opinion may have an impact on foreign policy. Based on the evidence in The Russian People and Foreign Policy, it would be premature to conclude that the impact is strong, or that it is independently causal. However, one does have to admit that Zimmerman has been right before, and his suggestive findings may prove him right again.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS


— Mary Ann Tétreault, Trinity University

This very interesting analysis of the shape of the long conflict between the state of Israel and its Arab neighbors and inhabitants offers an example of the ethic driving the perestroika movement within the American Political Science Association: despite a primary focus on formal modeling, it also reveals the benefits of methodological pluralism. Hemda Ben-Yehuda and Shmuel Sandler begin by developing a theoretical framework based on a critique of neoliberal orthodoxy. The framework incorporates a Kantian perspective on the existence and utility of institutions, on the assumption that even when the institutions one can observe are informal patterns rather than behaviors prescribed by formal treaties, they offer good reasons for questioning the pervasive fatalism characteristic of that Hobbesian orthodoxy. The authors then proceed to examine the interstate aspects of the conflict using the Jonathan Wilkenfeld–Michael Brecher crisis model. The model is laid out and employed to its best advantage, making the authors’ critique of its deficiencies, including its exclusive focus on interstate relations, constructive as well as instructive. They conclude their analysis by reexamining the same span of conflict through an enhanced model incorporating an internal dimension that they call "ethnicity," and offer their results to support an argument that might seem counterintuitive. They assert that the admittedly still-weak institutions revealed by their data demonstrate that the conflict has become less intractable than it was, and therefore, at least theoretically, more resolvable. It is tragic to write this review in the current context, when actual internal and external conditions seem to be conspiring to reverse the hopeful trends the authors found.

The perestroika quality of this volume is most evident in its careful utilization of both formal modeling and historical analysis. As I noted, the Wilkenfeld-Brecher model, like all approximations of real situations, is necessarily incomplete. Abstraction, by definition, omits information and simplifies relationships. The assignment of cases to categories is a simplification technique that adds distortion by requiring that continuous and/or complex variables be collapsed into discontinuous simple measures—one example is to categorize crises as "high magnitude" and "low magnitude." Despite the inclusion of decision rules to guide the assignment of a particular crisis to various evaluative categories, assignment also relies on judgment, and judgment is affected by the standpoint of the analyst. From my standpoint, for instance, I would categorize the 1982 Lebanon war differently on more than one measure from the way it is categorized by Ben-Yehuda and Sandler, and there are a few other instances where my operationalization decisions would differ from theirs, although less markedly. Nevertheless, in spite of these differences, because it is applied consistently across this five-decade period, the model reveals patterns in the conflict that the authors are able to address effectively in their accompanying analysis.

The historical analysis is the strongest feature of this book. It is good enough to enable the authors to find the missing dimension of “ethnicity” in the formal model they employ. It also is good enough to enable readers to come to their own conclusions, not only about technical issues, such as how various crises are classified, but also with regard to the overall picture drawn by the authors of this long and bitter conflict. This transparency invites readers into a mental conversation with the authors, offering opportunities to agree and disagree in intellectually constructive ways, and it provides a well-grounded foundation to researchers who might wish to work further on this problem, either as empirical or interpretive analysts.

If I were to teach The Arab-Israeli Conflict Transformed, I would pair it with Yaron Ezrahi’s Rubber Bullets: Power and Conscience in Modern Israel (1997). The focus of Ben-Yehuda and Sandler’s volume is systemic despite the incorporation of different levels of analysis in the historical discussion. Ezrahi is concerned with the “system,” too, but as a reflexive cultural process rather than as an analytical model. As such, Ezrahi provides a context within which one can understand both the transformation of the Arab-Israeli conflict that Ben-Yehuda and Sandler describe and the transformation in consciousness that enabled these authors to open formal analyses of this conflict to include the domestic environment.

The perestroika critique goes beyond a call for “qualitative” methodologies. It is a call for plurality—in methods, yes, and also in how we frame our questions, do our research and teaching, and communicate to colleagues, students, and the public. While the volume under review certainly is not intended for the
public, I believe that it communicates well to the professional community and on more than one level. Of course, the primary goal of this book is to provide a research report: This is what we think; this is what we did; this is what we found; this is how we understand it. But there are other, some of them barely articulated, levels of communication that also infuse this work. The most important is that it reflects that shift in consciousness I noted earlier, one which marks the progress of recognizing a reality that is submerged beneath most applications of formal models to this conflict, that is, the reality of Palestinian existence. Area specialists are familiar with the famous comment of Golda Meir, echoed by many others in authority in the Israeli state, that there is no such thing as a Palestinian. Much of the conventional international relations research on the Arab-Israeli conflict seems to be based on that assumption. However tentatively, through their refusal to be satisfied with a formally “interstate” approach, Ben-Yehuda and Sandler show a serious commitment to moving on from this position. As others follow, we will benefit not only from a richer picture of Middle East politics but also from a more realistic approach to conflict resolution in the region.


— Naeem Inayatullah, Ithaca College

Combining theory and narrative, every chapter in this edited volume brims with complexities and nuances that nevertheless speak from concrete locations. There is, for example, the post–World War II sarcastic verbal jousting over what constitutes historical justice between West African Daniel Ouezzin Coulibaly and various left French parliamentarians; the Cypriot women using “black” (Sri Lankan) women as domestic laborers as a way to free themselves professionally while resentment the “white” (Romanian) women who steal their men by selling their bodies; the Afro-Guyanese crowd slowly overcoming its animosity toward a young Indo-Guyanese cricketer and, with each run he scores for the West Indies against England, embracing him as a national and regional hero; and the Indian child carpet sellers, some of whom demand better learning, living, and working conditions while others want to eliminate all child labor. Each successive vision conveys intricacies that overwhelm the theoretical containers of mainstream international relations theory, as well as undermining the reader’s sense of having understood the world.

Besides having edited the volume, Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair have written a thorough and illuminating introductory chapter that explains the project, familiarizes us with the relevant literature, and embeds each chapter in its context. Their primary purpose is to alert us to gains that IR can make by paying attention to what they call the “postcolonial shift.” Their problem with the field of IR is not only its thin and scant deliberations on issues of justice and inequality but a seeming “disimulation around questions concerning equity, poverty, and powerlessness.” The end of the Cold War and lofty declarations of an “end to ideology” have led to the intensification of neoliberal economic ideology, resulting in processes that “obscure the working of power in a global political economy,” and that “elide the racialized, gendered, and class processes that underwrite global hierarchies” (p. 1). The source of these problems for conventional IR—and to a lesser degree for what they refer to as critical (postmodernist, Marxist, and feminist inspired) IR—is an inattention to the past and present of colonialism and imperialism. Imperialism’s role in the world political economy is pivotal since it structures the very identities of both the West and the postcolonial world. Four themes follow from situating imperial and colonialism at the center of IR: the production and representation of identities; the relation between capital and power; the intersection of race, gender, and class; and the recovery of moments of resistance against the imperial project.

While the chapters bravely engage all of these themes, the emphasis in each differs. The essays by Siba Grovogui, Randolph Persaud, and J. Marshall Beier foreground race; the chapters by Sankaran Krishna, Shampa Biswas, and Dibyesh Anand demonstrate the transnational dimensions of nationalism, religion, and cultural identity. The final two chapters by Chowdhry and Nair, respectively, take up the human rights discourse. Not surprisingly, these two chapters are the most robust in delivering on all four themes.

