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Book Reviews

Why Intelligence Fails: Lessons from the Iranian Revolution and the Iraq War by Robert Jervis. *Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2010. 248 pp. \$27.95.*

Anything on intelligence written by Robert Jervis is worth reading. This volume is certainly no exception. In this instance, he takes on the difficult job of trying to understand why the United States, despite spending \$80 billion on intelligence each year, still makes mistakes in predicting the trajectory of world affairs.

That intelligence often fails is hardly a new insight. Generations of scribblers have commented on the uncertainty that besets all human efforts to pierce the fog of the future. What makes Jervis's contribution valuable are the rich case studies he has to offer: one on the fall of the Iranian Shah in 1979, and another about suspected weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq in 2002.

Jervis investigated both of these cases for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), the first prepared at the time of the Shah's demise and the second as a more-recent post-mortem. The book also offers in-house CIA critiques of his Iranian analysis, accompanied by his thoughts on what it is like to work as an outside consultant to a secret agency.

Jervis cuts the CIA some slack for its failure to predict the Shah's fall, on grounds that it is difficult to estimate how far street protesters will go. I recall speaking to a top agency analyst responsible for Iran at the time. He said to me:

We knew the Shah was widely unpopular, and we knew there would be mass demonstrations, even riots. But how many shopkeepers would resort to violence, and how long would Army officers remain loyal to the Shah? Perhaps the Army would shoot down 10,000 rioters, maybe 20,000. If the ranks of the insurgents swelled further, though, how far would the Army be willing to go before it decided the Shah was a losing proposition? All this we duly reported: but no one could predict with confidence the number of dissidents who would actually take up arms, or the "tipping point" for Army loyalty.

Uncertainty is common for intelligence analysts and one can appreciate why they sometimes err. Still, with better human and technical intelligence in Tehran, the CIA might have had a keener sense of the Shah's vulnerabilities. Analysis is only as good as the information it rests upon.

Jervis has it right, too, on the Iraqi failure. He rejects the simplistic thesis that the administration of George W. Bush politicized intelligence to support its predetermined intentions to attack Baghdad; rather, he digs into the nuances of why the intelligence itself was so badly flawed. While Vice President Dick Cheney did twist intelligence on some aspects of the Iraqi matter (such as claiming an al Qaeda–Iraqi connect despite strong evidence to the contrary), nevertheless, the core intelligence finding in support of the WMD hypothesis was not politicized.

Jervis lays out the flawed strands of analysis that led most of the spy agencies to accept the likelihood of WMD. Again he finds their conclusion reasonable, given the poor information possessed by the United States about Iraq.

George Tenet, Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) at the time, warrants harsher criticism in this second case for failing to highlight the dissents of State, Energy, and the Air Force on key aspects of the WMD estimate. Had Tenet put his foot down, instead of in his mouth, with the now infamous “slam dunk” comment, the President might have considered a delay in the Iraqi invasion plans while the United Nations further tested the validity of the weapons hypothesis. Instead, the administration rushed to war, encouraged by a DCI who forgot his primary duty: to present the facts, including dissents, in detail and without taking sides.

LOCH K. JOHNSON
University of Georgia

The Crisis of Capitalist Democracy by Richard A. Posner. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2010. 408 pp. \$25.95.

This book, written by the eminent jurist, Richard Posner, is an effort to write current economic history in the midst of a financial crisis. As such, it suffers from many claims that are unproven about the appropriateness of economic policies. Evidence for these claims will only come in over the next year or two—if that. But more problematic is the presentation of the arguments. One might have expected thoughtful academic analysis—given Posner’s previous academic writings and publication of the book by a major university press. Instead, we have a blend of polemic against various politicians and academics that Posner appears to dislike, combined with a fig leaf of academic citations to literature on the subject. On this score, it would appear that the outcome is closer to a blog between two covers, rather than a serious piece of work.

What evidence is there for these claims? First, the book is surprisingly parochial, giving little attention to the global context and implications of the crisis. Although chapter 12 is called “America in the World Economy,” this 25-page chapter tries to combine *both* international arguments, *and* an analysis of the deficiencies of the U.S. polity. This would hardly seem adequate, given the title of the book and its efforts to link the crisis to governance issues. With respect to

the lack of adequate international analysis, for example, Posner approvingly cites Paul Volcker's tackling of inflation in 1981–2. Yet he fails to mention how dramatically high interest rates set off the Latin American debt crisis of the 1980s, putting American (and other international banks) at risk, and forcing the administration of George H.W. Bush to force a resolution of the debt crisis with the creation of Brady Bonds (named after Nicholas Brady) to force banks to write down outstanding sovereign debt toward the end of the 1980s.

Second, although Posner weakly defends the intervention to bail out General Motors (GM) and Chrysler, he goes on to criticize government-led efforts to transform the companies. But one can read the recent news about GM's profits, and argue that this approach might be a success. Or maybe it will be a failure. But can we really judge what good policy is and should we use intermediate developments (at the time of the writing of the book) to make a case either way?

Third, the passing shots at Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke, Timothy Geithner, Henry Paulson, Paul Krugman, and Christina Romer make provocative reading, but are not always well argued or substantiated. It is even odder that Posner should note that "it is a matter of concern when academic economists, upon becoming either public officials or public intellectuals (like Paul Krugman), leave behind their academic scruples" (p. 153). As a former academic who now has clearly become a public intellectual, Posner might do well to heed his own advice.

These comments notwithstanding, the book does have some useful arguments about the problem of a self-sustaining market, the need to think of the economic system in an institutional context, and the importance of Keynes's work—hardly novel ideas, but important ones that have long been espoused by political economists. It is unfortunate that the useful insights that Posner provides on bankruptcy law (where he is on firmer intellectual ground) could not have been the basis for a more scholarly treatise. If university presses ape commercial presses and rush out polemical works, then it is hard to see their *raison d'être*.

VINOD K. AGGARWAL
University of California at Berkeley

The Bridge: The Life and Rise of Barack Obama by *David Remnick*.
New York, Knopf, 2010. 672 pp. Cloth, \$29.95.

The American president is not a prime mover, but there have been episodes such as the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 in which the occupant of the Oval Office was called upon to take actions of incalculable importance. It follows that there is intense interest in understanding the qualities each new chief executive brings to his (and at some point her) responsibilities.

The work under review contains numerous insights into the leadership style of Barack Obama, many of them deriving from its author's interviews

with an impressive number of informants, including Obama himself. Two that are of particular interest were with Robert Putnam and Laurence Tribe, a pair of Harvard professors who saw a great deal of Obama during his time as a Harvard Law School student. Putnam was impressed by Obama's gift for taking in the seemingly contradictory assertions made by the participants in public forums and identifying points of agreement (p. 306). Tribe was struck by his pragmatic mind-set, freedom from rigid assumptions, and "problem-solving orientation" (p. 196). These are qualities that should serve Obama well in the period of divided government ushered in by the 2010 elections.

David Remnick's focus, however, is not only on the matters referred to in his book's subtitle. He also seeks to relate the life and rise of Obama to the larger black experience. This aim is captured in the symbolism of his title, which links the site of a 1965 police assault on black freedom marchers in Alabama to civil rights icon John Lewis's Inauguration Day 2009 remark that "Obama is what comes at the end of that bridge at Selma." Remnick's interest in situating his protagonist in the sweep of black history leads him to devote much of *The Bridge* to matters as diverse as the history of the Civil Rights movement, Chicago's south side, and the relationship between Frederick Douglass and Abraham Lincoln. The inevitable effect is to dilute the book's account of Obama.

Taken as a meditation on race in American history, *The Bridge* is an informative and moving work. Taken as an account of Obama himself, however, it is less instructive than such more-focused works as *Chicago Tribune* reporter David Mendell's 2007 *Obama: From Promise to Power*.

FRED I. GREENSTEIN
Princeton University

Newcomers, Outsiders and Insiders: Immigrants and American Racial Politics in the Early Twenty-First Century by Ronald Schmidt Sr., Yvette M. Alex-Assensoh, Andrew L. Aoki, and Rodney Hero. *Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2009. 336 pp. Paper, \$24.95.*

The nation's demographics have dramatically changed since its founding. Since the 1960s, immigration has transformed a society almost completely populated by Europeans into a multi-religious, polyglot, majority-minority nation. Political science, except for notable exceptions, such as Lawrence Fuch's encyclopedic *The American Kaleidoscope*, is new to the study of how these immigrants have transformed the polity. Rather than target immigration's effects directly, political analyses have targeted the impact of immigration via studies of Latino and Asian ethnic politics. This work, however, has not tested or produced theoretical insights into how immigration affects the nation's racial political processes, which is the goal of *Newcomers, Outsiders and Insiders*.

Newcomers links immigration to the nation's historical and current racial politics. It focuses on Asians and Latinos, groups that have long been victimized

by social and governmental institutions, and uses the prism of historical discrimination to show that these two groups enter a racialized environment that they will influence and which will simultaneously affect their political lives. Although black immigrants also find themselves in a similar, if more extreme, position, their numbers are so low and black history is so distinct that this study pays little attention to them.

The study's primary objective is to evaluate competing theoretical explanations of the nation's racial politics, given recent and future immigration. Unlike prior work such as Mario Barrera's *Race and Class in the Southwest: A Theory of Racial Inequality* and Michael Omi and Howard Winant's *Racial Formation in the United States*, which utilized a singular theoretical approach, *Newcomers* is in the tradition of Chris Garcia and Rodolfo de la Garza's *The Chicano Political Experience*, Rodney Hero's *Latinos and the U. S. Political System*, and Rufus Browning, Dale Rogers, and David Tabb's *Racial Politics in American Cities*, which evaluate the utility of competing theoretical approaches used to explain the relationship between ethnic/racial minorities and the polity. It differs from the latter three because it incorporates immigration, an issue that was not salient when these studies were completed.

The volume's primary achievement is that it is so comprehensive. This makes it invaluable as a text for upper-division classes on minority politics, immigration, and general American politics. However, it contains no original research. Specialists may find references with which they are unfamiliar, but substantively, they will find nothing new. Instead, the text invites questions that should have been asked. For example, what impact does immigration have on the growth of Latino and Asian national membership organizations? Given that the paucity of such organizations has long weakened Latino mobilization, this is a significant question.

Its contributions to theory are even more problematic. Theoretical issues related to naturalization are never raised; for example, what are the theoretical implications for racial politics, given that naturalization has become increasingly costly and difficult? Can such changes be conceptualized as impediments to Latino and Asian access to the polls and challenged based on the Voting Rights Act (VRA)? What about requiring voters to be citizens? Another major theoretical issue is the impact of transnational behaviors on political incorporation. I agree that there is little evidence that this impedes immigrant incorporation, but the authors should have engaged it more fully, given its increasing political salience.

Despite these limitations, *Newcomers* will be a most useful addition to the growing literature on minority politics. While it will be especially valuable to upper-division students, anyone interested in immigration and ethnic/racial politics will find it valuable.

RODOLFO O. DE LA GARZA
Columbia University

Not Even Past: Barack Obama and the Burden of Race by *Thomas J. Sugrue*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2010. 178 pp. \$24.95.

To many observers, the election of Barack Obama as President was the harbinger of a “post-racial” era in American politics, evidence that race was no longer significant either as a barrier to individual success or as an object of group antagonism. Obama’s ascendancy seemed to many to mark the culmination of the long Civil Rights struggle for recognition, rights, and equality. After all, if an African American—especially one whose political identity so carefully avoided the sharp binary distinctions of an earlier era—could become president, what barriers could remain?

Now, two years into the Obama era, the realities of recession, war, and intense political divisiveness define the political moment, and rather than fading into the background, race has been a frequent source of political conflict. The nearly giddy enthusiasm of the campaign and election has subsided and with it, perhaps, the hope of a “post-racial” America.

Thomas Sugrue’s fine book offers a cogent and powerful explanation for this mismatch between expectations and reality. He situates Barack Obama’s personal racial and political odyssey in a richly textured history of race, class, and politics in the late twentieth century, and in Sugrue’s deft and elegant prose, Obama’s political biography becomes a lens through which American politics and race relations come into clearer view.

The book unfolds in three sections. The first narrates Obama’s path toward finding his own personal racial identity and his place as both a legatee and a critic of the black freedom struggle of the 1950s and 1960s. The second focuses on Obama’s career in Chicago, first as a community organizer in the 1980s and then as a law professor and rising politician in the 1990s. Chicago in those years was one of the epicenters of American industrial decline, and in the south-side neighborhoods where Obama lived and worked, the effects of that decline on the black urban poor were stark and severe. Sugrue’s brisk intellectual history of black disadvantage in urban America—encompassing such diverse characters as William Julius Wilson and Jeremiah Wright—is one of the book’s highlights, and it nicely describes the crucible in which Obama’s political character, and particularly his emphasis on building alliances across lines of race and class, was defined.

