

In the second section, Chesterman provides three examples of the practice of intelligence. In the United States, his focus is well-placed on the “outsourcing” (chapter 4) of intelligence activities; he provides numerous examples of the reliance on private contractors, explains the reasons for this development, and raises the question of whether it is possible to restrict such outsourcing on the basis that these practices are “inherently governmental” (p. 125) functions. Chesterman next examines practice in Britain with particular attention to the use of closed-circuit television and the generally failed attempts to legally regulate its use. The final chapter in this section explores the United Nations’ lack of intelligence; although this is an important topic, it does not seem to fit well conceptually into Chesterman’s overall perspective or inform his conclusions.

In the final section, Chesterman tackles the pressing questions of how accountability can be effective given the changed nature of intelligence services. He argues that reliance on traditional government oversight will not be sufficient and makes a convincing case for active roles by civil society actors, especially the media. Secondly, he proposes that the focus of accountability should be less on the collection of information and more on its use. This is an interesting distinction but one that is less meaningful than he imagines, as practice has shown that once information is collected, compelling cases can be crafted for why it should be creatively mined. In chapter 8, he raises questions about accountability and whether indeed it is possible; his conclusions here are less clear than they might be, as he concludes somewhat vaguely that “the precise details of an accountability regime are less important than clarity as to its existence and scope” (p. 241). Finally, Chesterman poses the intriguing possibility of a new social contract for this post-September 11 world. Here I expected more than I think he delivered. The notion of a “social contract” as a way of navigating and understanding the changes in the intelligence world is intriguing—but he leaves the hard intellectual work of what this would entail to another book.

PRISCILLA M. REGAN  
*George Mason University*

**Scandalous Politics: Child Welfare Policy in the States** by Juliet F. Gainsborough. Washington, DC, Georgetown University Press, 2010. 207 pp. \$26.95.

To the detriment of the field of child welfare, there have been few serious treatments of the political aspects of policymaking in this area. Unlike welfare policy, health care policy, and aging policy, which all receive substantial attention from scholars utilizing various theoretical models and a range of methodological approaches, child welfare policy has lacked this same level of serious analytical sophistication. *Scandalous Politics*, therefore, is a particularly welcome addition to an understanding of the politics of child welfare policy. In

the tradition of Barbara Nelson's *Making an Issue of Child Abuse*, Juliet Gainsborough successfully applies an analytical lens to the heavily value-laden domain of policymaking for abused and neglected children.

Child welfare systems face numerous challenges, and tragedies that occur to children while under the care of child welfare authorities typically generate extensive attention. But does this result in substantive policy improvements? Using theories of political agenda-setting the author conducts an empirical examination of this issue, addressing the question: "When and how do attention-grabbing stories shape child welfare policymaking? (pp. 2–3)." These questions are important. If child welfare policy is primarily crafted in response to various tragedies, scandals, and crises, this does not bode well for producing effective policies to professionally address the best means for securing the safety of children and supporting families.

The author's examination of the issue involves a multivariate quantitative analysis of policymaking in the 50 states and a multiple case study of three states (Florida, Colorado, New Jersey) in which high-profile tragedies occurred to children in the child welfare systems. Chapters 1 and 2 effectively provide background context. The use of quotes from congressional debates highlight the tensions between multiple perspectives on issues related to child abuse, particularly in regard to factors of poverty and race. The term "pendulum swing," between the endpoints of child protection and family preservation, is often used in describing child welfare policy history. Insightfully, the author suggests that this "pendulum metaphor is misleading, in that it implies smooth and regular shifts in policy" when in reality, policy "lurches from one approach to another" (p. 46).

The quantitative analyses are conceptually and methodologically sound, using regression models to test the potential impact of scandal on two outcomes: increased spending on child welfare, and enactment of child welfare legislation. While this analysis offers interesting findings, the qualitative case studies are even more compelling. In these chapters, the author effectively provides the detail, nuance, and complexity of the relationship between child welfare scandals and the politics of policymaking. The findings extend understanding of the impact of these tragedies on resultant actions: media coverage, resignations, commissions, class action lawsuits, and real and symbolic policy change. The attention to context that case study research provides captures the reality of policymaking. Policymaking is not static; a variety of reforms, typically small, are in progress in many states. For example, in Florida, the focusing scandal occurred while the system was already undergoing significant reform to a privatized system. Thus, the framing of the scandal, and the consequent reaction, must be viewed within this larger picture.

Given Gainsborough's command of the subject area and the provocative data provided, I had anticipated a more-extensive concluding chapter addressing further the theoretical implications for agenda-setting and policy implications for child welfare. Nonetheless, the data and insights of this detailed but well-written

book provide much to ponder and will be of interest to scholars, policymakers, and practitioners.

MARY ELIZABETH COLLINS  
*Boston University*

**Challenges of Ordinary Democracy: A Case Study in Deliberation and Dissent** by Karen Tracy. *University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011. 264 pp. Cloth, \$59.95; paper, \$27.95.*

This close-range study of democratic decision making focuses on school board meetings in Boulder, Colorado. “Ordinary democracy” refers to the kind of speech that occurs in such meetings as citizens and officials talk with each other. Karen Tracy’s perceptive analysis stays at the ground level; “ordinary” means “local” and “observable” speech that reflects routine concerns—speech that aims to do a solid day’s work in the public world. Though more than a few of her observations and analyses are relevant to normative political theory, she explicitly steers clear of ongoing debates in political theory between liberalism and critical theory, for example, or between deliberative and participatory democratic theory. Her central goal is simply to describe and make sense of the ordinary democratic talk of local government, something as understudied as it is celebrated in political theory.

After providing a recent history of Boulder school board politics, which introduces ongoing community issues and leading actors, Tracy investigates how citizens and officials use the term “democracy” in their public talk, examines patterns of citizen participation in board meetings, considers the role of newspapers, and looks at a controversial election and policy debate. Tracy’s discussion of citizen participation is particularly interesting. She points out that citizen involvement in local government boards is a distinct form of participation. Unlike public hearings, school boards meet regularly and involve people who know each other and will come into contact again after the meeting is over. Unlike New England town meetings, where each citizen has an equal right to speak and vote, school board sessions are marked by stark deliberative inequalities as they give officials unequal power to speak and make decisions. Moreover, Tracy notes a number of ways that citizen participation is further diminished by institutional practices. Rules governing the lay participants’ conduct permitted only those who signed up beforehand to speak on a given evening, determined how many could speak, allotted only two minutes per citizen comment, restricted the amount of time for an agenda item, and regulated the content of the remarks—disallowing ad hominem critiques of board members, for example. Once uttered, lay citizen speech was frequently neutralized and drained of significance as it was entered into the public record. Tracy keenly observes how board secretaries in charge of writing minutes depoliticized public comments by rendering sophisticated contributions