There are still deeper motivations in this book’s production. Something much more tangible, alive, and urgent is at stake here than scoring debate points or building publishing careers, namely, a warning about the complicity of IR in constructing global hierarchies. For Chowdhry and Nair, the paradox of how to be a political/ethical human being while belonging to a profession that continues to produce global hierarchies calls for a “strategic rewriting of IR,” and for a dialectical joining of the “academic enterprise” with the “politics of resistance” (p. 28).

Part of my critique is endemic to edited volumes. Those seeking theoretical critiques of various aspects of Western IR, as well as those seeking the alternative resources that a postcolonial shift provides, will find both in each essay. Nevertheless, perhaps it is more a compliment than a critique that the chapters struck me as brief. No sooner was I immersed in a particular narrative then the adventure seemed to end. The reader is provoked and induced to search out the bigger works of which these essays are inviting and well-framed glimpses.

A bumpy spot in this project may be a premature closure on the efficacy of its own demands. It seems hard to deny that conventional IR has remained largely blind, deaf, and dumb about the elephantine effects that imperialism and colonialism have on global processes. Nevertheless, one can wonder whether a strategy that critiques the elephant-less conversation and demands an elephant-aware exchange will itself be heard. A hint of this problem may be seen in the closing sentence of Grovogui’s chapter, which starts in assertive tones but shifts to a sense of resignation that questions the effectiveness of its demand: “[I]nternational theory must assimilate the lessons of anticolonialism, however tentatively, in the interest of productive exchanges among the constituents of the moral order—that is if there is any interest in the expressed voices, will, and desires of the formally colonized” (p. 54). If the “expressed voices, will, and desires of the formally colonized” find no resonance in the desires of the powerful, then what?

One strategy is to force such interest—poking the elephant so that its swinging trunk knocks over a teacup or two. Another might be to recover the postcolonial shift within Western IR by examining exactly how Western senses became impaired such that some cannot apprehend the elephant while others in that same tradition seem to have their eyes and ears open. Chowdhry and Nair’s fourth theme of “recovery and resistance” would seem to incorporate this critique. Indeed, they are generous in integrating the insights of Marxist, postmodern, and feminist IR. Yet in overlooking the recoverable elements of conventional IR, as well as in the longer tradition of Western thought, they may be discounting a potent location for their aim of strategically rewriting IR.

In the larger context, my pointing to IR’s probable indifference toward the benefits of the postcolonial shift may be mere quibbling.
One way or another, it seems likely that IR will finally have to face its former colonial subjects and its imperialist legacy. The question then will be about the tone and productive quality of this confrontation. Ultimately, Power, Postcolonialism, and International Relations calls our attention to this decisive problem and great opportunity. Nothing, it seems to me, could be more important. Chowdhry and Nair, along with the authors of this volume, make a timely, vital, and deeply necessary intervention in international relations—one that informs theoretically, enriches our knowledge of the world through its narratives, and forces us to confront the differentiated whole-ness of our humanity. Readers will want to emulate the skills and sensibilities they offer.


— James D. Seymour, Columbia University

Although Anthony Langlois rejects the "Asian values" line on human rights, he also insists on cultural relativism and rejects the Western liberal claims about the universality of human rights. He argues that the idea of rights universality is "misplaced" because it is based on flawed methodological assumptions. On a broad theoretical level, his arguments seem worthy of consideration. In what he claims is an effort to "preserve rather than undermine...the project of universal human rights" (p. 128), he adopts Cass Sunstein's idea of "incomplete theorization," arguing that some such bridge is necessary to relieve the "strains that exist in contemporary attempts to theorize human rights" (p. 117).

One is not convinced, however, that the strains are all that great. Langlois has difficulty coming up with specifics. To demonstrate how parochial Western-style rights are, he cites such issues as paid holidays and alleged differing attitudes toward suicide and self-inflicted pain. The first illustrates the author's inability to distinguish between human rights (rights that inhere in each human by virtue of his or her membership in the human race) and citizen rights, which depend upon one's polity, not humanity. The right to suicide is one of the still-unresolved areas of rights; where it exists it is a civil (citizenship) right, not an internationally protected human right. As for "avoidance of pain," while there is some truth in Langlois's statement that "dissent and mourning often receive expression through self-immolation or self-injury" (p. 55), I know of no international human rights instrument that speaks to such issues.

Langlois has done considerable interviewing of subjects in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore for The Politics of Justice and Human Rights. We are told what some of the answers were, but not the questions. But the answers are presented in a more anecdotal than scientific manner, and, more seriously, one suspects that often the wrong questions had been asked. After all, the beliefs of the subjects are not central to human rights; what one needs to know is whether they can tolerate people of different ideas. Religion, we are told, highlights the reasons that "it is not possible to talk about 'universal' human rights" (p. 67), and yet so far as the reader knows, the interviewees did not object to the religious tolerance that, in general, these three cultures practice. The Hindus of Bali, for example, live free of persecution by Indonesia's Muslim majority. Likewise, Singapore is a religiously pluralistic society. Some might argue that the treatment of the Catholics of East Timor was an exception, but there, religion was hardly the driving force behind the carnage. The author's analysis seems to take place in an empirical vacuum.

Then there is the question of whether, when there is persecution of innocent people, the international community has no right to maintain standards. Must abuse of women be tolerated because many in the society think it is acceptable? Would one excuse slavery in America on such grounds? The idea behind international human rights is not that there is universal agreement on them, but that the international community has the right and obligation to draw the line somewhere.

Although not as ambitious on a theoretical level, Philip Eldridge's The Politics of Human Rights in Southeast Asia has a firm intellectual base, drawing less on Western political philosophers and more on local activists and thinkers, such as Anwar Ibrahim (ignored by Langlois). The book solidly positions each Southeast Asian country in terms of human rights norms and practice, relative to international standards. But the emphasis is on the actions of governments; Eldridge is not much better than Langlois at getting at public attitudes regarding the demands that can legitimately be placed on governments in the name of human rights. But enough information is provided to allow the reader to make certain inferences. In the case of Burma, the fact that democrats won the 1990 election perhaps speaks for itself, while Cambodia and the Philippines have ratified virtually all the international human rights instruments, making them presumptive domestic norms. And Thailand's liberal political culture can perhaps be taken for granted.

But Malaysia and Indonesia represent more difficult cases, and the full chapters on both countries are welcome. Regarding Malaysia, Eldridge is particularly good at untangling the various strands of Islamic thinking. Issues such as apostasy and proselytizing are clearly explained. These are serious matters, with national practice clearly at odds with international human rights norms. Still, they do not strike one as deal-breaking core issues. Perhaps Langlois's "incomplete theorization" could be brought into play here, but theory aside, these are fringe issues on which the world can agree to disagree. What is perhaps most noteworthy is the "increasing range of Malaysian groups [that] incorporate universal and indivisible human rights values into their discourse and goals" (p. 115).

In Indonesia, despite a dismal background (Eldridge devotes an entire chapter to East Timor), the politics of human rights has evolved much further than in Malaysia. Democracy and human rights are closely linked, with the judiciary being the Achilles heel. Outlined in detail are the human rights discourse during the Suharto era, social and political mobilization against the regime, the role of Islam, labor issues, and the post-Suharto democratization (with special reference to such issues as media, labor, electoral issues, and the problem of regionalism). Social and economic rights depend more on macroeconomic developments than on human rights principles. And there is one major cloud on the horizon: "Alternative political ideologies, whether based on Islam, regionalism or popular radicalism are more communitarian than liberal, and in many of their common expressions threaten both humanitarian values and constitutional processes" (p. 150).