The book’s third section parses Obama’s approach to the politics of race in a society defined by increasing racial and ethnic diversity, riven by persistent and pernicious racial inequality, and broadly committed to a rhetoric of color-blindness. At the center of this section is a close reading of Obama’s pivotal campaign speech on race, in which he successfully defused a crisis over his own racial identity and sympathies that threatened to end his bid for the presidency. Sugrue’s reading of the speech intricately weaves together the threads of history, biography, politics, economics, and sociology that have formed his narrative, and the result is a culminating portrait of Obama as tactician, orator,

thinker, and above all, as a projection of the profound paradoxes and ambiguities of race in contemporary American society.

Sugrue's portrait of Obama-in-history lays bare an important analytical challenge for observers of American politics and society. In the wake of the Civil Rights revolution of the 1950s and 1960s, the most obvious barriers to racial equality—state-sponsored and -sanctioned segregation, explicit discrimination, and widespread racial prejudice—have declined dramatically. Moreover, the anti-discrimination regime created by the Civil Rights laws of the 1960s has been comparatively successful at rooting out the most egregious practices of racial exclusion and establishing racial integration as a widespread goal of public policy. But these changes, while they have dramatically improved life chances for many members of racial and ethnic minority groups, have not closed the gap entirely, and multiple sources of inequality—residency, education, employment, income, wealth, and incarceration, among others—still overlap and reinforce one another. Moreover, as labor market and economic inequality have increased and hardened in recent decades, the racial gap has become more, not less, acute. It is this general puzzle—the persistence of racial inequality in an apparently “post-racial” world—that is perhaps the most profound challenge facing American politics and society, and Sugrue's book is an essential guide to those who seek to answer that challenge.

ROBERT C. LIEBERMAN
Columbia University

Beyond Ideology: Politics, Principles, and Partisanship in the U.S. Senate by Frances E. Lee. Chicago, IL, University of Chicago Press, 2009. 264 pp. Paper, \$22.00.

Any observer of American politics today would instantly recognize that political discourse is dominated by disagreements between the two major parties. Even though President Barack Obama and his predecessor, George W. Bush, independently issued campaign promises to “reach across the aisle” and promote bipartisanship, party disagreement on roll call voting is near an all-time high. Political scientists have tended to chalk these disagreements, as well as the polarization of American politics, up to the growing ideological differences between elected Democrats and Republicans. As her book title implies, Frances Lee argues that much of the partisan disagreement we observe in the U.S. Senate is caused not by ideological disagreements over the direction of policy, but by intense electoral competition between the two major parties. Given the desire of each party to control the presidency and to hold a majority of seats in Congress, Lee argues that many seemingly non-controversial policies get caught up in the larger, zero-sum, electoral game between political elites.

Through a careful, yet wide-ranging examination of the Senate agenda and roll call voting patterns over the past three decades, Lee demonstrates that

widespread party disagreement occurs on all kinds of votes on all kinds of issues. Policies touted by presidents in their State of the Union addresses seem to provoke partisan disagreement even if the underlying issue is non-controversial. While not downplaying the fact that party disagreements have grown on ideological issues such as the extent of the social safety net, tax policy, and social issues such as abortion, Lee points out that there is considerable partisan bickering over non-ideological issues. Roll call data show considerable party disagreement on seemingly non-ideological issue such as preventing fraud in government contracts, promoting government efficiency through reducing wasteful spending, and gathering high-quality, timely information. Here her argument turns provocative as she points out that contemporary theories that rely on spatial models fail to explain the consistent partisan disagreement on these non-ideological issues. Relying on numerous quotes from party insiders and examples of issues on which the major parties have exchanged positions in a short period of time, Lee convincingly claims that political scientists are ignoring much of the politics in political science. She argues that by relying too heavily on spatial voting models, which conceive of all roll calls and members as aligned on a singly ideological spectrum, scholars have mischaracterized much of modern American politics. Lee makes a case for scholars to more carefully consider how party membership and competition shape the strategies of party leaders and the behavior of the rank and file members, instead of thinking of issues spatially and independently. Though this argument could have benefited from more attention to the causal mechanisms at play, Lee's overall argument regarding the shared fate and goals of party members has a great deal of face validity for most observers of American politics today.

Lee's focus on the intricate details of what is behind each roll call and her willingness to delve into the politics of the U.S. Senate rather than just the U.S. House should be commended. *Beyond Ideology* is meticulously researched, carefully argued, and well-written. It makes an important contribution to contemporary scholarship on the U.S. Congress, and may well help set new research agendas as congressional scholars move on from the decade-long party-versus-preferences debate that has defined much recent research.

JASON M. ROBERTS

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Political Branding in Cities: The Decline of Machine Politics in Bogota, Naples, and Chicago by *Eleonora Pasotti*. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009. 304 pp. \$90.00.

A comparative case study of municipal politics in Bogota, Naples, and Chicago is hardly an obvious choice. At first blush, it even appears a little quirky. But Eleonora Pasotti carries off her research in three languages on three continents

with flair and intelligence, producing a genuine, if somewhat flawed, *tour de force*. What these cities have in common, we discover, is that each made a transition in the last 25 years or so from clientelistic or machine politics to a reform mode that Pasotti calls the “politics of branding.” The three-city comparison, it turns out, affords an informative and rich context for understanding certain cross-national commonalities among modern municipal reform regimes.

Here is her argument: Whereas the politics of machine clientelism is driven by particularistic exchanges—a job for your vote—the politics of branding is propelled by an articulation of collective values that offer “innovative visions of what it means to be a citizen” (p. 227). A vision or brand transcends particularistic identities, including race and class, and offers new vehicles for “lifestyle experiences” (p. 227) that urban citizens find in new public spaces, street entertainments, culture, and public transportation. In brand politics, consumption promotes community and solidarity, as Naples Mayor Antonio Bassolino put it, rather than individual gain. Voter loyalty forms when a mayoral candidate develops a brand that provides emotional and expressive benefits, rather than instrumental ones, although why voters are willing to make this exchange is not made very clear. (Pasotti says that brands make voters “feel better about themselves and their futures” [p. 244], but there is scant evidence presented here on this. What seems apparent is that so-called brand politics responds to a growing taste for urban amenities.)

Brand politics emerged in the three cities in response to a set of institutional and political shifts. In all three places, hugely bloated public employment rolls became unsustainable as central government resources declined and as anti-corruption campaigns crystallized. In all three, the mayoral office was strengthened in various ways, offering stronger centralized power and the diminution of traditional parties.

Things get especially interesting when the book turns to the three case studies. The book is full of colorful political characters: Antonio Bassolino of Naples, who claimed inspiration from Martin Luther King’s “I have a dream” speech; Bogota’s Antanas Mockus, a university dean and philosophy professor, who once dropped his trousers to shock a crowd of unruly student demonstrators; Enrique Penalosa, also of Bogota, an economics professor and master transportation visionary; and Harold Washington, Chicago’s first black mayor and a progressive challenger to the white Democratic machine, among others. And their achievements truly transformed their cities: among these were the creation of a great public plaza in the heart of Naples in what was once a huge parking lot; the planning and implementation of a bus system in Bogota that has become a model for the world; and the construction of Millennium Park in Chicago, one of the great urban public spaces of the late-twentieth century.

The problem with the book is that it is finally not clear that the notion of “political branding” provides convincing added theoretical value to what we already know about post-machine reform. The themes of brand politics—efficiency,

transparency, privatization, and economic development—are elements that scholars have long included under the rubric of the New Public Management and reform regimes. Nor are the symbolic aspects of municipal branding particularly novel: Atlanta was calling itself the “City Too Busy to Hate” in the 1970s, and the elder Richard Daley’s Chicago was known as “The City that Works.” Branding in Pasotti’s hands becomes a vehicle for over-theorization, leading to discussions of “recoding voters’ expectations” (p. 243) and “catalyst events that embodied [mayors’] discursive frames” (p. 143). What is finally interesting in this book are the case studies of a diverse set of local politicians seeking to satisfy a growing citizen appetite for urbanity.

PETER EISINGER
The New School

Electing Chávez: The Business of Anti-neoliberal Politics in Venezuela
by Leslie Gates. Pittsburgh, PA, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2010.
208 pp. \$24.95.

This tidy book seeks to explain the election of Hugo Chávez in 1998 by exploring the impact of business elites and anti-business sentiment in Venezuela. Leslie Gates lays out two related puzzles: how Chávez managed to win voter support despite his apparently anti-neoliberal position (widely presumed by most Latin Americanists to be a losing strategy at the time), and how he also managed to win financial backing from a few business entrepreneurs, a rather well-known secret during the election of 1998.

Gates’s solution to the first puzzle modifies some of the most common explanations for the emergence of Chávez. Voters were not only reacting to widespread political corruption, the inadequacies of their democratic institutions, and the impact of neoliberal economic reforms, as some theories suggest, but they had become disenchanted with business interests. Business elites enjoyed historically strong ties to government and were increasingly implicated in corruption scandals. While most presidential contenders presented themselves as outsiders who would change the system, only Chávez took an anti-elite stance that was also anti-business.

In answer to the second puzzle, Gates proposes that the dependence of some business leaders on access to the government, coupled with their fears of losing out to competitors who supported Chávez’s opponents, prompted these entrepreneurs to act against their broad sectoral interests. Thus, Venezuela’s oil-based economy not only helped create businesses with close ties to government and a penchant for corrupt behavior, but also turned business leaders into political enemies, based on their ties to different political patrons.

Gates tests her first argument (on anti-business sentiment among the public) with a combination of historical, biographical, and public opinion data that are largely convincing. She notes a clear, sharp decline in public confidence

in the national business confederation in the 1990s; she shows an increase in corruption scandals involving business; she measures the high levels of business participation in Venezuela's government and its increase over time; and she analyzes a pre-election survey from 1998 showing that anti-business sentiment was at least one of a few important factors that helped predict a vote for Chávez. While most of the survey data have been analyzed in other studies, the rest of Gates's data are original. She constructs a database on the business trajectories of almost all cabinet officials and legislators for the 1958–1998 period, and codes corruption scandals found in newspapers and a published compendium for these same years.

The test of Gates's second argument is even more compelling and productive. She engages in a clever effort at academic journalism, uncovering the names of Chávez's key business contributors in the 1998 campaign and interviewing each of these "elite outliers." Surprisingly, she finds that Chávez's business support cut across sectoral lines. She then provides a detailed account of Venezuela's 1994 banking crisis that enables her to link these elite outliers to their experience during the crisis. Most of Chávez's business supporters in 1998 were losers in the previous government's response to the crisis, while the businessmen who participated in the previous government and benefited from the crisis were friends of Chávez's key opponent. Chávez's supporters were trying to gain the upper hand over their competitors.

Gates's book is a helpful corrective to research on Venezuelan politics during the Punto Fijo period, which has tended to focus on parties and organized labor. It more clearly spells out some of the ways in which business actually operated within the Venezuelan state, and it provides impressive new datasets on corruption scandals and the business ties of politicians. It also challenges the accepted wisdom in the political economy literature, which has tended to assume that sectoral ties determine political preferences.

KIRK A. HAWKINS
Brigham Young University

The New Labour Experiment: Change and Reform Under Blair and Brown by Florence Faucher-King and Patrick Le Gales. *Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 2010. 183 pp. Cloth, \$60.00; paper, \$21.95.*

This work by French political scientists provides a useful outside perspective on the British Labour Party's 13-year rule from 1997 to 2010. The main analysis deals with Tony Blair's 10 years as British Prime Minister (1997–2007), with a postscript on Gordon Brown's term until his defeat in mid-2010. The focus is exclusively on domestic policy. The authors pose the question: "What can a government of the left do today?" (p. 14). They note that New Labour's answer was largely rejected by other European socialist parties, although it was admired by others such as Nicolas Sarkozy.

It was only after its fourth successive defeat in 1992 that the Labour Party fully accepted the need for radical reform of its structures and policies. The Party's rebranding as "New Labour," led by Brown and Blair, was their response to the changes in British society after 18 years of Conservative rule. As a result of accelerated deindustrialization and anti-union legislation, the decline in trade union numbers and power had eroded the Party's organizational, support, and funding base. Labour could no longer rely on working-class solidarity to win; the target of New Labour was middle England. Labour also had to demonstrate its competence to govern after the disastrous economic performance of the last Labour government (1974–79). Hence, Brown's insistence as Chancellor of the Exchequer on sound economic management, refusal to raise taxes, courting of the business community, and particular indulgence of the booming financial sector in the City.

