

# The Academy of Political Science

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Similarly, the Taliban government was removed from power because it refused to turn over the planners of September 11 and had become a safe haven from which catastrophic terrorism might be planned and implemented. Nor is the United States likely to invade Iran any time soon (or ever) primarily to install democracy. It is likely to resort to military power, if it does, because it concludes that the regime cannot be trusted with nuclear weapons and hegemonic ambitions.

Other than criticizing “neo-cons” for trying to instill democracy at the point of a gun and neglecting security, Etzioni’s generalizations have little to offer beyond their initial obviousness. He is one of those big-concept thinkers who like to pose large either-or questions and then come down solidly on the side of platitudes. His book is full of careful equivocations. Speaking of the duty to intervene when states have not carried out their responsibilities to their populations (pp. 200–201), he then quickly draws back from the abyss: “One must note though that this principle does not *necessarily* justify armed intervention. It principally points to the moral expectations, that we ask one another as individuals or as nations, what is considered good conduct, behavior we cherish or condemn.” Alas, our moral expectations do not carry much weight with the very countries and leaders who are a danger to the United States, its allies, and others. Regrettably, talk softly and carry high moral expectations is not a formula for success in these circumstances.

The book’s singular contribution, contained in its title, is unexceptional, but its arguments are so carefully calibrated at an abstract level that they dissipate at the level of real life.

STANLEY A. RENSHON

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**Healthy Voices, Unhealthy Silence: Advocacy and Health Policy for the Poor** by Colleen M. Grogan and Michael K. Gusmano. Washington DC, Georgetown University Press, 2007. 156 pp. \$24.95.

Modern adherents of a “Third Way” in American public administration and politics such as the Democratic Leadership Council say they move beyond “left-right debates” and have argued for innovative bottom-up public management instead of what they describe as inflexible and traditional top-down bureaucracies. One key approach to implementing this includes encouraging community nonprofits to play a pivotal role in providing societal services. Contrary to this assertion, Colleen M. Grogan and Michael K. Gusmano’s new book finds a lack of a vigorousness of nonprofit public voice for administrative innovation and increased health care services for the poor with Connecticut’s Medicaid Managed Care Council advisory board from 1995 to 1997. Connecticut’s proposed program reforms included cost controls, program quality improvements, and greater health care access. Proponents also

argued that competitive bidding for service contracts was the best approach to implementing these goals.

While much research has concluded that most governmental advisory boards are symbolic and based on tokenism, the authors examined the intriguing question of what public discussion and advocacy occurred by nonprofit organization representatives on this advisory board. This research analyzed public participant discussion in comparison with interviews conducted privately.

The authors discovered private concerns on the part of many nonprofit representatives regarding the necessity for health care access and reducing welfare stigma for health care recipients. Nevertheless, many nonprofit board members felt constrained from publicly voicing these concerns due to the national political environment promoting Medicaid privatization, state budget cuts, and concerns that quality health care with reduced funding could be improved.

In addition, many nonprofits had long-term and direct organizational and political ties with a state government that relied on these nonprofits to provide health services. Nonprofit representatives were also privately concerned that a change in competitive third-party contracting for health services meant that health maintenance organizations (HMOs) would not contract with them, would threaten their protected status in delivering services, and would cause unwarranted reimbursement rate changes. Thus, they did not want to publicly criticize HMOs due to fear of seeming self-interested. This concern for maintaining current contract arrangements also halted any public nonprofit representative discussion regarding expanding health access to the poor. To counter this lack of public voice, the authors propose reforms including nonprofit representatives serving on advisory boards with no direct ties to state government and encouraging deliberative discussion and democracy to bring issues into the open.

However, this book downplays the role of the poor themselves in having an impact on the advisory board. The authors argue in one short paragraph (pp. 129–130) that poor people serving on the advisory board would be too intimidated by the process. This broad characterization of the abilities of *all* poor people to effectively serve on advisory boards is one point the authors do not explore. Also, evidence from the social movement literature that outsider advocacy tactics, such as public demonstrations, that hold public officials publically accountable for their actions are effective and can have a substantial impact, is overwhelming. In fact, if public voice has been quieted as the authors aptly note, then one key way to increase public discussion is to increase the voice of the poor in the process from the outside.

Beyond the relative merits of suggested reforms of the process, this book provides an interesting and lucid case example for scholars and practitioners on some key deficiencies of Third Way theory and practice. In particular, it convincingly argues that nonprofit provision of required societal services is not necessarily a panacea. Nonprofits, while often doing good work, like other

interest groups, may experience considerable constraints in their advocacy and provision of services. This book very convincingly, illustrates why.

MICHAEL GIVEL  
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**The Failed Welfare Revolution: America's Struggle over Guaranteed Income Policy** by *Brian Steensland*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2008. 330 pp. \$35.00.

In this book, sociologist Brian Steensland explores the rise and fall of what he sees as an alternative to conservative welfare reform: guaranteed annual income (GAI) policies. In the United States, the idea that government should guarantee all citizens access to a minimum income regardless of their labor market status became widely debated in the late 1960s and, especially, the 1970s. At the time, experts and policymakers turned to GAI proposals in order to address what became known as the “welfare mess.” In his detailed historical account, Steensland suggests that actors supported such proposals for very different reasons, partly because this idea “had multiple meanings attributed to it by various supporters” (p. 4). For example, depending on a set of factors, GAI proposals could take on a liberal or a conservative meaning.

Steensland offers a detailed analysis of the debates about GAI policies within the administration of Richard Nixon, in Congress, and among interest groups ranging from big business to the then-influential welfare rights movement. Nixon's Family Assistance Plan came close to being enacted but, according to Steensland, the fact that it “brought into the same program categories of the poor who had been previously treated as undeserving and mixed them with deserving populations” considerably undermined its support (p. 238). Focusing on the understudied role of culture in social policy development, Steensland shows how existing programs featured cultural categories such as “deserving poor” and “undeserving poor” that shaped perceptions of the policy alternatives at stake. For example, because the Family Assistance Plan would have provided benefits to both the deserving and the undeserving poor, many observers saw it as a “welfare” program that would symbolically contaminate the working poor. For Steensland, such a “symbolic pollution” weakened support for Nixon's Family Assistance Plan, which largely explains its ultimate demise. Attempts to revive GAI proposals in the Jimmy Carter years failed miserably (p. 1). Starting in the late 1970s, the conservative push for workfare overshadowed GAI proposals, which fell into oblivion. According to Steensland, the defeat of such proposals in the 1970s was a major missed opportunity. For him, GAI is a great idea that deserves a second chance.

*The Failed Welfare Revolution* is a well-researched book that fills a significant gap in the literature on U.S. social policy. The theoretical perspective is innovative, and Steensland makes a strong case for the study of the role of