Although both Langlois and Eldridge are Australian, only the latter examines Australia's role in the evolution of human rights in Southeast Asia. Australia has been most involved in Cambodia, Myanmar, and Indonesia, but also somewhat active in Vietnam, Thailand, and the Philippines. There has been very little involvement in Singapore and Malaysia. At times the emphasis is on working within the United Nations system, and at other times the approach is more bilateral. Either way, Australia walks a fine line between constructive engagement and being perceived as meddling.

Eldridge concludes that Southeast Asia "remains far from accepting international
human rights law as a common frame of reference,” and Langlois would agree. However, Eldridge believes that “on balance, international human rights infrastructure appears to have reached sufficient critical mass to carry momentum for change forward in a region of the world which until recently has offered greatest resistance” (p. 200).


— Michael P. Sullivan, University of Arizona

The flagship journal of the political science profession published a single article in 1981 with “democracy” in the title (2%). A decade later the number was two (4%), and by 2001 it had risen to seven (14%). Democracy is palpably in the air, most notably in the “democratic peace,” with several formulations placing public opinion in a key position. Philip Everts’s title implies a focus on the broad relationship between democracy and war, but in fact is limited to the narrow issue of the “bodybag” hypothesis, namely, that the public in the post–Cold War world is preoccupied with risk avoidance and casualties, and opposed to military action over and above that needed for essential national defense. The author explores this question by examining a mixture of public opinion polls from numerous countries across several cases.

Introductory chapters provide a summary explication of the multiple standard problems inherent in survey research, such as the “meaning” of public opinion and shortcomings and sources of error in opinion data. Unfortunately, the author muddles the presentation by posing two sets of “essential” questions in different chapters. The first set focuses on recent changes in the public’s attitude toward use of military force, the support that exists for the “casualties” hypothesis, and the impact of public opinion generally. The second set—labeled a “new research agenda”—focuses on the meaning of public opinion; its nature, content, and salience; its correlates; and—the only repeated question—its impact. All of this is presented against the backdrop of the standard opposing views of the classic or realist versus the liberal or critical schools of public opinion. The former sees public opinion as either irrelevant or dangerous given dictates of a realist framework, while the latter casts public opinion as not only a potent but also a positive influence on contemporary policy-making. Given the narrow research question and the data utilized—essentially secondary, ad hoc, available surveys, generated for a variety of different purposes—these issues become secondary to the specifics of the data analysis.

The heart of the book, then, is opinion data relative to four specific case studies—the post–Cold War “defense conversion,” the Persian Gulf War, the Bosnian conflict, and the intervention in Kosovo—all setting the stage for the general analysis of the bodybag hypothesis. Post–Cold War attitudes toward defense in these data are too diverse to summarize; while no major shifts occurred concerning attitudes toward the military, there was a discernible change toward favoring approval of nontraditional uses for the military. On the Gulf War, contrary to contemporary memory, support was not nearly as uniformly high as many suppose, especially throughout the course of the crisis and then during and after the war itself, and the author sees no confirmation either way on the casualties hypothesis.

For the Bosnian/Yugoslav intervention, the mostly Dutch data covering three and a half years uncovers mixed attitudes in terms of support for peacekeeping forces; still, despite some casualties and painful but obvious military failures (such as Srebrenica), support remained generally positive. Opinion on NATO actions in Kosovo cover only three months, and while showing strong support for air actions, the results differed across countries for inserting ground troops, but in no instance could public opinion be called highly supportive. Thus, the author sees backing for the casualties hypothesis in that overall approval for NATO intervention dropped once the hypothetical issue of dispatching a country’s own troops was raised.

The chapter most extensively and directly investigating the casualties hypothesis utilizes both historical and experimental evidence. The first is opinion data mostly from the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, but including the Soviet undertaking of 1992–93 as well as the other four case studies. The experimental evidence, less relevant, suffers from the obvious pitfall: Asking people about hypothetical situations differs from eliciting opinions during actual real-world situations. The most important finding is that no clear conclusion emerges from the historical evidence for the casualties hypothesis, which in itself is still significant, for the mixed findings serve as an antidote to what has become the accepted wisdom on bodybags. Everts does not find any consistent relationship supporting that hypothesis, and goes so far as to call it “largely a myth and a self-serving creation of politicians and journalists” (p. 181).

This work surely does not lack for relevance or timeliness, given that the debates during the summer and fall of 2002 fixated on U.S. policy toward Iraq and the public’s potential response to any extensive American military venture. Nonetheless, several drawbacks preclude any conclusive results. First, the author verges on self-destructing by overemphasizing the multiple and well-known problems in public opinion data. In that regard, the most serious obstacle in the present case is the lack of surveys explicitly generated to test the hypothesis in question. Ad hoc, available surveys produced for disparate reasons—a problem readily acknowledged by the author (p. 15)—produces a disjointed quality in the analysis.

Second, the cases that form the core of the data—Korea, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf, Bosnia, and Kosovo—differ in multiple ways, most importantly their duration: Vietnam lasted 12 years, Korea and Bosnia approximately three, and the others roughly two to three months. Reactions to situations of long, drawn-out casualties can be derived only from the Vietnam case, and even there the author contends that the bodybag hypothesis does not receive the support conventional wisdom so readily suggests. Finally, the concluding chapter, in attempting to go beyond the ad hoc nature of the data, introduces much broad speculation attempting to place the data into the broader democracy-and-war domain; while interesting speculation, much of it cannot be extracted from the evidence presented—or at least the author does not establish clear connections between his assertions and the data he presents.

Despite these admitted drawbacks, Democracy and Military Force offers a potentially compelling finding, namely, that no clear confirmation of the bodybag hypothesis exists in the available evidence, and in so doing also presents much specific data that may contradict memories of earlier military activities. From this study, we can no longer casually assume that the post–Cold War generation—and, more importantly, Americans—suffer from the low-casualty syndrome, a conclusion that flies in the face of standard conventional thought.


— William M. LeoGrande, American University

Mervyn Frost wants the discipline of international relations to take human rights seriously—to stop treating them as a secondary issue, subordinate to core issues like security. To accomplish his task, he sets forth in this
volume an analytic, normative argument about why individual human rights are properly central to virtually all of the issues and interactions that constitute modern international relations. Indeed, he argues (p. 1) that “it is not possible to gain a proper understanding of the international relations of our time without taking the notion of individual human rights seriously.”

Building on his earlier work in constitutive theory, Frost argues that there are two international “practices” in which almost everyone participates: 1) the practice of being a member of a transnational community of people who regard themselves as having (and thus make claims for) fundamental human rights, simply by virtue of being humans; and 2) the practice of being a member of a community presided over by a state (in particular, a democratic or democratizing state—more later on why this qualification is important). The first community Frost calls civil society, acknowledging that his usage is stipulative and unrelated to the normal sociological use of the term. He refers to members of this virtual community as “citizens.” The second community is the familiar one of citizenship, and its participants are “citizens.”

The near-universality Frost claims for these two practices is arguable. As he himself admits, certain groups may not actually accord themselves the fundamental rights that are the defining element of “civil society.” He replies that his argument is not addressed to such people, since he wants to elucidate the ethical implications of belonging to this community. But that is not wholly satisfactory, because if this practice does not include significant groups of people, then it loses relevance for how they conduct international relations, in which case human rights may not be as central to international affairs as Frost claims.