Unlike most of its European counterparts, New Labour was enthusiastic about globalization. It was Blair and Brown's ambition to radically reform British institutions and reshape individual behavior to adapt to the new global economy. For the first time, Labour fully embraced market society but retained its traditional confidence in state action. The new objective was "reorganizing and redirecting the state to benefit from market dynamism" (p. 18). This "new public management" meant the frequent reorganization of government services and the proliferation of targets, indicators, and league tables. The effect was, in the authors' view, to give Britain the most centralized government in Europe. There was a new confidence in social engineering, in changing individual behavior with a combination of incentives and coercion. There was a strong emphasis on social order and security, leaving Britain the most-watched society in Europe. Indeed the authors accuse New Labour of breaking with the social democratic tradition of universal rights.

The revamped Labour Party succeeded in winning three successive elections for the first time in its history, but its reputation was damaged, first, by Blair's decision to join the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 and fatally, when the economic boom collapsed in 2008. Overall, the authors' judgment of the New Labour experiment is critical. They conclude that New Labour largely abandoned its traditional working-class supporters and social democratic values and, as a result, failed to meet many of the goals important to the left: it failed to reduce social inequalities, leaving Britain the most unequal society in Europe; specifically, it failed to reduce the north/south prosperity divide in Britain. It also failed in its stated goal of further integrating Britain into the European Union, and its ambitious program of constitutional reform remained incomplete.

Once more in opposition, the Labour Party has to reconsider its direction under a new generation of leaders. Will New Labour survive? Is a return to old Labour traditions possible? What can a government of the left do today?

GEORGE BRECKENRIDGE
McMaster University

The Mother of Mohammed: An Australian Woman's Extraordinary Journey into Jihad by Sally Neighbour. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010. 368 pp. Paper, \$26.50.

Sally Neighbour's book is an excellent insider's account of a convert's journey to radical Islam. Not since Lawrence Wright's *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* has a book provided as much detail on the inner workings of the global jihad. Neighbour has spent hundreds of hours with Rabiah (Robyn) Hutchison, a twenty-year Islamic holy warrior from Australia. In the book, Neighbour takes the reader from Robyn's early life as a pot-smoking, surfing beach bunny to the pesantrens of Indonesia and eventually, to al Qaeda training camps in Afghanistan. Rabiah is a matriarch of radical Islam, and in Central Intelligence Agency circles, she is referred to as "the Elizabeth Taylor of the *jihad*." Throughout the book, the reader is afforded glimpses of how a convert becomes a true believer and how radicalized women have increasingly become important players in the global jihad, forming the emotional backbone of the movement.

Neighbour's interviews with Ms. Hutchison reveal how jihadi women see themselves and how they see the world. If Rabiah represents the norm, then Western interpretations about the patriarchy miss their mark. For Hutchison, her veil is not a symbol of oppression but of freedom of movement and association, and affords a supplemental layer of respect and protection in her community. When Rabiah's daughter decides, after their return from exile to Australia, that she no longer wants to wear the veil, her mother cuts all ties, confused as to why she would voluntarily surrender this advantage.

The book delves into the day-to-day life of the mujahadeen, including the many hardships, and how true believers survived. It documents how Islamic communities care for one another and for newcomers. Over the course of several moves between Indonesia, Australia, Pakistan, and Afghanistan, Rabiah, with five children in tow, is taken in by families she befriends at mosques or Islamic community centers. The altruistic and generous nature of the community allows her to survive for years without employment. Following from Eli Berman's book, *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism*, they are masters of mutual aid, creating supportive tight-knit communities. They thrive even as they insulate themselves from the outside world.

Neighbour's interviews describe the philosophic divide within the jihad. Through Rabiah's experiences with Osama bin Laden, Ayman al-Zawahiri, and Umayma al-Zawahiri, the book relates how bin Laden created numerous schools in Afghanistan and supported the education and well-being of women and girls. Zawahiri personally deputized her to run a women's hospital in Kandahar—efforts their Talib hosts rejected. The book offers insight into how and why bin Laden was able to develop a cult of personality among the Arab Afghans, and how small gestures of generosity had a huge impact. Rabiah relates a story of how bin Laden followed a group of children to the local bakery. Seeing all the children

in line for bread without any money, and buying the bread on credit, bin Laden paid off everyone's debts, to the joy of the children and parents alike.

The book provides a wonderful contrast to the role generally presented of women in different Islamic organizations. When Rabiah attends the Jemaat Islamiyya pesantren in Solo, Abdullah Sungkar and Abu Bakir Ba'asyir spend hours discussing the Sunna and Hadith with her as she offers critiques and suggestions. In contrast, when she meets with Zawahiri, she must do so behind a thick black curtain.

The book ends with Rabiah back in Sydney under house arrest and 24-hour surveillance. Designated "a threat to national security" and prevented from travelling abroad because she might "destabilize foreign governments," according to the Australian Security Intelligence Organization, Rabiah insists that she is just a regular grandmother. Although this book is the biography of one woman, it is incredibly informative for students of radicalization, those interested in Indonesia, and anyone interested in the study of gender and women's roles in jihad.

As a journalistic account, the book suffers from a few problems. Occasionally, the level of detail is overwhelming, and the accounts of Robyn's early childhood development growing up with an angry, drunken father imply that her conversion to Islam was prompted by family issues. The book tries a bit too hard to connect the dots between Robyn's broken home and her radicalization, unconvincing for students of the process. Moreover, the story is uncritical of Hutchison. There is scant analysis by Neighbour. Nevertheless, the copious amount of material that will benefit future researchers far outweighs any shortcomings. Chapters of this book will be useful for classes on Islam, terrorism, the role of women, and Indonesia.

MIA BLOOM
Penn State University

Tax Evasion and the Rule of Law in Latin America: The Political Culture of Cheating and Compliance in Argentina and Chile by *Marcelo Bergman*. University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2010. 264 pp. Cloth, \$65.00; paper, \$28.95.

This is a great study that provides a crucial criticism of the literature on the new institutionalism in political science. The author persuasively shows that the nature of the tax agency, or even the enforcement of rules sanctioning non-compliance, does not explain the behavior of taxpayers. The force of the law is not sufficient to modify the behavior of cheaters. Taxpayers that were audited or even punished for non-compliance are not more likely to obey the law after the punishment. Marcelo Bergman argues that instead, perceptions of the strategies of other taxpayers and the information they provide about the likelihood of audits and sanctions have a stronger impact on tax compliance.

Although Bergman's argument about tax compliance includes vertical enforcement, his main contribution rests on his analysis of horizontal (peer) enforcement. The sharing of information between taxpayers promotes rational imitation and socialization, leading to an individual understanding of the collective level of compliance. Individuals want to avoid being "suckers" who pay in a context of non-compliance even though they would pay if they were in a context of generalized compliance. The argument emphasizes the role of culture and the rule of law more generally in each of the two studied countries.

The richness of the study is enhanced by the author's use of multiple empirical strategies to test his theory. His many different empirical indicators include real and experimental behavior as well as attitudes. First, his measures of real taxpayers' behavior in both Argentina and Chile allow him to perform natural experiments about the impact of auditing and punishment on subsequent behavior by taxpayers. He also relies on experiments with students of two universities where he is able to manipulate the probability of audits and the impact of levels of punishment and collective compliance on his subjects. Finally, he uses surveys on attitudes of taxpayers and the population more generally to further assess the cultural aspects of his theory.

Bergman's empirical and theoretical analysis is both rich and persuasive and opens a line of inquiry on compliance beyond our current understanding of enforcement for explaining variation in the rule of law. Indeed, his conclusion could have been bolder, given his empirical findings on the weak explanatory power of legal enforcement, and could reshape our understanding of the impact of formal institutions on the behavior of citizens, an implicit assumption of the new institutionalist literature. By contrast, the study opens the door for further investigation of its claims. Bergman's claim about the stability of each of the non-compliance and compliance equilibria would require going beyond his initial discussion of how countries in the middle of the distribution tend to move to one of them whereas those on the extremes stay stable. The historical analysis of two countries emphasizes the origin of tax institutions, but does not delve into how each equilibrium was built in each country. Additionally, the very insightful argument about the role of culture that provides incentives for individual behavior could be tested using network surveys rather than attitudinal surveys that could be biased by the same norms that are being studied—it is more likely that Chileans rather than Argentinians would overstate their compliance if that is the general norm in their culture.

In short, this is an excellent piece that provides enough material to change our understanding of the impact of institutions on behavior, not just in Latin America, but more generally. Others should follow in Bergman's steps, extending this study to other policy areas and to other countries, but without losing the richness of his empirical analysis.

MARIA VICTORIA MURILLO
Columbia University

Imperial Alchemy: Nationalism and Political Identity in Southeast Asia
 by Anthony Reid. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 262 pp.
 Paper, \$29.99.

Perhaps the best two words to describe this latest work by the world's preeminent historian of Southeast Asia are "encyclopedic" and "kaleidoscopic." That *Imperial Alchemy* is encyclopedic in its historical and regional sweep will come as no surprise to readers even minimally familiar with Anthony Reid's substantial corpus. That the book feels kaleidoscopic in the complexity of the historical patterns it explores should surprise no one even remotely familiar with the highly heterogeneous terrain of Southeast Asian political identities. In a sense, Reid's authorial task is to convert his vast encyclopedia of personal knowledge into a kaleidoscopic pattern of comparative knowledge on how imperialism forged—and yielded to—a panoply of new ethnic and national identities across Southeast Asia. To pull this off, Reid must perform some analytical alchemy to rival the imperial alchemy of his title.

The finished product looks much more like gold than base metal. Reid commences with two broadly theoretical chapters, which deftly position Southeast Asia in wider conversations on nationalism and in wider comparisons with European and Northeast Asian cases. The overarching comparative lesson is that Southeast Asia has historically been a "state-averse world" (p. 22) where rulers generally lacked the capacity "to create cultural homogeneities" (p. 17) in the manner of an England or a Korea—delaying the vital struggles over nationalist inclusion and exclusion until colonial and postcolonial times.

These chapters also offer two Southeast Asia–tailored typologies that help bring the region into the theoretical conversation on its own terms. First, Reid posits four regionally relevant types of nationalism: ethnic nationalism, state nationalism, anti-imperial nationalism, and outrage at state humiliation (pp. 5–11). Reid then introduces four types of imperial interactions, which had profoundly divergent implications for political identities: expanding an ethnic core, as in Burma, Thailand, and Vietnam; protecting fragile monarchies, as in Malaysia, Cambodia, and Laos; transforming trade empires into revolutionary unities, as in Indonesia and the Philippines; and ethnicizing the stateless, as in the myriad Southeast Asian communities that have managed to claim ethnic commonality, but not national sovereignty (pp. 37–48).

These typologies only loosely guide the empirical chapters, truth be told. Reid takes a great historian's license to regale his readers with new and fascinating perspectives on the cases he knows best—not the cases that would best flesh out his typologies. Chapter 3 sets the stage with a masterful revisionist history of the community against whom (and the category against which) Southeast Asian political identities have frequently been forged: "the Chinese." Chapter 4 sees Reid depart mainland for insular Southeast Asia for good, with a marvelous narration of the transformation of the category of "Malay" from "a wonderfully absorptive and eclectic category" (p. 88) into

a narrowly bounded ethnic marker. Together, these two chapters shed great new constructivist light on “the most widespread, ambiguous, and portentous of Southeast Asian labels” (p. 81). Chapters 5–7 then analyze three instances of “ethnicizing the stateless” in island Southeast Asia: Indonesia’s Acehese and Bataks, and Malaysia’s Kadazan/Dusun.

These final empirical chapters relate more to “ethnie formation” (p. 211) than state-seeking nationalism. This highlights the point that *Imperial Alchemy* is less squarely focused on imperialism and nationalism than its title suggests. It is as much about the postcolonial shaping of ethnic politics; and to the extent that it is about nationalism, the key alchemists were more often *anti*-imperialists than imperialists. In the final analysis, this is a book about the alchemy of political identities writ large. Anyone interested in the comparative political history of ethnicity and nationalism should jump at the chance to peer through Reid’s kaleidoscope.

DAN SLATER
University of Chicago

Exporting the Bomb: Technology Transfer and the Spread of Nuclear Weapons by Matthew Kroenig. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2010. 248 pp. Paper, \$22.95.