Additionally, different subsets of people within civil society claim different baskets of rights as “fundamental,” making this practice not very cohesive or coherent. It is as if, in the practice of playing chess (one of Frost’s analogies), people all around the globe played by different sets of rules. That inconsistency makes it difficult to extract much ethical guidance about how we should relate to policy issues, particularly ones that involve conflicting conceptions of fundamental rights.

The practice of citizenship is more nearly universal, of course, but Frost’s caveat here is that his argument concerns only citizens of democratic or democratizing countries (because he will later want to root the ethics of state policy and sovereignty in the individual rights of self-determining citizens). This, I submit, is an even more limited community than that of civil society. There are many states—including the most populous, China—that cannot be called democratic or democratizing by even the most expansive application of the term.

Having specified these two practices, the author’s next move is to argue that a great many international issues involve an ethical tension between the two. The ethical demands of the practice of civil society and of citizenship come into conflict, and since both these practices are “foundational”—they constitute part of how we see ourselves, as who we are—neither can claim ethical preeminence. However, Frost also argues that these two practices are inextricably intertwined. The practice of democratic citizenship presupposes a commitment to certain fundamental human rights (i.e., the practice of “civil society”), and at the same time provides ethical advantages of self-determination and community that civil society alone cannot.

Within Frost’s argument that international relations is incomprehensible without an understanding of individual human rights, the logical linchpin is his conception of citizenship. Most of the examples of international conflict he describes involve what most international relations theorists would normally call conflicts of national interest between sovereign governments (or groups seeking to assert their sovereignty). He transmutes these into human rights issues by arguing that state sovereignty is rooted, ethically, in the right to self-government of citizens in democracies. Since, Frost argues, almost all of us subscribe to the practice of democratic citizenship, we are bound to respect state sovereignty. And if state sovereignty is rooted in individual rights, virtually any international conflict involving (democratic or democratizing) states can be reconceptualized as a rights-based conflict. While he may be correct analytically, it is not entirely clear how this reconceptualization gives us any better understanding of the conflicts themselves or better ethical maps to navigate them.

The rights-based conception of state sovereignty is relatively new, of course, and has been used recently to argue in favor of humanitarian interventions in places where the state is either unwilling or unable to protect basic human rights. But Frost’s version has even more sweeping implications, for if sovereignty is rooted in democracy, then democratic states have no obligation to recognize the sovereignty of nondemocratic ones. The United States would have no ethical barrier against invading Cuba, for example. To be sure, these are not conclusions that the author himself would embrace; he generally stands for dialogue and negotiation to sort our conflicts of rights and interests. But we should be concerned about an argument that offers yet another way in which self-interest can dress itself up in ethical clothes while it runs roughshod over others.

The practical problem with Constituting Human Rights is that Frost does not seem to allow for the possibility that democratic states may not behave ethically. His description of the international practices of democratic states (p. 117) is almost utopian, and it is not entirely clear if he is describing how they ought to behave or how he expects them to behave. But in the real world, democratic states misbehave all the time, both internationally and in the treatment of their own citizens. One reason that human rights is so often relegated to the margins of the discipline of international relations is precisely because even democratic states are so quick to subordinate human rights to other interests.

My caveat notwithstanding, in the end Frost makes a carefully argued case for the importance of human rights, a case that needs to be read in full to be fully appreciated. He certainly demonstrates that a great many international issues can be reconceptualized as rights-based, and that we ought to keep concerns about rights foremost in our minds as we confront them. In my view, he reaches too far in arguing that international relations is not properly comprehensible unless we put human rights center stage. But as a fellow practitioner of international civil society, I share his belief that they ought to be treated as more central than they often are.


— John W. Critzer, Southern Connecticut State University

Globalization continues to reshape economics, culture, society, and politics through the rapid movement of people, production, capital, and ideas across increasingly more porous national borders in the pursuit of greater economic wealth. Leaders and members of business organizations and political entities find that they must adapt to the new global conditions or face the loss of their livelihood or their political power. For labor unions, rapid global changes in transportation, production, and the mobility of capital have led to a dramatic transfer of industries once a stronghold for union labor to the Third World. This work suggests that American and French unions responded to the global changes that undercut their membership rolls and influence by shifting.
their traditional political position in favor of restrictionist immigrant policies to more open immigration in the late twentieth century.

This comparative work on American and French immigration policies is one of a growing number of theoretically grounded studies of immigration politics and policies. Leah Haus thoughtfully analyzes current theories about the relationship between the state and immigration policies in order to explore changing union policy positions on immigration. France and the United States were selected for the case study approach as each country had significant immigration in the twentieth century, their labor unions were politically weak relative to other countries, and union membership in each nation had declined in the late twentieth century. Her aim was to determine if global economic changes, the growing inability of nation-states to secure their borders from migration, and human rights issues pertaining to immigrants were responsible for transforming labor union immigration policies. The author argues that American unions were more pragmatic, focused their efforts on recruitment and organizing, and spent less time on human rights issues than the more ideologically driven French unions who did not organize but shared their nation’s ideological preference for inclusion.

While the American and French unions examined in this study have moved toward more open immigration policies, they have maintained restrictive stances on some types of immigrant labor. As Haus notes, U.S. unions favored restrictionist measures for temporary workers from abroad in agriculture, engineering, and information technology. While unions may have approved of more open immigrant policies, they faced businesses that prefer few if any restrictions in order to ensure a continuous immigrant flow that assists in maintaining a high supply of labor and low labor costs. One important question for unions in the new global age is whether with the decline of manufacturing and the growth of the service industries they will be able to organize white-collar professionals in the growing high-tech service industries who normally identify with management in sufficient numbers.

Haus also notes that political dynamics played an important role in shaping immigrant policies as unions needed to join with other organizations with whose political stances they might not ordinarily agree in order to have sufficient leverage to win in the political arena on a number of issues. For example, she argues that American unions have opposed certain restrictive immigrant policies so as to gain the political support of Latino groups for other union issues. In a similar fashion, she contends that French unions opposed the National Front, a right-wing political party built on an aggressive stance against immigrants, in part so as not to offend liberal groups with whom they formed an alliance in opposition to restrictionist immigration policies.

Haus concludes by developing a brief alternative case study to determine if such other factors as geography have shaped union policy preferences. She examines Britain, an island country which, unlike the United States, is not contiguous to a major source of immigration—from Mexico, or France, which is situated on the European continent, another major source. In addition, Britain has a smaller but growing percentage of immigrants and a higher but falling union membership relative to America and France. Still, she finds that the Trades Union Congress (TUC), similar to American and French unions, favored more open borders to increase its rolls. However, she argues that the TUC did not question the ability of the British state to control its borders given its island status and that global economic change was not a factor in the shift from restrictive to more open immigrant policies. She also finds that unions were supportive of European Union efforts to bring about greater mobility of individuals as a means for adding new members to their ranks.

Haus argues that race was related to unionization and immigration in that the TUC actively recruited blacks and its Black Workers Conference opposed restrictions in order to facilitate family unification and to avoid any internal enforcement of restrictions that would lead to racial discrimination. She also notes the significance of gender as UNISON, the largest union in the United Kingdom, made up of mostly women in public service occupations, has been the most vocal opponent to restrictionist policies primarily to encourage family reunification policies. A comparative analysis focusing on race and gender issues in Britain, along with her description of French union efforts to combat racial discrimination and a needed section on race and American unions, would have made this a much stronger work.

While unions need to increase their membership rolls to sustain their bargaining power, this is not likely to be sufficient when contending with global businesses. However, recent union support for more open immigration may assist them in forming linkages with emigration-sending nations as part of the effort to develop transnational unionization that has the potential to enhance their negotiating power in the global age.

Although rather short, Unions, Immigration, and Internationalization is a useful work as it provides a superior critique of current theories about immigration and the nation-state and demonstrates how theory and the case study approach may be combined to gain a better understanding of the politics of immigration policies.

Democracy and War: The End of an Illusion? by Errol A. Henderson, an alumnus of the Correlates of War Project, joins in this debate as an articulate critic of the DPP—which he calls an illusion—and proceeds, in a series of statistical analyses, to “hoist the democratic peace on its own empirical petard” (p. x), that is, by using the same research design and methods as were employed by its advocates. He plays this role well, shows a firm grasp of the literature, deploys a sharp, clear argument, and is generally evenhanded in the discussion of the several sides of these issues. This healthy skepticism is merited but once, in offhand (and unwarranted) remarks calling “Kant and Wilson”—widely regarded as the classical originators of “democratic peace”—“racist idealists” who “clearly espoused white supremacy” (pp. 83, 82). The author describes his own approach as “neo-idealism.”

The core of Democracy and War consists of four statistical analyses whose backbone is a multivariate logistic regression model using data mostly for 1946–92; they deal respectively with the dyadic DPP, the monadic DPP, extrastate wars, and civil wars. Henderson first replicates and extends John Oneal and Bruce Russett’s prominent June 1997 International Studies Quarterly article (vol. 41[2], pp. 267–93); he judges their findings as “not robust” (p. 47) because on his analysis, “joint democracy” does not reduce the probability of militarized disputes among pairs of states in that period. In this discussion, war, militarized
disputes, and international conflict are treated as virtually synonymous.

The monadic DPP asserts that democracies are inherently more peaceful than autocracies (for which the evidence is weak indeed), and Henderson finds that it, too, has its problems. His tests show that in the relevant period, democracies in general were more likely to be involved in interstate war, although Western states were less likely to be so engaged. Indeed, he declares democracies to be “the most bellicose type of states,” and reaches the alarming conclusion that “democracy, in itself . . . actually increases the likelihood of interstate war” because “the spread of democratic states will generate more democratic states” (pp. 72, 73). One wonders how that can be, for if democracies do not fight one another but only nondemocracies, then the spread of democracy does in fact reduce the number of hostile interaction opportunities.

In his analysis of extrastate wars (wars between states and nonstate actors, that is, colonial and imperialist wars that other scholars tend to ignore), the author deems Western states more likely to be involved and sees ample reason to believe that such involvement will continue in the future. In his review of civil wars in postcolonial states, he finds that his results “refute the DPP for civil wars” (p. 119) but corroborate previous findings that semi-democracy is associated with greater likelihood of such disturbances. One wonders why he does not extend his study to all states; for is not internal democratic peace the rule for all democracies?

Having cast doubt on, or discarded, several explanations, the author still has not disposed of the kernel of the DPP: to wit, the well-established fact that democracies have not fought wars among themselves in the modern period. He offers a good critique of the normative and institutional theories of DPP, but his “alternative” explanation which draws on the notion of the post–1945 international security regime centered on NATO, and the World Trade Organization, in conditions of cold war bipolarity, is basically ad hoc: It ignores the long, and formative, pre–1945 period; it might suggest why the NATO-WTO system remains intact but not why the Warsaw Pact–Comecon regime is no more; and it offers no guidance for the future except for repeated warnings about the irrelevance, or the (imputed) dangers, of the policy of “democratic enlargement.”

On balance, the reader is left with the feeling that the title of one of the book’s chapters, “Strong Statistics, Weak Theory,” might apply to the book as a whole. The statistics look good but they do not explain much or tell the whole story. Henderson’s petard (to use his own word) may ruffle some feathers, but the essentials of the democratic peace still stand. We would agree with the author that democracy may not be the sufficient condition of world peace but would also maintain that at the global level (that the author systematically ignores), democracy is one of the necessary conditions of enduring world organization, hence, of peace on a systemic scale. What the author distinctly lacks is the sense of democratization as a massive, worldwide process that today reaches more than 3 billion people where only 150 years ago it may have affected fewer than 100 million. It is a centuries-long evolutionary movement in which humans are learning to cooperate on a worldwide scale, an ongoing if error-prone process that cannot be adequately captured in a 46-year slice of war statistics, in a period in which the democratic peace is only beginning to be evident.

Is the democratic peace an illusion? No, it is not an illusion but it is a vision that we owe to the Age of Enlightenment. It is a long-term vision and therefore liable to be blurred or even ignored. But it is a vision that scholars also have a duty to keep sharp, and above all, alive.


— Thomas Oatley, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Scholars have long debated whether trade policies are shaped by class conflict or by conflict between industries. Michael Hiscox argues that either conflict can drive trade politics. More importantly, he argues that whether class or industry conflict will drive trade politics at any point in time will be determined by the degree of factor mobility present in the economy. Trade politics will be shaped by class conflict when factors can move easily from one industry to another; when factors cannot easily move from one industry to another, conflict between different industries will dominate trade politics. Hiscox tests this hypothesis by developing measures of labor and capital mobility for six countries over the last two hundred years. He uses these measures to identify periods in each country during which factors are mobile and immobile. He then uses case studies, supported by statistical analysis of the U.S. case, to evaluate whether trade politics have been driven by class conflict during periods of high factor mobility and by industry conflict during periods of low factor mobility.

He concludes, somewhat cautiously, that the evidence suggests a general correlation between factor mobility and coalition formation. Class conflict plays a larger role in trade politics when factors are mobile; industry conflicts play a larger role when factors are less mobile.

This is an important book. It tackles a fundamentally important question central to trade politics and to international political economy more broadly. Moreover, it addresses this question in a theoretically sophisticated and yet remarkably simple manner. The combination of case studies and statistical analysis provides confidence that the argument Hiscox advances, as well as the conclusions he reaches, can be generalized across time and space. The question that he asks, the theoretical answer he suggests, and the conclusions he reaches should have a profound impact on future research into trade politics.

I remain unconvinced, however, by the book’s conclusions. My concerns, many of which the author anticipates in the conclusion, revolve largely around two issues. First, the argument requires us to accept the assumption that factor mobility is not greatly influenced by government policies. I find this assumption hard to accept. Factor owners’ expectations about the likelihood of government support will clearly shape their decisions to exit or stay in a particular industry. Government subsidies or import barriers that raise the return to capital invested in textiles, for example, will reduce the incentive to shift this wealth to another industry. Hiscox recognizes this in the chapter on Sweden (pp. 96–103), where he notes that the Swedish government has crafted programs expressly designed to promote the movement of factors from one industry to another. If government policies do have an important effect on factor mobility, then the causal relationship between factor mobility and trade coalitions begins to break down. It is equally plausible to suggest that the causal arrow runs the other way. That is, if we assume that the structure of interest representation is exogenous, then government trade policies supplied in response to coalition demands may determine the degree of factor mobility. When groups organize around industry lines, government policies will protect influential import-competing industries. Such policies will reduce the incentive to move from one industry to another and factors will be relatively immobile. When groups organize along class lines, government policies will promote class-based adjustment to trade. These policies will encourage factor movement and hence greater factor mobility. It may well be, therefore, that the degree of factor mobility is determined by the structure of interest representation rather than the other way.
around. I do not know whether this alternative variant is the right story, but it is certainly a plausible interpretation of the evidence Hiscox presents. He seems inclined to rule it out by assumption; I would have preferred a more empirical approach.