The spread of nuclear weapons, popularly known as proliferation, has long been a source of anxiety for policymakers and a popular subject for research by academics. Matthew Kroenig adds to the scholarly side of this tradition in his book, which focuses on the comparatively neglected supply-side dynamics of proliferation. In this well-argued and well-evidenced volume, he demonstrates that countries give assistance to nascent proliferators for strategic reasons rather than economic or institutional ones, contrary to popular belief.

In particular, governments give sensitive nuclear assistance—the “transfer of nuclear materials and technologies directly relevant to a nuclear weapons program” (p. 2)—to other countries that are first, sufficiently far away so that they are not inadvertently cramping their own agenda by introducing nuclear weapons to a state over which they have power projection capabilities, and second, facing a common enemy, or as Kroenig puts it, “The enemy of my enemy is my customer” (p. 111). However, if a country is a superpower (or beholden to one), it is less likely to do so.

Kroenig bookends his analysis with two sets of regressions, the first demonstrating the correlates of sensitive assistance. In addition to finding support for his main hypotheses, he finds that members of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty (NPT) are less likely to assist other states, but he finds little support for economic motives of suppliers or the effectiveness of institutional barriers other than the NPT. His final empirical chapter shows that sensitive assistance is likely to lead to nuclear weapons acquisition.

He bolsters his quantitative results with well-chosen case studies that cover the full range of his independent (power projection/common enemy) and dependent (sensitive nuclear assistance) variables, including a nice treatment of selected “shadow cases” of non-assistance. Israel is his central case, an excellent comparison of why France, with its inability to project power but with a common rival (Egypt) in the area, chose to aid the Israeli program, but the United States, a superpower without such a rival, did not. He also takes on the primary case that would seem to disprove his argument, the Soviet Union’s assistance to China, a state that the USSR could project power over, and makes a strong case that although power projection concerns were present, the desire to balance against the United States through China overrode these concerns.

However, he does underestimate the power of domestic political considerations to tilt assistance decisions. For example, he understates Charles de Gaulle’s opposition to assisting Israel once he came into power, arguing that he “merely took steps to cover up the official role of the French government in assisting Israel’s nuclear program” (p. 75). Yet, de Gaulle initially demanded a complete end to cooperation and an opening to inspections, and only after two years of bargaining was this position softened (see Avner Cohen’s classic *Israel and the Bomb*). Similarly, the administrations of John Kennedy, Lyndon Johnson, and Richard Nixon all had very different positions toward Israel and China.

Such an underestimation does not undermine the book, however; rather, it simply suggests an additional avenue that future scholars who seek to understand the supply side of proliferation could investigate: the role that particular governments play in the ebb and flow of proliferation policy. This book is a must read for scholars of nuclear politics as well as for policymakers who seek to understand why countries would ever give away the secrets to the most powerful weapon in the world and why the United States has such a difficult time convincing others to back its nonproliferation policies.

ALEXANDER H. MONTGOMERY
Reed College

Going Local: Presidential Leadership in the Post-Broadcast Age by Jeffrey E. Cohen. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 256 pp. \$26.99.

This ambitious book focuses on presidential activities in the contemporary political environment that Jeffrey Cohen characterizes as marked by polarized political parties in Congress and fragmented mass media. Building on his own work (for example, the recent *The Presidency in the Era of 24-Hour News*) and the contextual theory that Samuel Kernell develops in the classic *Going Public*, Cohen connects presidential behavior to the organization of Congress and the mass media. As the shift from congressional institutional pluralism (which Cohen

identifies as prevailing 1953–1969 [p. 43]) to individual pluralism (1970–1988) helps explain presidents’ increased emphasis on public activities covered by national media, so more-recent changes in political context have affected presidents’ public behavior. Cohen argues that congressional polarization and media fragmentation (1989–present) help explain recent presidential efforts to more narrowly target constituencies via interest groups and local media. As an example of this tactical shift, Cohen notes President George W. Bush’s schedule of domestic travel to circumvent his “national Pooh-Bahs” (p. 2) and build support for legislative initiatives.

Cohen documents a decrease in the ratio of major prime-time presidential addresses to minor speeches and an increase in the number of presidential appearances outside of Washington since 1989. From these he infers increased presidential targeting of narrow political interests, communicated via presidential events not intended for general public attention, and smaller geographic constituencies via travel. Cohen is more persuasive on the second point, recognizing the difficulty in systematically ascertaining the purposes of presidential events he tallies, the topics the president addressed in them, or the constituencies he intended to serve (pp. 44–45).

To gauge presidential effectiveness at news management, Cohen examines the relationship between presidential public activities and the quantity and tone of presidential news in 24 local newspapers in 2000, as well as the quantity of presidential coverage in 56 local newspapers and *The Washington Post* over time (1990–2007). He finds that presidents can effect more and better local coverage by making more speeches; the relationships between presidential speeches and the quantity and tone of these news stories are curvilinear. While these analyses suggest that local media are still covering the president in an era of press downsizing and transition from old to new media, these findings do not clearly suggest that presidents are targeting local news outlets in their speeches or favoring them over national media.

In the sweep of its argument, *Going Local* is a well-crafted and quite useful assessment of contemporary presidential press politics. However, the book’s conceptual breadth may also limit Cohen’s contribution. He defines two of his most-important concepts with intentional vagueness: *context* appears to encompass the entire “external political environment” (p. 20), and *presidential news management* consists of “all activities that presidents engage in to affect the content and other characteristics of their news coverage” (p. 73). More-precise definitions would help Cohen guide the reader to his measures—attributes of Congress and mass media for the contemporary context and the quantity of presidential speeches for news management. Were Cohen to identify presidential news management techniques more closely with the purposes of presidential events, the topics they covered, or who was invited to them, he would provide even more persuasive evidence that the president is targeting narrow interests and intentionally going local rather than broad and national. Cohen explicitly recognizes many of these concerns, and in spite of them, the work is pertinent

and compelling. *Going Local* contributes to our understanding of presidential activities as an able extension to research that underscores structural influences on contemporary presidents, a particularly fruitful line of research for political scientists.

MARTIN JOHNSON
University of California, Riverside

The Civil Rights Movement and the Logic of Social Change by Joseph Luders. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 264 pp. Cloth, \$75.00; paper, \$25.99.

Following in the footsteps of such luminaries as C. Vann Woodward and V.O. Key, Joseph Luders questions the oversimplified view of the “solid South” by pinpointing the varied pressures Southern whites faced during the Civil Rights Movement. Across regions (Greensboro, New Orleans, Atlanta, Albany, Birmingham, Greenwood, Selma) and across issues (public school integration, voter registration, and desegregation of public accommodations), Luders disaggregates business interests (farmers, local merchants, professionals dependent on external investment, chain stores, manufacturing, and national corporations) and political variables (public opinion, mass attentiveness, and political mobilization) to illuminate the ways in which white Southerners calculated their support for or resistance to civil rights. By focusing less on the proponents of change and more on the targets of change, Luders successfully challenges the conventional approach, which tries to ascertain movement outcomes solely from the behavior of movement activists. Luders abstracts four archetypal targets of change (accommodators, resisters, vacillators, and conformers) and demonstrates how their respective cost–benefit analysis was historically contingent and strategically dynamic.

The most interesting insights have to do with his use of sectoral variation across business interests and his explanation for differential policing across the South. Countering the generalized presumption that economic development is inherently a moderating influence, Luders convincingly demonstrates that only certain kinds of economic development lend themselves to political moderation. Also, his analysis of differential policing breaks with the traditional narrative that divergent law enforcement responses stem primarily from differing personalities. Instead, Luders situates policing practices within a context of “specific local political incentives” (p. 111).

In other words, Luders reminds the reader that histories matter. But to what extent? Luders’s critique of the “solid South” raises questions of its own. Luders’s cost–benefit analysis characterizes racism as seemingly rational to the point that one wonders if there is anything distinctive about the South. The very fact of “calculating” the cost of racism also obscures the illiberal premises by which those calculations can even be posited. What partly made the South

distinctive was the perverse normality of racism, and this either gets lost or dismissed in Luders's account.

Luders's methodology also becomes more strained the farther out his explanatory scope goes. Whereas his analysis of local struggles in the South is entirely convincing, his analysis of the federal government's response to civil rights mobilization falls short. In order to fit into his overall argument regarding the central role movement opponents play in determining movement outcomes, Luders downplays the idiosyncratic and proactive role of sympathizers like President Lyndon Johnson and instead places in the foreground congressional resistance as epitomized by Republican minority leader Senator Everett Dirksen of Illinois. This shifting of attention runs counter to the dominant narrative and thus raises questions regarding synthesis. Specifically, how does one situate his approach within the vast literature concerning movement theory and the Civil Rights Movement? Luders equivocates on this point. At times, he sees his contribution as supplementary; at other times, he sees it as a substitute. This project of synthesis is perhaps beyond the scope of the book, but it is internal to the problems that Luders tackles.

Having breathed new life into something as exhaustively researched as the Civil Rights Movement is a feat in of itself. The amount of detail Luders musters has the potential to overwhelm the analysis. But Luders elegantly schematizes the historical detail in a way that does justice not only to the past but to the reader as well. Analytically illuminating and empirically rich, Luders's book maneuvers across disciplines with such ease and insight that one is inspired by the possibilities of further interdisciplinary work. Overall, the book is solidly researched and worth reading.

DANIEL KATO
Kalamazoo College

The View of the Courts from the Hill: Interactions Between Congress and the Federal Judiciary by Mark C. Miller. Charlottesville, VA, University of Virginia Press, 2009. 264 pp. \$45.00.

"This book explores congressional attitudes toward the federal courts in general and the U.S. Supreme Court in particular, concentrating on the period 1995-2006, when the Republicans mostly controlled both houses of Congress" (p. 1). It is based on "more than forty interviews" conducted during the 2006-7 academic year with "members of Congress, key congressional staff, federal judges, interest-group representatives, employees of the judicial branch, and others interested in the courts" (p. 5). Methodologically, Mark Miller roots the book in what he calls the "governance as dialogue movement" (p. 5). Quoting a member of Congress, he understands "governance as dialogue" as a "continuous back and forth between us [Congress] and the courts. In other words, it is a complex dialogue among equal branches always jockeying for power" (p. 8).

Miller's key argument is that in the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first, conservative forces in general, and the religious right in particular, have attacked the federal courts in ways that threaten their independence and ability "to be full participants in the inter-institutional constitutional dialogue" (p. 19). His often-stated claim is that judges base their decisions on "legal reasoning" rather than political preference and that "legal reasoning is the unique factor that courts bring to the inter-institutional constitutional dialogue" (p. 30). This is crucial because "U.S. constitutional democracy demands independent federal courts that are free to use legal reasoning and legal analysis in order to protect their status as full participants in the constitutional conversations that shape American society in the long run" (p. 35). Miller is concerned that "the current tense relationship between Congress and the federal courts may be eroding that foundational principle of the American system of government" (p. 185).

The book is divided into an introduction, five substantive chapters, and a conclusion. Chapter 1 summarizes the historical record of conflict between the courts and the other branches of the federal government. Chapter 2 examines the many ways in which Congress can attempt to influence the courts, from appointments to budgets to changing the number of courts and judges to legislating in response to Supreme Court decisions. The focus changes in chapter 3 to attacks on the federal courts in the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the twenty-first. Chapter 4 continues this focus by examining the actions of the U.S. House Judiciary Committee, particularly under the chairmanship of F. James Sensenbrenner (R-WI), who chaired the Committee from 2001 to 2006. Chapter 5 focuses on actions taken by one or both branches of the Congress to attack the courts, including jurisdiction-stripping, the proposal for an inspector general for courts, and impeachment. The book ends with chapter 6, which "explores the need for judicial independence in the American system of separation of powers" (p. 37).

The book is well-researched and well-written. Miller's interview data enrich the analysis. For readers new to the area, the book provides an accessible introduction.

Miller's argument is problematic in three main ways. First, Miller conflates judicial independence with judicial power. An independent judiciary need not be a powerful one. For example, traditionally, British courts were independent but lacked the power of judicial review. Second, Miller does not fully make the case for why the United States needs powerful as well as independent courts. He makes some effort to do so in the last chapter, but he does not elaborate and develop the case for judicial power. Third, his belief that judges engage solely in legal reasoning romanticizes the role of judges and overlooks the influential and growing attitudinal model literature.

GERALD N. ROSENBERG
University of Chicago

Now is the Time! Detroit Black Politics and Grassroots Activism by Todd C. Shaw. Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2009. 312 pp. Paper, \$23.95.

Todd Shaw's model of "Effective Black Activism" asserts that context, utility, and timing are important components of successful activism. Specifically, activists need the ability to forge allies, use techniques that can overcome those in power, and both recognize and act in windows of opportunity. In many respects, this is an urban politics interpretation of John Kingdon's federal policy model, in which problems and policy solutions come together when a policy window opens. Shaw's focus on low-income housing is intentional; housing has been and remains a politically charged arena, bringing together disparate players with conflicting interests.

The theoretical construct of political opportunity structures is the basis of Shaw's arguments connecting components of social movement theory with urban politics and policy. Shaw explores post-Civil Rights black activists' claims of the necessity for change since low-income housing needs were ignored by public officials, irrespective of race. The in-depth treatment of the 20-year tenure of Coleman Young, Detroit's first black mayor, is rich and insightful. This is set against the backdrop of the actions of federal, state, local, community, and private entities, between the 1930s and the 1960s, that impacted housing quality and availability for blacks in Detroit.

Using mixed methodology, with quantitative and qualitative data, Shaw weaves a tapestry through time, examining the actions of community activists, local elected officials, and department heads. Several detailed cases are presented, with a discussion of how the "Effective Black Activism Model" overlays each case. The delicate balance between race solidarity and class solidarity, as well as the role that gender plays in public housing activism, is highlighted. Several colorful quotes, some a bit abrasive, demonstrate the rancor of public housing activism in Detroit.

The strength of the book is its detailed look at activism during the time of one of the most controversial and heralded black mayors, and in a city that lost its former glory and remains bereft of opportunity for its black inhabitants. Shaw gives voice to community activists and demonstrates their strength, passion, conviction, and determination to impact political systems. The limitations of activism that are not grounded in the appropriate political support, at the right time, are also presented. In many ways, Shaw's account confirms that politics almost always matter, even when the issue is largely one of community activism. The right people have to be involved, with adequate resources, at the right time.

Students of community activism, black politics, and social movements will find this to be a rich resource. Some scholars may be intrigued by the detailed accounts, while others with less tolerance for the intricate examples will simply want to get to the bottom line. For those, suffice it to say that Shaw's "Effective Black Activism Model" asserts that "grassroots activists and their allies

must select the right tactic, time, and place for activism to be effective in demanding political accountability to the needs of the poor” (pp. 1–2). Furthermore, Shaw uses the model to highlight when “black grassroots activism can most effectively apply pressure to black and other public officials, despite the barriers of race, class, gender, and regime” (p. 13).

A key concern of the book is when and how activism can impact political accountability. This is demonstrated through several cases in Detroit between 1973 and 2005, and reaffirmed through examples from Atlanta, Newark, and DC. Application of this model by others will require a willingness to get into the trenches as Shaw did. For those who are eager and willing to explore how and when the boundaries of electoral and black politics can be expanded, or at the very least challenged, by black activism, this book will be an interesting read.

CYNTHIA JACKSON-ELMOORE
Michigan State University

Partisan Bonds: Political Reputations and Legislative Accountability by Jeffrey D. Grynnaviski. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 232 pp. \$70.00.

This book’s central premise is that despite the American party system’s differences from the Westminster system, it nevertheless allows voters to hold congressional government accountable for its performance. While not the first work to make such a claim, according to the author it is the first to do so without the heroic assumption that voters have a close knowledge of the institutions that congressional parties use to enforce discipline.

Its basic argument is that American parties each act as a “surety” that offers a credible signal to voters about the performance of its candidates in office. Parties do this by developing a reputation as an organization whose members support a set of principles about the range of acceptable public policies. Parties value this reputation because it helps a party’s candidates win elections. To the extent that voters see unified parties in government, they infer that parties value their reputations and have institutions to enforce some member loyalty. In this case, voters will view party labels as credible predictors of how electing a candidate will translate into policy outcomes.

The book derives this argument using a complex set of theoretical connections. Central to the theory is the assumption that voters care about legislative outcomes more than about who represents their district, and are therefore concerned about what happens in other districts. In part because voters do not know in advance whether they are selecting a faithful reelection-motivated delegate or an unfaithful conscience-motivated ideologue, the median legislator in Congress may often be more ideologically extreme than the average voter—in a world without parties. Because of this, candidates see a potential electoral advantage in forming parties that each promise to promote policies

more moderate than the preferences of this (theoretical) extreme median legislator. Voters who view a party's commitments as credible will prefer to support party-affiliated candidates rather than risk having more-ideologically extreme legislative outcomes. A majority party can keep its promise to promote a more moderate policy in part by using powers of agenda control to block extremist proposals from within the party (among others). Whenever voters observe members of a party acting in a unified fashion in office, they infer that the party has (and uses) institutions to enforce party discipline and implement its promised program. Accordingly, public perceptions of party unity increase the likelihood that more citizens will become loyalists for the party, and that voters will view affiliation with that party as a credible signal of how a candidate's election will be likely to affect legislative outcomes.

The book goes to great lengths to preempt potential critiques of this theory, including many sub-arguments and empirical data. Nevertheless, as any good book should, it is bound to spark some debate. One question is whether greater unity really always benefits a party when both parties are equidistant from centrist voters. During bad times, the opposition party often tries to paint members of the ruling party as walking in lock-step with its unpopular leaders. This suggests that the opposition thinks public perceptions of unity in the ruling party will actually hurt that party. Another question is why voters depicted as savvy enough to perceive the strategic circumstance and probable behavior of candidates and voters outside their district would not be able to eventually learn whether their own incumbent was an ideologically motivated extremist or a reelection-motivated representative of district preference.

Understanding the complex interaction between legislative performance, party brand, and voter preference is vitally important to understanding American democracy. This book suggests new and unique ways of thinking about these relationships and is certain to generate interest among scholars in this area.

DAVID R. JONES
City University of New York

Honest Broker? The National Security Advisor and Presidential Decision Making by John P. Burke. College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 2009. 492 pp. Cloth, \$60.00; paper, \$29.95.

How can presidents most effectively utilize their national security advisers and staff? In particular, is it possible for the National Security Council (NSC) adviser to function both as an honest broker charged with protecting the integrity of the national security decision-making process, and also as an advocate for a particular policy option or course of action? These are the core issues John Burke addresses in this ambitious and immensely useful study of the evolution of the national security advisory system during the post-World War II era. Burke

concludes that it is possible for the NSC adviser to be both honest broker and personal presidential policy adviser—indeed, presidents are best served by an NSC adviser who takes on both roles. But balancing the two tasks, he shows, is immensely difficult. Perhaps the NSC adviser who came closest to fulfilling Burke's ideal (and whose insights inform his analysis) is Brent Scowcroft, who served under Henry Kissinger on Richard Nixon's NSC staff, and later as NSC adviser for presidents Gerald Ford and George H.W. Bush. But Burke acknowledges that even Scowcroft occasionally neglected his brokerage duties due to the demands imposed on him as presidential adviser.

The book is organized chronologically, with separate chapters discussing the major change points in the evolution of the national security system, beginning with Harry Truman and the creation of the NSC system in 1947 and concluding with George W. Bush's presidency. A final chapter contains Burke's summary conclusions. Burke traces the beginning of "honest brokerage" to the staff system developed by Dwight Eisenhower's National Security Adviser, Robert Cutler. That system, however, functioned more as an interdepartmental coordinating unit than as a presidential policy staff, making it less useful for Eisenhower's successors. Beginning with McGeorge Bundy under John Kennedy, subsequent NSC advisers moved away from brokerage and toward a more personal advisory role, which often included policy advocacy. That trend culminated in Henry Kissinger's ascension as both NSC adviser and Secretary of State under Nixon. The loss of brokerage, Burke argues, proved costly as presidents made decisions, such as whether to escalate the U.S. presence in Vietnam, that were not fully informed. It was Scowcroft who restored some semblance of brokerage while continuing to function as a personal presidential adviser, Burke concludes. Subsequent NSC advisers, however, such as Condi Rice under George W. Bush, were not always able to sustain that balance.

As to be expected in a book that essentially is a history of the NSC advising system, Burke synthesizes an enormous amount of material, ranging from archival documents and secondary sources to interviews with key principals, including Scowcroft. Each chapter discusses the general principles by which the president utilized his NSC staff, key characteristics of that advising structure, including an assessment of the NSC adviser's personal attributes and effectiveness, and examples illustrating when the system worked—and when it did not. Although much of this story has been told before, Burke's is the most comprehensive look at the NSC adviser's role yet. (Indeed, he is forced to relegate his analysis of five NSC advisers to the book's appendix. These are well worth reading, however.) To his credit, Burke never loses the thread of the argument amid the welter of historical detail.

Evaluating the effectiveness of an advisory system is immensely difficult, as Burke knows, and he is careful to qualify his assertions by noting their uncertainty. Nonetheless, he comes down strongly on the side of the Scowcroft model. Some readers will remain unconvinced by Burke's claim that it is possible for an NSC aide to be both broker and personal adviser, but he makes the best case for

this that I have yet to read. Interestingly, given his previous research into the Eisenhower advising system, I was surprised by Burke's general neglect of Andrew Goodpaster's role, which in some ways anticipates the development of the NSC adviser as personal assistant to the president. The division of labor between Cutler and Goodpaster, it seems to me, offers a potential alternative to the Scowcroft model, in which the NSC adviser must be both honest broker and policy advocate, but one that Burke does not fully address.

More broadly, Burke does not really question whether presidents are even served by the development of an advising system that tends to separate consideration of national security issues from domestic issues. In this regard, one wishes Burke had spent just a bit more time discussing how presidents integrate the NSC apparatus into the broader White House-centered advising process.

These criticisms are not meant to detract from what Burke has accomplished in writing this book. He is not the first to discuss the tension inherent in the different NSC roles (see, for example, previous work by Alexander George). But his treatment of this issue is by far the most comprehensive and, pending a more systematic effort to link the specific attributes of the NSC staff structure and decision processes with particular outcomes, it sets the standard by which future books on this topic will be judged.

MATTHEW J. DICKINSON
Middlebury College

Gun Crusaders: The NRA's Culture War by Scott Melzer. *New York, New York University Press, 2009. 336 pp. \$45.00.*

Over the past several years, gun enthusiasts have won repeated victories in a variety of government institutions. The Supreme Court has ruled that the second amendment protects individuals' gun rights, and Congress has voted to allow loaded firearms in national wildlife preserves. States have passed bills allowing citizens to carry loaded weapons into churches, and providing for holidays from the sales tax for guns and ammunition. Groups of men have gathered in Starbucks coffee shops and national parks with their loaded weapons openly displayed. To the casual observer, this is not a time when gun owners are under threat. Yet the National Rifle Association (NRA) continues to warn its members of grave dangers to gun rights, which are sometimes linked to broader cultural issues.

The 1977 revolution within the NRA that culminated in new leadership and more-radical policy has been well documented, but Scott Melzer argues that there has been a more gradual, quiet revolution that has steered the NRA into a broader pattern of cultural war politics. The book begins by putting the NRA's efforts within a broader symbolic framework, then explores the way in which the NRA frames gun rights issues, and the attitudes of NRA activists and their level of commitment to the organization.

Melzer situates the pro-gun movement within a backlash against the loss of status of white men during what he calls the “second masculinity crisis” that arose out of feminism and the Vietnam War. He conceives of the NRA as “a unique SMO promoting not simply individual gun rights, but rather a specific frontier version of masculinity politics.” His interviews with NRA activists reveal anger at women legislators, feminized men, and nanny state policies.

Melzer joined the NRA to conduct the study, which gave him access to official publications, and the ability to attend various conventions and events. He quotes from publications and official speeches, and also from a set of interviews with activists whom he contacted at these events. Melzer admits that the majority of members refused to participate, but some gave him contact information that allowed for phone interviews. From these interviews, he expanded his contacts through snowball sampling. Melzer divides these activists into groups that he labels critical mass, reserves, and peripherals, based on their activity and commitment to the organization.

The book is at its best in documenting the changing communications by the NRA to its members, and in the richness of the interview material. But it is difficult to assess the representativeness of the members that Melzer interviewed. The critical mass activists that Melzer interviewed resemble a set of conservative activists that have showed up in many other studies—who see connections between a wide range of issues, and link their issues to a cultural and political decline. But without additional information, we cannot know if those who agreed to these interviews are the most moderate or the most extreme, the most paranoid or the most phlegmatic.