I was also troubled by how the author measured capital mobility. When capital is mobile, it will flow out of low-return industries and into high-return industries. Consequently, he argues, when capital is highly mobile, we will not see large differences in the returns to capital employed in different manufacturing industries. When large differences do exist, we can conclude that capital is immobile (see pp. 13–14). Yet large differences in the return to capital employed in different industries need not indicate that capital is immobile. One can think of two scenarios in which a large gap would coexist with highly mobile capital. First, industries will vary in the risk they pose, and the returns to investments in industries will vary according to this risk. Low-return industries can persist alongside high-return industries, therefore, simply because they are less risky than high-return industries (to his credit, Hiscox recognizes this limitation [pp. 16–17]). Second, imagine an economy in which capital is highly mobile and technological change regularly creates product and process improvements. In this economy, technological change will continuously create new high-return industries. Wealth holders will continuously respond to technological change by shifting out of the low-return industries and into the high-return industries. If we measure the returns to manufacturing industries in this economy each year, and array these annual measures as a time series, we would see a persistent gap between high- and low-return industries. It would be quite misleading, however, to infer from this gap that the economy enjoyed little capital mobility. For these reasons, I am not convinced that Hiscox’s measure accurately distinguishes periods of mobile capital from periods of immobile capital. As a result, any conclusions based on his measure should be seen as suggestive rather than conclusive.

These criticisms should not detract from the overall importance of *International Trade and Political Conflict*, however. The work represents an original, thoughtful, thorough, and extraordinarily interesting attempt to answer one of the most important questions in international political economy. Its many strengths make it required reading for scholars working in this field. Its shortcomings, many of which arise from the ambitiousness of the task, should set the agenda for much additional research.

**Historical Sociology of International Relations.** Edited by Stephen Hobden and John M. Hobson. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. 324p. $70.00 cloth, $25.00 paper.

— James B. Rule, Stony Brook University, SUNY

Like many another book, this collection of essays represents a political act. The editors aim to rally support for an insurgency against what they identify as theoretical orthodoxy in the study of international relations. The establishment—neorealists—have exerted hegemony over the subject for too long, Stephen Hobden and John Hobson aver. But now its forces are in disarray. To challenge the entrenched position, the editors have mobilized an eclectic collection of statements from diverse, alternative theoretical persuasions, rather loosely bracketed as “historical sociology.”

The recurring theme is that neorealist orthodoxy simply leaves out of consideration all sorts of important trends, forces, and conditions that matter enormously in international affairs. These range from globalization in its many forms to the role of supranational and transnational actors on the world stage; to shifting notions of sovereignty, both in the minds of government actors and elsewhere; to the fact that states do not represent the invariant units that neorealists are accused of positing. These alleged gaps indeed provide bases for far-reaching and consequential debates, paralleling familiar theoretical controversies elsewhere in social science.

One trouble is that the editors and authors, for the most part, do not put their positions so clearly or directly as I have just done. More often, they offer statements like the following remarks from Hobson’s introductory chapter: “[B]oth the post-1945 multilateral institutions and normative frameworks can in part be explained by the presence of socially embedded state-society complexes (i.e., where the socially embedded state-society complex was internationalised into the institutional and normative international frameworks). However . . . these three social power forces are mutually embedded in each other and cannot, therefore, be treated in isolation of each other, nor ultimately be reduced to one of their component parts. In this way, I suggest, second-wave Weberian historical sociology is able to remedy the chronofetishism and tempocentrism associated with mainstream international relations theory as well as first-wave Weberian historical sociology” (p. 80). Sociological sensitivities have not brought out the best in the authors’ conceptual or communicative style. Yet there are important issues at stake. “Chronofetishism” and “tempocentrism”—apparently concepts of the editors’ own invention—are indeed central to the debate. More simply stated, these terms designate the shortcomings of models of world affairs that take no account of changing social and historical contexts.

How well do the authors make their case? Note, for starters, that they wage their arguments overwhelmingly in conceptual terms. That is, they devote themselves to elaborating concepts, concerns, relationships, and intellectual strategies that they hold necessary to restore what neorealism has allegedly banished from the analysis of international relations. Thus, A. Claire Cutler details her objections to conventional analyses that assume states as “the essential actors in international relations . . . [and] also the legitimate voices of the global polity” (p. 187). Martin Shaw argues that globalization and supranational institutions change the workings of geopolitics fundamentally. Andrew Linklater appeals for a view of international affairs that will take account of the ways in which members of the world community are coming to make “a moral concern with transnational harm one of their organising principles” (p. 163). Steve Smith critiques the views of his fellow contributors for not going far enough in breaking with the theoretical establishment; he charges that “historical sociology is at base a rationalist enterprise that can fit relatively easily within the mainstream” (p. 223). As the reader will have gathered, the authors’ positions have not much in common beyond antagonism to neorealism.

For the most part, these conceptual criticisms deserve to be taken seriously in their own terms. The rise of transnational actors, the domestic strength of states vis-a-vis other power centers within the polity, the spread of new normative concepts—in short, the host of constraints and dynamics detailed here—certainly do make a difference, some kind of difference, in international processes. The question is, do they make the sort of difference that these authors’ neorealist opponents could or would recognize? That is, do they provide bases for refuting the orthodoxy view in its own terms? This question is difficult to answer from the information provided in this work alone. The authors characterize the opposing position rather freely in their own terms, yet are sparing with citations or quotations from the other side that might permit their opponents to speak for themselves. Would the targets of these critiques accept the picture of their position conveyed here? Or would they insist, as adherents of self-contained theoretical visions typically do, that their view explains well what it purports to explain—but that it need not address all the concerns of theoretical outsiders?
Any theory, however we understand that term, involves focusing attention on those specific aspects of the subject matter held to matter most. Mind-sets that seek to include everything end up becoming lists, rather than theories. A resourceful neorealist riposte to the theoretical attack embodied in this book would apply just this logic. One need not worry about the sociohistorical variables highlighted by these authors for purposes of explaining certain crucial events or processes, neorealists might insist. These editors’ project of bringing a vast array of historical and sociological considerations “back in” might be seen simply as a distraction from the work of creating economical and precisely targeted explanations for specific sorts of outcomes.

I admit to skepticism regarding such a defense. The more we study almost any social system, the more multifarious the causal process involved seems to be; it is hard to imagine that international affairs could represent an exception. But in Historical Sociology of International Relations, the authors’ penchant for conceptual argument stands in the way of what would seem a much more useful exercise: comparative examination of specific events and sequences in light of the contending theoretical visions. What can the insurgents’ accounts of, say, the decline of the British Empire tell us that the neorealists’ analyses cannot? Do the two theories anywhere offer distinctively different predictions, or point to alternative empirical evidence, as bases for contesting explanations?

The lost opportunities for confrontation between the insurgents and their entrenched opponents in such empirical terms are regrettable in a work like this. The concerns animating this book surely deserve a voice. That that voice speaks so often in tones of self-absorbed conceptualization does not help the cause.