I am by nature suspicious of arguments that groups are not really about the issues they advocate—in this case that the NRA is primarily about frontier masculinity rather than guns. Sometimes a pistol in a pocket is just a pistol in a pocket. In the 2010 elections, the NRA endorsed a number of Democratic candidates who oppose gun control but who have otherwise liberal voting records.

Moreover, the transformation of the NRA has taken place during a time when other groups have also become more partisan and polarized, and when fundraising professionals have increasingly urged groups to craft appeals that link their issues to broader cultural concerns. It is difficult to fully understand the transformation of the NRA in isolation from the larger political culture.

Overall, this book is well written, and raises interesting issues about the transformation of interest groups in a period of polarized politics. The book would be useful in the classroom, where it could be a launching point for a variety of discussions. It might even spark interesting conversations in Starbucks shops the next time that groups of well-armed patrons gather to increase their caffeine levels.

CLYDE WILCOX
Georgetown University

Degrees of Democracy: Politics, Public Opinion, and Policy by Stuart N. Soroka and Christopher Wlezien. *New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 256 pp. Cloth, \$80.00; paper, \$25.99.*

This book is an important contribution to the study of how publics and national policymakers interact. The title is a play on the authors' "thermostatic" model, in which the government is not only expected to provide what the public wants ("representation"), but further—and in the authors' view, just as importantly—the public then must adjust their preferences as policy changes ("responsiveness"). Stuart Soroka and Christopher Wlezien examine this dynamic with public opinion and governmental spending data covering roughly a 20-year period for the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada, the only countries for which comparable data are available for testing their model. Their analysis encompasses primary issue domains of defense, welfare, education, and health, as well as some minor areas like transport or space that are not available for all three countries. They skillfully match government spending data by functional categories to the public preferences domains, sequentially looking at responsiveness to changes in government spending patterns and then at how spending changes as a function of preferences.

A key concept is their idea of "democratic efficiency," which is a combination of representation and responsiveness or the rates at which preference-policy systems reach equilibrium following externally induced changes in public preferences. Much of their analysis is guided by three hypotheses. On the institutional side, they expect that public responsiveness is greater in unitary systems (the UK) than in federal systems (the United States and Canada); this is because citizens should have a clearer policy signal in the former. They find strong support for this in some policy domains, especially defense. Their second hypothesis is that government representation of preferences is better in presidential systems where separate elections of the executive and legislative branches increase the chances for "error correction." They find general support here as well, although there are notable policy relationships that do not fit the expected patterns.

Some of the apparent inconsistency in the results is resolved by their third hypothesis, that public responsiveness to policy changes is a function of the salience of the policy domain. Here they find that national publics vary in which policies they say are important, and that responsiveness increases with the salience of the policy domains.

Their overall message is highly positive: democracy works. In making their case, Soroka and Wlezien take on a normatively very different message that has emerged from recent works by Martin Gilens and by Larry Bartels. Both of these authors argue that government policy is responsive primarily to the preferences of upper income groups; the poor are ignored. *Degrees of Democracy* argues that by and large, different groups' preferences change in tandem

over time, so that when government responds, it responds to all. They tell us there is a lot more equality than inequality in the representative relationship in their three countries.

The authors' research design deals only with national publics and national spending patterns—and this admittedly encompasses a huge amount of data. But it does limit them in making hard and fast conclusions about democratic responsiveness in federal systems. That is, there are important preference-policy relationships in these systems at a level the authors simply do not address. This only reminds us that much remains to be done.

This is a rich, innovative, and thought-provoking study. The authors offer many tantalizing findings, but the long-term contribution of *Degrees* is likely to be in re-framing the comparative study of representation. And, given the fundamental importance of representation for democratic governance, that is a very substantial contribution.

GERALD WRIGHT
Indiana University

Untying the Knot: Marriage, the State, and the Case for Their Divorce
by Tamara Metz. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2010.
214 pp. \$27.95.

Is it illiberal for the state to bestow marriage licenses and provide official recognition and support to marriages? Rather than join those liberal theorists who argue that the state should open up civil marriage to same-sex couples, Tamara Metz, in *Untying the Knot: Marriage, the State, and the Case for their Divorce*, argues that they, like their liberal forebears, John Locke and John Stuart Mill, fail adequately to answer a basic question: why is marriage the state's proper business at all? Marriage matters, she argues, both because it is a source of material benefits and obligations and because it is a "comprehensive social institution" rich in social meaning. This meaning side is at the heart of the problem with a liberal state's engagement with marriage. This engagement is an "establishment" analogous to the constitutionally forbidden state establishment of religion. What makes the *civil* status of marriage special, she contends, has "little to do with legal definition or concrete benefits and much to do with the extralegal social institution that shares its name"—the meanings that marriage has for individuals who marry, their families, and the communities who witness their public declaration of commitment (p. 95). Those meanings often stem from religious conceptions of marriage. She draws on G.W.F. Hegel's analysis of marriage to reveal that it is the "ethical authority" of a community that helps marriage perform its constitutive role (pp. 101-104). For the state to be this conferring authority, however, is deeply problematic because it offends liberal principles of liberty, equality, and stability.

Metz's focus on the meaning side of marriage provides a timely guide to understanding contemporary marriage debates. Proponents and opponents of extending access to civil marriage to same-sex couples share a premise: marriage is the gold standard when it comes to committed, intimate relationships because it has unique expressive value. Thus, same-sex couples contend—and some courts have agreed—that even if the state provides same-sex couples an alternative legal status, such as domestic partnership or civil union, intended to provide all the material benefits and obligations of marriage, it still denies them the equal respect and dignity that comes from official recognition and support of their family relationship as a *marriage*. Metz does not conclude that the state has no business at all regulating intimate life. Instead, drawing on liberal political thought from John Locke to Susan Moller Okin, she highlights that the state has a legitimate concern with intimate care-giving because of its vital role in fostering human development and addressing human vulnerability. Care-giving bestows benefits on the recipient of care and on society, but also involves risks for the care-giver, whether caring relationships are between equals (for example, adult intimates) or between unequals (for example, parent and child). Thus, as a matter of justice, a liberal society should recognize and ensure against risks of vulnerability that arise in care-giving relationships. Metz proposes to couple the disestablishment of marriage with the creation of a new legal status attached to intimate care-giving, which would be available to a broad array of care-giving relationships. Metz's call to disestablish marriage poses an important challenge to those liberals (myself included) who instead argue in favor of greater marriage equality. Her focus on the "ethical authority" that gives marriage its special status invites more-careful attention to a curious feature of U.S. law about marriage: it allows a partnership between civil and religious authorities constituting marriage as a social institution. Her book should be of interest to the wider audience of readers who feel some stake in the ongoing marriage debates.

LINDA McCLAIN

Boston University School of Law

Coethnicity: Diversity and the Dilemmas of Collective Action by James Habyarimana, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N. Posner, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. *New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 2009. 235 pp. \$35.00.*

Truly a landmark study, this book brings to research on ethnic politics a central focus, not on *whether* ethnic diversity shapes political outcomes such as public goods provision, but rather on *why* it may do so; it employs a series of both standard and original experimental games to sort out the reasons that coethnics might be more prone to cooperate; it pays central attention to more-general external validity limitations, yet also attempts to ascertain whether experimental results can at least illuminate patterns of public goods provision

in the district of Kampala, Uganda, from which the experimental study group was sampled. The authors combine their experiments with extensive fieldwork and interviews with focus groups, community members, and chairpersons of local community councils, making this a splendid example of multi-method research in the service of a deeply important topic.

The virtues of this ambitious volume are to be found in every chapter. After examining the relationship between ethnicity and public goods provision in the country, city, and district from which they select their experimental study group in the second chapter (the main point here is not to verify the negative relationship suggested elsewhere in the literature; still, it would have been useful to discuss the extent of ethnic diversity in those rich neighborhoods in which public goods are in fact provided), the authors carefully and persuasively separate “benchmark” demography (that used by government censuses) from subjective identification. They find that while individuals can most readily identify the benchmark ethnicity of coethnics from photographs (and their ability to do so intuitively increases in the information provided about native language and surname), there is marked variation across ethnic groups in the extent to which benchmark coethnics are identified as such. The authors also devise a very smart, original, and widely applicable measure of ethnic distinctiveness, based on the probability that members of any two groups will correctly identify coethnics and non-coethnics (and they express this measure as divergence from the 2×2 identity matrix that would result if members of both groups could perfectly discriminate between their ethnic brethren and non-coethnics).

This sets the stage for the analysis of their experimental games. Results from standard dictator games reject the idea that individuals care more about the welfare of their coethnics, at least in this context. (Survey results on preferred types and sources of public goods also do not suggest any significant differences in preferences across ethnic groups.) There is somewhat greater evidence that technology might lead to coethnic cooperation; in particular, individuals believe that they can better assess the competence of coethnics and interact with them more frequently, and may be better able to track them down when asked. The authors design some especially innovative games to test these ideas, such as one in which individuals are asked to work in pairs to open a locked box (one member of the pair is given instructions and must then tell the other member, who is alternately a coethnic or a non-coethnic, how to do it), and another in which an individual is rewarded for tracking down another individual (again either a coethnic or non-coethnic) after being given only the individual’s photograph and district of residence. In the end, however, most of the explanation for coethnic cooperation in public goods games seems to come from norms of coethnic cooperation and sanctioning, which induce cooperation from “egoists” who would otherwise act selfishly but who can be induced to provide public goods when their behavior is observed by coethnics.

The volume pushes methodological frontiers in the study of ethnicity, and yet it also leaves some issues for future researchers to consider. For instance, the

fact that the authors draw a random sample from the population of Mulago-Kyebando (an area of Kampala) introduces two sources of uncertainty into estimates of treatment effects *in this population*: the uncertainty that stems from random sampling, and the uncertainty that stems from random assignment to treatment and control. However, the standard errors and associated confidence intervals reported throughout the book only appear to consider the latter form of uncertainty (and sometimes rely on the perhaps-impeachable assumptions of OLS models, rather than resting on the design of the experiments). This somewhat undercuts the usefulness of the authors' unusual and laudable step of recruiting the experimental study group through random sampling from a well-defined population. Another interesting issue relates to manipulability. While the authors are able to use their experiments to manipulate many aspects of the informational environment, one factor that emerges as having substantial explanatory power—whether subjects are “egoists,” as measured by whether they ever share a portion of their maximum allowable earnings in a dictator game—is a non-manipulable feature of individuals. This raises interesting issues of interpretation and suggests some of the difficulties involved in uncovering deep causal factors at work in ethnic politics.

Space does not allow further discussion of the many vital contributions of this important book, including those drawing from interviews of community leaders and residents of Kampala. These authors are extremely careful about what they can and cannot infer from their evidence; as they note, their findings about the relative importance of preferences, technologies, and strategy selection mechanisms might well vary in different contexts. Yet, the authors have provided a valuable template for careful analysis that could be replicated and extended in diverse contexts, thus allowing this variation to be investigated systematically. For this reason among many others, this wonderful book is certain to have a powerful impact on the study of ethnic politics and many other topics.

THAD DUNNING
Yale University

Skeletons in the Closet: Transitional Justice in Post-Communist Europe
by Monika Nalepa. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010. 336 pp.
Paper, \$25.99.

One of the most puzzling aspects of some regime transitions is their peaceful nature. Nowhere is this more evident than in the late-twentieth-century fall of dozens of regimes across Eastern Europe. Challenging the standard view, Monika Nalepa's impressive book on transitional justice in post-communist Europe tackles this and related questions. In *Skeletons in the Closet*, Nalepa focuses on the under-studied issue of lustration, a form of truth-telling and transitional justice, unraveling three key puzzles. First, why do autocrats ever

agree to pacted transitions if promises for amnesty could be reversed? Second, why does the opposition sometimes resist punishing former regime members? Finally, why can accountability be long delayed—after calls for revenge or other emotional needs have subsided—only to be pursued by former communists holding parliamentary majorities? Marked by groundbreaking analysis and exemplary methodology, Nalepa’s book is sure to spark a rigorous debate.

Skeletons in the Closet indeed makes several valuable theoretical contributions. To explain peaceful democratization, Nalepa introduces the “skeletons in the closet” model: negotiated transitions involve a credible commitment problem that can be overcome with a signaling game; insofar as the opposition is infiltrated by collaborators, these “skeletons in the closet” can be held hostage by outgoing autocrats and as insurance by the opposition to make credible their amnesty claims. In accounting for self-lustration by former communists, Nalepa turns to original survey data to dismiss the notion that social demands drive self-lustration; she then draws on the new literature on authoritarianism and institutions to emphasize the role of party systems and parliamentary rules of procedure: self-lustration, Nalepa contends, is a pre-emptive strategy by rational leaders wanting to avoid potentially harsher punishment by anti-communist opponents in an electoral climate of incomplete information.

Organizationally and methodologically, the book is especially noteworthy for its clarity and thoroughness. The book is divided into two parts, first examining the pre-transition and transition periods and then the post-transition breaking of amnesties. Distinct chapters survey the relevant literature, introduce Nalepa’s account, and illustrate the argument in specific cases. While referencing numerous countries, the primary focus is on Hungary, Poland, and the Czech Republic. Methodologically, the author adeptly engages multiple techniques, including comparative case studies, elite interviews, archival materials from secret police files, and statistical analysis of original survey data (i.e., the Transitional Justice Survey, polling over 3,000 people in three countries).

Despite the book’s strengths, one is left with a few questions after reading *Skeletons in the Closet*. For example, is “region” ever part of the relevant strategic context, so that lessons learned from one country (including perverse lessons) diffuse to neighboring countries? Nalepa cites the examples of Chile and Argentina (p. 38), although arguably the experience of the latter directly influenced the transitional justice choices of the former. Likewise, what is the relationship of truth-telling to other modes of transitional justice? Students of political transitions and truth-telling will want to test the book’s claims in a wider range of cases, further probing the skeletons-in-the-closet model and the role of democratic institutions to explain the form and timing of accountability measures.

Discussions of transitional justice typically highlight a one-time tradeoff between truth and amnesty, often assuming that the pursuit of truth reflects broad societal preferences. Nalepa shatters these popular ideas, as well as the well-engrained view that autocrats step down in exchange for amnesty.

In re-conceptualizing lustration and transitional justice as calculated strategic choices made by political leaders, alongside opponents secretly complicit in the abuses they denounce, *Skeletons in the Closet* offers an unsettling and necessary account of both regime transitions and post-atrocity justice.

SONIA CARDENAS
Trinity College

The Sources of Democratic Responsiveness in Mexico by Matthew R. Cleary. Notre Dame, IN, University of Notre Dame Press, 2010. 256 pp. \$28.00.

Using the case of Mexico, Matthew Cleary critically examines a key supposition of democratic theory: that elections produce good and responsive government. Though a mainstay of democratic theory, such a connection, as Cleary points out, rests on some rather weak theoretical foundations; it requires citizens to have adequate information about who is responsible for political outcomes, and assumes that institutions allow politicians to remain in office, something strictly prohibited in Mexico. In a nicely crafted theoretical discussion, Cleary examines the problems linking elections to responsiveness and highlights the potential impact of participation on government responsiveness. Among other virtues, non-electoral forms of participation can influence government performance by continually providing officeholders with information about the needs of the people, and by enforcing norms of public service.

Cleary then proceeds to empirically test a series of hypotheses gauging the electoral and participatory effects on government responsiveness using data from Mexico's municipal governments from 1980 to 2000, a period of time in Mexico when opposition parties began to effectively challenge the hegemony of the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party at the polls and in the streets. After numerous systematic tests, Cleary finds no substantive relationship linking electoral competition and improved government performance. Despite expectations, "there is a break at some point of the causal chain leading from electoral competition to responsive government" (pp. 116–117). By contrast, responsiveness did improve in municipalities with higher levels of participation.

This is a superb case study that contributes, as case studies should, to both the broader discussion on democracy and the specifics of the case. Students of comparative politics can certainly benefit from the excellent review of the debates centering on the pillars of democracy, and the struggles to create responsive and accountable government. The empirical portion further adds to the broader study of democracy, which is no longer seen in strictly dichotomous form, but as part of a continuum (hence, the struggle to make democracy more democratic). By the same token, the work provides Mexicanists with a thorough empirical examination of the impact of electoral and non-electoral factors on local government.

Some readers may find weakness in Cleary's operationalization of variables, particularly the use of electoral turnout, literacy and poverty as proxy indicators of participation, and public utility coverage and public finances to gauge local government performance. Though he goes to great lengths to build a case for his use of these measures, problems remain. For one, the link between voter turnout and participation, which he cites as justification for using turnout, pertains to democratic systems rather than the type of authoritarian, one-party system Mexico sustained during this period. This problem is made even more apparent in his narrative of the Mexican political transition (chapter 6). Here, he highlights the rise of civil society organizations and the use of protests and demonstrations to challenge government authority. Such aspects of participation seem a far cry from the electoral turnout measure used in the empirical section.

Far outweighing the methodological concerns, *The Sources of Democratic Responsiveness in Mexico* offers critical insights and raises important questions. It highlights, for instance, how democratization via participation may actually precede the implementation of formal democracy (elections), as seemingly occurred in Mexico's protracted transition. It shows that elections may be of limited value in producing responsive government—or only take us so far—leaving the key task to citizen engagement. The work also raises questions regarding the interactive relationship linking electoral competition and participation. Though the empirical section nudges him in the opposite direction, Cleary continues to express hope in the concluding chapter that elections and participation actually work together to forge more-responsive government. Clearly, this interaction deserves greater attention. To what extent, for example, might participation shape the images and reputations used by voters when they go to the polls? Is there perhaps an ideological component at play by which the assumption that elections ensure government accountability (the heart of democratic theory that Cleary puts to the test here) can actually undermine participation? And how might expanding the scope to the national political level impact the relationship?

STEPHEN D. MORRIS

Middle Tennessee State University

Investing in Democracy: Engaging Citizens in Collaborative Governance

by Carmen Sirianni. Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press, 2009. 608 pp. Paper, \$26.95.

Revolutionary changes in communications technology allow people to be in touch with each other directly, frequently, and instantly. And they are doing so, to a fault. Does anyone you know leave their Blackberry home when they go out to dinner?

Yet, while we are more and more connected with each other, we seem less and less connected with our governments. Thus the growing self-consciousness,

both in the academy and in government, regarding the necessity to reemphasize the “of” in Abraham Lincoln’s immortal Gettysburg trilogy: government of, by, and for the people.

After a thorough and thoughtful review of the thinking on the causes and consequences of citizen disengagement, Carmen Sirianni affirms the essentiality of governmental efforts to “engage citizens in collaborative governance” pursuant to eight core principles that he distills from the record: coproduction of public goods, mobilization of community assets; sharing of professional expertise; enabling public deliberation; promoting sustainable partnerships; building fields and governance networks strategically; transforming institutional cultures; and ensuring reciprocal accountability (p. 42).

The heart of this book is three richly detailed chapter-long case studies. Two are locally focused: neighborhood empowerment and planning in Seattle, Washington, and youth civil engagement in Hampton, Virginia. The third looks across the programs of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to answer the question: “Can a federal regulator become a civic enabler?” For these case studies, rooted in the documentary record, the author conducted extensive observation and interviewing in the field. And for each case, he makes a summary assessment with reference to the eight core principles.

Big cities are local governments, but their governance is not really local. Unlike in rural areas and many suburbs, city residents do not ordinarily call the mayor by her first name, encounter her at the supermarket, or easily reach her directly by phone or e-mail. If it is achieved at all, “community” is defined within these cities as “the neighborhood,” a place with valued defining physical or social characteristics and commonly understood (if sometimes indistinct) boundaries. Sirianni does not appear to be self-consciously communitarian, but in discussing citizen engagement in Seattle’s planning process, he is, in fact, offering an example of how community and governance more generally may be brought into synchronicity within big cities. At minimum, we learn, it requires committed leadership, proper organizational structure, and significant resources available for discretionary use at the community level. It also requires a willingness to adapt conventional city-wide service delivery paradigms in response to lessons learned. And it requires patience—change is not achieved in a day.

Young people are preeminent among “worthy” constituencies of local governments in their relative powerlessness to effect programs that serve or affect them. (Others, like homeless people, lack power, but are far less likely to be regarded as worthy.) Critical to youth engagement in Hampton was the willingness of a key not-for-profit youth services organization to transform its mission and approach, not treating young people as clients but engaging with them as partners who brought resources to the table in pursuit of mutually defined goals. Again support was found in city leadership, willing (in this case eager) to do business in new ways.

The EPA has a lot of big jobs to do. There is a large public with enthusiasm for environmental goals. Bottom-up organization and training that energize

citizens provide the agency with legitimacy, sympathetic state-level response, and critically needed resources on the ground for program implementation. Ecosystem-restorative efforts organized on a watershed basis were pioneering in this approach. Community-based work extended to Superfund and environmental justice programs, and disseminated within the agency through cross-fertilization over time as leading figures moved from position to position.

One risk for changed ways of doing things is that innovations are regarded as “add-ons,” not “must-haves,” when times get tough. Though the author is gentle with those who were not supporters, he makes clear that budget shortages and leadership or staffing changes slowed or seriously threatened the collaborative governance initiatives described. It is less clear that the national-level initiatives he recommends, including an executive order directing greater focus in executive agencies on the “civic mission” and the creation of a White House Office of Collaborative Government, will overcome these problems in an era of pandemic state and local fiscal crisis.

Finally, when does citizen engagement—worthy and essential—become citizen mobilization, more the province of political parties or organized interests than of government agencies? The demarcation may not always be clear. But there is an important distinction between the two, one that ought to be honored.

GERALD BENJAMIN

State University of New York, New Paltz

Inside Insurgency: Violence, Civilians, and Revolutionary Group Behavior by Claire Metelits. *New York, New York University Press, 2009. 256 pp. \$23.00.*

Insurgent movements worldwide exhibit a wide range of conduct. Their behavior toward civilian populations under their control ranges from brutal to benevolent. Such variation poses a problem for theories of insurgency, and of how to counter it. How can any single theory account for such major differences in how insurgent groups treat noncombatants?

Differences are apparent not only between groups but also in the behavior of any one group over time. It is this latter type of variation on which Claire Metelits has focused in explaining insurgent treatment of civilians. Relating changes in that treatment to changes in a group’s fortunes and circumstances makes it possible for the study of even a single group to suggest explanations for insurgent behavior. Metelits has studied three groups: the Sudan People’s Liberation Army, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, and the Kurdistan Workers’ Party. Her study has included extensive field research, including numerous interviews with individuals associated with each group.

Chapters on each of these organizations trace the evolution of their strategies and, specifically, their handling of civilian populations. The case studies lead Metelits to propound a theory of insurgent behavior that centers on the

concept of competition for resources. Metelits defines resources very broadly to include not only material items such as guns, food, and money but also non-material goods such as popular support. Her core idea is that insurgent groups change their behavior toward civilians according to whether they face active rivalry. A rival—a competitor for resources—could be another insurgent or opposition group, or it could be a state. When there is little or no competition for resources, an insurgent group can afford to establish “contractual” rather than coercive relations with the locals, basically because this is a more efficient way over the long term of gaining whatever the civilians have to offer. If faced with an active rival, however, a group’s priorities shift to short-term survival, with necessary reliance on coercive methods.

The correlation implied by this theory is largely borne out by the history of conduct that Metelits recounts with each of her three cases. Her concept invites further questions and explanations, however, that she does not explore. An alternative logic, for example, based on the idea that insurgencies need popular support to thrive, might posit that insurgents would need to be all the more solicitous of civilian populations when their groups’ fortunes are bleak. What keeps insurgent leaders from thinking that way?

The wide variation that lies behind the concepts of insurgents, resources, and rivals also probably is important for how noncombatants are treated. The ideology of an insurgent group, including the political end state it hopes to establish—and not just the exigencies of winning a war—surely affects whether it treats a subject population democratically and liberally or harshly and in an authoritarian manner. Lumping competing insurgent groups with states under the label of “rivals” also obscures important distinctions. Although Metelits writes of states “choosing” to compete (p. 167), states do not really have a choice comparable to that of opposition movements in deciding whether to wage an insurgency.

Even though her theoretical perspective may provide only a partial explanation of the behavior in question, Metelits’s book is a very useful contribution to understanding why insurgent groups act as they do. Her first-hand research also will provide grist for further efforts to explain the strategies and tactics of insurgencies.

PAUL R. PILLAR
Georgetown University

Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right: The New Cultural Conflict in Western Europe by *Simon Bornschieer*. Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press, 2010. 245 pp. \$64.50.

Few developments in European party politics over the last several decades have received more attention from scholars, as well as journalists and concerned citizens, than the rise of right-wing populism. Yet as Simon Bornschieer reminds

us, right-wing populists are hardly marching in lockstep across the continent; their parties have succeeded in some European countries and failed in others. While the scholarly trend has been to explain this variation in terms of “supply-side” factors, such as the behavior of right-wing parties themselves, Bornschier makes a strong case for the importance of demand-side factors such as social structure. Empirically rich, methodologically sophisticated, and theoretically compelling, Bornschier’s book not only settles some outstanding debates in the literature but also frames important questions about the basic dividing lines of European politics.