— Vinod K. Aggarwal, University of California at Berkeley

In view of the current efforts by policymakers to grapple with debt crises in several countries and because of competing opinions on the merits of government intervention to resolve debt crises, this is clearly a timely book. Saori Katada focuses on the role of a key creditor government, Japan, in three recent sovereign debt rescheduling efforts: the 1980s Latin American crisis, the 1994–95 Mexican peso crisis, and the Asian financial crises of the late 1990s. She attempts to explain the differential behavior of Japan in these three crises: the active role of Japan in the first case, the relative lack of action in the second, and a shifting role in the third based on different phases of the Asian crises.

To explain Japan’s role, and creditor government behavior in debt crises more generally, Katada develops two key arguments. First, she suggests that creditor governments accrue private gains from their intervention actions when they provide the public good of stabilizing financial relationships between debtors and private lenders. Second, she suggests that institutional links among creditor, particularly financial actors, will influence creditor government intervention decisions. In terms of causality, with respect to the first hypothesis, the greater the gains to creditor governments, the more likely they are to intervene. And with respect to the second one, greater ties among banks will lead them to pressure their governments more actively and with greater efficacy.

Katada finds that the combination of these two factors can explain differences in Japan’s behavior in the three crises. In the 1980s Latin American crises, the Japanese government had interests in these countries, including immigration and trade ties. In addition, Japanese banks were heavily involved in lending to Latin American countries. In the Mexican peso crisis, these factors were reversed: The Japanese government had few ties to Mexico and private Japanese creditors had few investments or were dispersed among different types of financial assets. In the third phase, the Japanese government was more active in the first and third phases of the Asian financial crisis, but less involved in the second. During the whole crisis, the Japanese government had strong ties to countries in the region, and Japanese banks were quite heavily involved. The author argues that U.S. government opposition to Japanese suggestions for a separate Asian fund provides a good explanation for the lack of Japanese success in promoting its views in the second phase.

On its surface, the view that private gains drive creditor governments and that pressure from their banks leads them to act would appear to be rather intuitive. If this were Katada’s only contribution, the book would not add much to the literature or our understanding of creditor government behavior. To her credit, however, she more carefully explores what private gains really mean for creditors, and explores the nature of institutional links among private creditors in some depth. Moreover, her regression analysis, followed by case studies of the three crises, provides considerable grist for exploring the nature of the driving forces behind creditor governments’ actions. For example, she finds that there is no simple linear relationship between official Japanese financial flows and strong trade ties. Instead, in the two cases of 1980s Latin America and 1990s Mexico (to which she restricts her regression analysis), Japanese immigration ties seem to be a key factor. Moreover, the extent of U.S. trade ties with Latin American countries is a significant influence on Japanese willingness to be actively involved. She argues that Japan’s actions in the 1980s can be explained by its desire to help the United States and thereby improve its economic relations with the country.

Katada’s assertion of what constitutes private gains for the Japanese government is thus the most counterintuitive assertion in her analysis. As noted, arguing that strong bankers’ coalitions will increase pressure on the Japanese (or any creditor government, for that matter) is hardly surprising. The regression analysis by itself does not tell us what calculations underlie this apparent relationship and is thus worth exploring.

Unfortunately, I found the case studies to be somewhat disappointing when it comes to investigating the behavior of the Japanese government. Despite having conducted a number of interviews, Katada fails to provide significant insight on the dynamics of the interplay of ministries in Japan, or clear evidence of how the Japanese government took into account its concerns about purportedly acting to benefit countries in which the United States was particularly interested. Similarly, the analysis of the Asian financial crisis does not really provide much new insight into how Japan made decisions during the crisis. More surprisingly, her discussion of the Korean crisis does not even mention the very strong concerted action taken by creditor governments to force bankers to cut the interest rate on the loan that the Korean government sought as part of its debt rollover effort in 1997–98.

In her defense, the Asian crisis (and possibly the earlier 1980s Latin American crises) may not be amenable to investigative research in view of their recent nature and the reluctance of decision makers to reveal their motivations. But in view of the counterintuitive nature of some of the assertions, the reader may find the evidence unsatisfactory.

With respect to the theory, I found some of her arguments underspecified. Considerable work on types of goods and the implications of these for cooperation (such as the difference between common pool resources and public goods) could have been brought into the discussion of the private and public aspects of the
provision of international financial stability through creditor government intervention. In addition, the strategic problem of creditor government interaction, in conjunction with their interaction with debtors, lenders, and international organizations, could possibly be better analyzed with game theoretic tools.

Banking on Stability is a useful survey of the role that the Japanese government has played in financial crises since the 1980s. The book provides a systematic treatment of the factors driving the Japanese government’s intervention decisions. As more materials become available in the future about these cases, Katada’s arguments will be worth revisiting by the author or other scholars.


— Charles A. Kupchan, Georgetown University

As the title suggests, this book examines America’s long struggle to fashion a form of engagement in world affairs that is in harmony with its national identity. Henry Nau contends that the United States has long lurched between incompatible extremes, at times isolating itself from foreign entanglements and at other times overreaching by seeking to remake the world in its image. The timely central message is that America now has an opportunity to find a stable equilibrium. With a significant portion of the globe coming to share America’s democratic values and identity, the United States can at last sustain a steady and balanced brand of international engagement—it can finally feel at home abroad.

Nau builds his case for this claim on a conceptual framework that bridges realist and constructivist perspectives. Power still matters in today’s world, and the United States needs to balance against states that threaten its security. Threats do not arise from material capability alone, however, but also from national identity—the images that nations hold of themselves and their relationships with other nations. A state’s national interests are a function of both identity and power; U.S. grand strategy must therefore be based on ideational as well as material considerations.

It is the common democratic identity that America shares with Western Europe, Japan, and a handful of other countries that opens the door to a new form of U.S. engagement: “A permanent partnership between the United States and these countries is within reach. This partnership promises the best chance America has ever had to integrate its democratic ideals and international power in world affairs” (p. 84). The security community formed by this democratic core provides a political and conceptual foundation for U.S. foreign policy. Depending on the extent of their transition to democracy, other states lie in concentric circles around this core. States in the midst of democratic transitions are one step removed; the United States should seek to promote their economic well-being and defend their domestic stability. Nondemocratic states lie in the periphery of this system. They still pose a strategic threat, requiring that the United States balance against them at the same time that it seeks to close the distance between their identities and that of the democratic core.

Nau’s analysis makes a significant contribution to both theory and policy. His synthetic integration of realism and constructivism helps build an important bridge between traditions too long held in opposition. Locating power balances and national identities in the same conceptual framework enhances the explanatory leverage of both perspectives. His handling of the notion of identity is particularly adept. Whereas many analysts treat the concept as a relational externally derived variable, Nau recognizes that national self-images also have domestic, internally derived sources. Indeed, he devotes an entire chapter to the historical roots of America’s foreign policy traditions, deftly examining how the Union’s formative years have come to shape its later engagement in the world.

The author’s concentric-circles approach to fashioning U.S. foreign policy provides a novel and useful basis for distinguishing among the disparate challenges faced in different regions—and adjusting U.S. engagement accordingly. His chapter on Asia is especially insightful. He contends that the United States should rely on deepened cooperation with democratic allies such as Japan and South Korea to enhance multilateralism in the region. A multilateral, democratic core would then provide a solid foundation for gradually drawing China and other nondemocratic states into a durable political community.

Although persuasive and elegantly parsimonious, Nau’s own framework does pose several challenges to his overall argument. First, he recognizes that national identity has many different facets and inputs. Nonetheless, he posits that democratic states all share the same identity, claiming that “[t]he U.S. national identity is now widely shared among the great industrial powers of the world” (p. 14). It is by no means clear, however, that all democratic states share America’s identity or, for that matter, any common identity strong enough to ensure lasting bonds. Consider the United States and the countries of the European Union. They may have common democratic traditions, but they practice different brands of capitalism, disagree on basic questions of statecraft, and diverge on a host of social issues, including the moral status of capital punishment and the scope of the welfare state. In light of current transatlantic tensions, a “permanent partnership” based on a shared identity should not be taken for granted.

In similar fashion, although Nau recognizes that national identities can change dramatically over time, he articulates a static notion of identity among democratic states; identities seem to converge around democratic norms—and then stop evolving. Even if the United States and the countries of the EU share a common identity for now, however, identities on both sides of the Atlantic could undergo consequential change in the future. As the EU’s geopolitical aspirations broaden, its members may fashion a collective identity that is in opposition to the United States. As America’s Hispanic population swells, the country’s sense of affinity for Europe may give way to a collective identity more oriented toward Latin America.

Finally, despite Nau’s sensitivity to the relational attributes of identity, he at times overlooks the extent to which U.S. behavior might work against its foreign policy goals. He writes that “anarchy remains in U.S.-Russian relations” (p. 122), urging Washington to keep Russia at arms length and deny it a place in a broader NATO. But such policies may only reinforce oppositional identities, limiting rather than expanding a democratic core. Similarly, Nau writes that, “[p]ermanent partnership does not preclude unilateral actions; it actually requires such actions” (p. 88). America’s unilateralist proclivities, however, have been alienating friends and foes alike, perhaps doing irreparable damage to the security community that Nau correctly identifies as the centerpiece of international order.

These queries do not compromise Nau’s argument, but only reflect its nuances. At Home Abroad is an important book that succeeds in making a vital contribution to the emerging debate over the study and practice of U.S. grand strategy in the twenty-first century.


— Jeanne A. K. Hey, Miami University

Carlos Parodi’s new book infuses postmodern sensibilities into the examination of the
Europeans withdrew, boundary theorists took their successor states, and the church. After the conflicting territorial needs of the monarchies, the political unit had a distinct territory. Rather, history: that colonial and early nation-state reveals much of the myth behind colonial border- apart indigenous nations. The chapter also power needs of colonial rulers but also tore order to draw boundaries that not only met the assumptions that powerful political actors used boundaries and their politics, but instead the theory that the author himself offers to explain explores the “boundary theory,” which is closest to his articulation of an organizing con- reading on the subject.

In Chapter 2, Parodi offers what comes closest to his articulation of an organizing concep- tual frame for the book. This chapter explores the “boundary theory,” which is not a theory that the author himself offers to explain boundaries and their politics, but instead the composite of ideas, rationalizations, and assumptions that powerful political actors used (and continue to use) to justify drawing boundaries as they chose. Thus, he examines in great detail how the “boundary theorists” employed everything from supposedly “scientific principles” (p. 62) to political violence in order to draw boundaries that not only met the power needs of colonial rulers but also tore apart indigenous nations. The chapter also reveals much of the myth behind colonial border history: that colonial and early nation-state lines were drawn to ensure that each emerging political unit had a distinct territory. Rather, they were drawn and redrawn to fit the often conflicting territorial needs of the monarchies, their successor states, and the church. After the Europeans withdrew, boundary theorists took over the notion of tying territory to a sense of nationhood. The boundary theory chapter informs any casual observer of South American politics, and no doubt some serious observers of the same, that there was much more behind the creation of national borders than simply the decisions of a few colonial cartographers. Missing is a comprehensive discussion of who most of these boundary theorists were. The prose suggests that anyone who had a connection to drawing or justifying a border was such a theorist. Nonetheless, most readers will be fascinated to learn of the lengths to which many participants in this process went to try to convince populations that territory was so important to the nation. Sadly, this often meant creating a strong enemy image of surrounding populations, a process that not only sent many innocents to their deaths in territo- rial wars but also divided populations who cul- turally and historically had no reason to hate each other.

The two case study chapters, on border dis- putses between Ecuador and Peru and in Amazonia, respectively, identify many of these boundary theorists, at least for the cases under study. These studies are often not as satisfac- tory as the earlier and last chapters. Parodi describes nearly all boundary theories employed in these conflicts as rationalizations for some unworthy political goal. He makes a strong case that the 1995 Ecuador–Peru border war, fought over a tiny piece of remote territo- ry in the Andes, makes no sense outside of a constructed world in which Ecuador and Peru are enemies because of a border dispute. Few will argue with that conclusion. But he does not appear to accept that in the modern nation-state system, borders are a reality (if a necessary evil), a reality to which the author offers no alternative.

That said, The Politics of South American Boundaries is a superb examination of the embedded interests and power behind bound- ary decision making. The consequences of those decisions are enormous. They range from the survival of indigenous peoples to the artifi- cial dividing of South American nations in a way that distracts them from a common goal of economic development, to the terrible loss of life in border wars. Parodi quotes María Luisa Tamariz Tormen, an Ecuadorian anthropologist, appealing to her country to abandon the dispute with Peru: “Would it not be more honorable to leave aside our rhetorical and chauvinistic patriotism . . . and make defeating poverty and achieving better life conditions for all our population the basis on which we build our national pride?” (p. 97) [my translation]. There is not a soul in South America who could disagree with Tamariz’s sentiment, not only for Ecuador but for all the other poor countries in the continent. After reading Carlos Parodi’s book, you will understand why the South Americans have such difficulty in following Tamariz’s prescription.


— Donald F. Kettl, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Guy Peters and Jon Pierre have assembled an exceptionally thoughtful and comprehensive review of public management reforms. This book is a world tour, from the popular reform spots of New Zealand and the United Kingdom to lesser-known efforts by Greece, Austria, and Hungary. It paints a rich and text- tured portrait of the global administrative reform movement—and how varied it has been.

The chapters present detailed case studies of reform in 14 different nations. Comprehensive evaluations of such efforts, such as Allen Schick’s definitive study of the New Zealand reforms (The Spirit of Reform, 1996), are extraordinarily difficult to produce. The case studies aim instead at descriptions of what public officials in each country tried to accomplish and how their reforms evolved. Readers looking for a Schick-like assessment of the reforms’ impacts will be disappointed. Peters and Pierre focus instead on one big issue: How has the reform movement affected the relation- ship between career civil servants and their political masters?

Along with the goal of improving the effi- ciency of government services, their question is central to the administrative reform move- ment. As elected officials began struggling in the 1980s to streamline their governments, they portrayed civil servants as insufficiently responsive to the needs of citizens. These work- ers were locked in inefficient routines and stan- dard procedures that hindered efficiency. Only by transforming that relationship, the reformers believed, could governments improve their results and lower their costs. The reformers deregulated personnel systems, empowered employees, measured performance, and pur- sued “agentification,” contracts specifying results in exchange for budgets. Under the broad banner of “managerialism,” these reforms aimed to increase the accountability of civil servants.

Peters and Pierre conclude that in many countries, the reforms had the opposite effect. They increased administrators’ power, made them harder to control, and created conflict between administrators and politicians. The contract system diminished the emphasis on