Bornschier’s central argument is that the expansion of education has created a new political divide in Western Europe since the 1960s that pits universalistic conceptions of community against traditional, nationalistic ones. The new left is the primary political representative of the former, while the latter fuels the right-wing populist backlash. Bornschier demonstrates this empirically through a multidimensional scaling analysis of party positions, which he derived from a multinational, multielection media analysis of campaigns. These data will no doubt provide a treasure trove for future scholars working on party politics. Aside from a trenchant discussion of the concept of political cleavages, Bornschier rejects two common explanations in the literature. First, his data show that right-wing populist voters are, in fact, a stable bloc, and not a transitory phenomenon, as the “protest thesis” would have it. Second, Bornschier demonstrates that economic preferences play little role in right-wing populist mobilization, as Herbert Kitschelt argued in his influential book, *The Radical Right in Western Europe*.

Yet Bornschier is no crude structuralist. His theory leaves some room for the behavior of both right-wing populist parties and their competitors on both the left and the right. This comes out especially in the case studies of France and Germany that, along with that of Switzerland, form the second half of the book. In France, political parties—especially the Socialists—were instrumental in increasing the salience of the cultural cleavage at the expense of the traditional economic conflict, and to the benefit of the National Front. In Germany, however, the mainstream political parties colluded to dampen the cultural conflict, and thereby deny the populist right the political space to mobilize. The conservatives (CDU/CSU) took strict positions on immigration and integration, while the Socialists (SPD) did not fan the flames of the populist right and stuck to more-traditional economic issues rather than cultural ones. This is an interesting argument, one that has also been forward by Bonnie Meguid (*Party Competition Between Unequals*), but one that could use more empirical richness.

Bornschier is already part of a vigorous debate about the nature and stability of political cleavages in Western Europe. On the one hand, there are those who argue that the decline of historical cleavages has led to increased electoral volatility and a general lack of predictability in European elections. If Bornschier is correct, however, perhaps we should expect more stability from election to election in the future? *Cleavage Politics and the Populist Right* does not deal with elections since the great recession, but it speaks to the debate about whether

right-wing populism will benefit or suffer from it. If economic issues take precedence over cultural ones, then we should expect there to be less political space for the populist right. This goes against the conventional wisdom that the populist right will benefit from the rising xenophobia that often accompanies economic crises. One can find support for both positions in Bornschier's account: the new cultural cleavage he identifies is firmly rooted in social structure (and hence not likely to dissipate), yet at the same time, economic issues have certainly acquired greater salience than at any other period since the 1970s. Time will tell which of these two countervailing pressures will prove to be stronger.

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Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers: Women's Lives Through War and Peace in Sierra Leone by Chris Coulter. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2009. 289 pp. Paper, \$24.95.

What happened to women during the war in Sierra Leone (1991–2002)? What were the gendered aspects of the conflict and the post-conflict reconstruction process? How have women experienced the post-conflict era?

Chris Coulter addresses these and several other questions in *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers*, a ground-breaking ethnographic account of female ex-combatants in Sierra Leone. With the aid of more than a hundred interviews of young women who were abducted during the conflict, Coulter presents an in-depth exploration of women's experiences with war and sexual violence, their strategies for coping with the conflict's brutality, their attempts to negotiate the gendered dynamics of the post-war social order, and their responses to the gender-blindness of internationally sponsored disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration processes. The book covers this broad variety of topics without sacrificing analytical depth, analyzing complicated questions like the continuum-like structure of the war (p. 7), the way in which accounts of the war emphasize women's victimhood (ignoring their agency) (p. 10), the complexities of Sierra Leoneans' narratives of wartime atrocities (pp. 17, 174), and the instability of relationships, sex, and marriages in wartime (pp. 81, 244).

The book engages with women like Aminata, who was abducted from Kabala and lived in the "bush" with the rebels. Aminata fought in the war, and had two children with her "bush husband." After the war "ended," Aminata struggled to reconcile with her family and her community, to deal with people's fear of her as "a rebel," and to earn an income despite that stigma. After Aminata's father denied her request to "legitimately" marry her "bush husband" and her family punished her for her involvement in the war by denying her food, Aminata turned to prostitution to support herself. After struggling for a long time after the war, Aminata has recently married.

This book is about Aminata, and about women in Sierra Leone, but it is also about looking through gendered lenses, and wars and conflicts more generally. The analysis in *Bush Wives and Girl Soldiers* fits as easily into feminist discussions in political science and international relations (IR) as it does into Coulter's native discipline of anthropology. The book could be brought usefully into dialogue not only with other work in feminist IR that addresses women combatants in Sierra Leone (like Megan MacKenzie's work, recently published in *Security Studies* and the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*), but also with other work on gender and war.

Particularly, in addition to the important empirical contributions that Coulter's work makes, the book pushes theoretical boundaries in several areas. While there are several contributions that could be noted, for purposes of space efficiency, I will highlight two. First, Coulter investigates the interdependence of morality and economy, where shame and livelihood are linked for women in post-conflict situations. Her work contributes to our ability to understand how gendered expectations about what women should be influence whether or not women can sustain themselves financially, socially, and physically. Second, Coulter probes the gendered dimensions of both silence about and sensationalism of wartime atrocities, weaving how violence is described into narratives about the social structures of conflict and post-conflict societies.

In sum, this book is not only a superb contribution to anthropological understandings of particular women in a particular war, but also to feminist theorizing about war and violence. I only hope that the anthropology literature of which this book is a part and feminist IR literature that I regularly frequent find more opportunities to interact and cross-pollinate.

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Challenging Neoliberalism in Latin America by Eduardo Silva.
New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009. 352 pp. \$26.99.

The rise of leftist governments in Latin America has attracted enormous scholarly attention. This "pink tide" came as a surprise because in the 1990s, the neoliberal right seemed to have established predominance with its market reform project. Eduardo Silva's book explains this turnaround with an argument borrowed from Karl Polanyi, namely as a backlash against neoliberalism. The effort to base economy and society on market relations exposes people to "exclusion" and insecurity, which induce them to demand protection via state interventionism. A pure market society is socially and politically unviable and tends to prompt such a reaction.

Accordingly, Silva argues that Latin American market reforms "created" (!) economic, social, and political exclusion (pp. 4, 26) and spurred defensive

mobilization from sectors that had been guaranteed rights and benefits under the preceding development model. People who had to bear the costs of structural adjustment protested. And since a wide range of sectors suffered such losses, under certain conditions, they managed to bundle their demands, embark on a crescendo of contention, dislodge neoliberal governments, and elect left-wing alternatives. This success prevailed where a democratic regime provided for associational space; where discontented sectors proceeded in reformist fashion, framed their demands in broadly appealing ways, and established coordination; and where economic crises exacerbated popular grievances.

With this explanation, Silva combines a structural argument from political economy to account for protestors' motivation and organizational arguments drawn from the literature on contentious politics to account for protestors' capacity. Given that many political scientists these days resort to formal-institutional theories, this alternative perspective is refreshing. While not completely new (as acknowledged on pp. 18 n.6, 26), Silva's core argument clearly is valuable: market reform has had disappointing results and has lost popular backing, which has facilitated backlashes. Silva substantiates these points with a good deal of evidence in an ambitious comparative analysis that features Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela as corroborating cases and Peru and Chile as contrasts. While drawing mostly on secondary literature and newspaper reports, his grasp on this range of cases is impressively firm. Thus, the book has strengths.

But the reasoning and presentation of evidence are not fully convincing. The central category of "exclusion" remains vague, so that its analytical value is unclear; Silva does not develop specific indicators or systematically assess the cases. The argument's logic suggests that deeper exclusion should trigger a stronger backlash; but the most "radical" leftist experiment emerged in Venezuela, where neoliberalism had advanced significantly less far than in other Latin American countries. The concept of "political exclusion" is particularly unclear; Silva claims it prevailed even where a congressional majority or party pact guaranteed a democratic president the backing of popularly elected representatives (for example, pp. 108–109, 117). Is it "exclusionary" to govern without granting opposition forces veto power? The question of the underlying notion of democracy turns even more problematic when the "excluded" force elected governments from office through street protests (pp. 95–98, 140–142, 172–173). How democratic is that?

Interested in highlighting anti-neoliberal contention, Silva does not mention that "neoliberal" presidents long commanded substantial popular support, as a wealth of surveys and some stunning election victories show; for instance, in 1995, after years of enacting neoliberalism, both Argentina's Carlos Menem and Peru's Alberto Fujimori won *increased* vote shares (not listed, p. 238, table 8.1). In general, although leftist electoral victories constitute his ultimate outcome, Silva does not pay much attention to electoral politics (pp. 99, 142–143, 191, 224, 247).

Furthermore, Silva repeatedly abandons the dispassionate language of scholarship, accusing neoliberals of “outrages” such as “relentless, willful, arrogant exclusion” (for example, pp. 73, 94, 97, 147, 177); his judgment of new-left governments that have arguably practiced “political exclusion” is less severe (pp. 144–146, 225–229). With his normative engagement, Silva endorses anti-neoliberal contention. But if the preceding development model had entered a deep crisis, is “defensive mobilization” promising? Have the losers from market reform designed a viable alternative? One would have appreciated clearer answers to these crucial questions (pp. 2 n. 4, 16, 226–227, 268, 279–284).

In conclusion, Silva’s book certainly makes contributions, but also provokes debate.

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Participatory Institutions in Democratic Brazil by *Leonardo Avritzer*.
Baltimore, MD, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. 224 pp. \$24.95.

Brazilian experiments with participatory democracy have drawn considerable attention from scholars and activists who are critical of representative democracy and seek to empower poor citizens. Most analyses focus on successful examples, most notably the case of participatory budgeting in the city of Porto Alegre. Often, the implicit or explicit goal is to draw lessons from these cases in order to copy them elsewhere.

Leonardo Avritzer has a warning for these well-meaning democrats: in some contexts, more-participatory and grassroots institutions lead to fewer positive outcomes than arrangements in which power is shared with government actors. Drawing on his own extensive scholarship on participatory institutions, he compares the outcomes of three participatory programs across four cities. He finds that a program’s design matters less than its fit to the political context. More-participatory designs do not necessarily lead to better distributive outcomes or higher rates of participation. His key variables are the strength of civil society and the political will among elites to permit broad participation.

Porto Alegre, he argues, is simply different, in ways that help all participatory institutions work better. Thus, “when civil society associations are strong and connected to a secure leftist party in power, most forms of participation work, irrespective of design” (p. 153). Under these conditions, the most-broadly participatory designs (“bottom up”) work best in terms of distributive outcomes and the extension of real participation. But these designs also demand the most from civil and political society and are most easily disrupted by hostile actors. When civil society is strong but political society is divided over participation, less-participatory designs (“power-sharing”) have better distributive and democratic outcomes. In the least-favorable contexts, where civil society is weak and political society hostile to participation, even

less-participatory designs (“ratification”) can increase popular sovereignty by creating a legal veto over some actions by political elites.

Avritzer’s book is theoretically complex and empirically rich. Its biggest contribution is its comparison of similar participatory institutions across varying political contexts. His conclusion, that political context matters and that participatory institutions work better when there is broad social and political support for them, would seem unremarkable if it were not so frequently ignored. Avritzer looks at failures as well as successes and draws compelling lessons from the comparison.

The book should be viewed primarily as hypothesis-generating. There are too many independent variables and too few cases for the reader to weigh the significance of different factors. In the end, we know that São Paulo is different from Porto Alegre or Salvador, but it is not clear how participatory institutions would work in cases that blend aspects of these three cities in slightly different ways. Key terms, like “strong” civil society or “divided” political society are not defined or operationalized in ways that would permit researchers to test the hypotheses in other contexts.

In particular, Avritzer’s types of participatory institutions—“bottom-up,” “power-sharing,” and “ratification”—need clearer specification. Each design is defined by three characteristics, but the characteristics are not different values of the same three dimensions. They seem ad hoc, tied to the specific programs he examines. A simpler classification, with one dimension (breadth of participation) or two at most (participation and autonomy from government oversight?) would make the concepts more generalizable and permit better future testing.

Nevertheless, this book is likely to be read with interest by both scholars and democracy promoters. It is accessibly written and very readable. It is a welcome addition to the burgeoning literature on participatory institutions.

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