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colonialism, but also did not experience the first 30 years of single-party and military rule in Africa.

These are compelling and mostly hopeful developments, though challenges abound. *The Postcolonial State in Africa* brings us to this moment in Young's engaging style and erudite prose. The book shares Young's encyclopedic knowledge of African politics, providing in a single volume a comprehensive rendering of the first 50 years of independence. The book is sprinkled with anecdotes from his vast experience in Africa and that of his many students, and quotations from all of the relevant literature published over the past five decades. Students and scholars of African politics alike will benefit immensely from and enjoy reading *The Postcolonial State in Africa*.

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The Undeserving Rich: American Beliefs about Inequality, Opportunity, and Redistribution by Leslie McCall. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2013. 300 pp. Paper, $29.99.

Income inequality was a major issue in the 2012 presidential election. While the Occupy Wall Street movement may fade into history, the substantial media coverage it received drew national attention to the unequal distribution of income between the top 1 percent versus the bottom 99 percent of Americans after years of increasing inequality. This and the Republican nomination of Mitt Romney, the poster child for the top 1 percent (even before the videotape of him claiming that 47 percent of Barack Obama's base of support were people who paid no taxes and believed that the government should take care of them), enabled Obama to use inequality—and redistribution—as a major campaign issue. He used it along with an array of other domestic issues that divided the parties in an election in which the Democrats focused on mobilizing their ideological partisan base, abandoning a centrist campaign. In the context of existing public opinion and other research, the resonance of the income inequality issue was in fact surprising—a puzzle. Although completed and drawing on data well before the 2012 election, *The Undeserving Rich*—and with its title—provides an explanation.

Leslie McCall does this in a data-packed, complex, compelling, and careful analysis that shows what better data and new theorizing can provide. It reveals, in particular, how past research and thinking may have been time- or context-dependent, based on data from before the late 1980s. McCall reviews the tolerance, ambivalence, and ignorance perspectives that others have emphasized in explaining why the public has not viewed income inequality as a major issue in the

United States. The public has been tolerant because it has been more concerned about the nation favoring one form of egalitarianism over another, favoring equal opportunity and individualism over equality of outcomes. Ambivalence stems from this same theoretically conservative, view, but it also acknowledges inequality that leads to hardships for individuals who need and deserve government assistance (the ambivalence here is caused by the well-known tension for the public between ideological conservatism and pragmatic liberalism). The public is also ambivalent toward the winners in the unequal outcomes: it is positive toward the capability and drive of the rich but negative toward their cold and calculating behavior. In contrast to these views, the public may have been largely ignorant—unaware of the rising income inequality after the 1960s or unable to link this and related facts to support for efforts at redistribution.

McCall's new and better data (chapter 3) are survey measures that focus clearly on beliefs and perceptions directly about income inequality (not policy preferences and attitudes toward redistribution that have pointed toward ambivalence): new data for beliefs about whether income differences are too large, whether inequality exists to benefit the rich, and whether income differences are unnecessary for prosperity. She draws especially on data for six intermittent years, from 1987 to 2010, from the NORC General Social Survey and the International Social Survey Program, to examine trends over time and to do individual-level multivariate analyses. She adds other survey data, economic statistics, and mass media content analysis to the mix to reach her further conclusions. (Other available aggregate survey trend data that are not covered in the book, but which I examined for this review, are not inconsistent with her results and claims.)

McCall's initial findings challenge the ignorance argument: by the 1990s, the public increasingly and more strongly believed (and this is clearer after statistical adjustments for changes in the composition of survey respondents) that income differences were too large, that the rich benefitted from them, and that this inequality was not needed for prosperity. During the 1990s, the nation had gone through a recession and then the economy took off, and, therefore, the overall health of the economy was not the major explanation, in contrast to rising inequality itself. What also mattered was media coverage of income inequality—measured through stories in news magazines—and this reached a high point in the 1990s in both overall coverage and perhaps, qualitatively, in the framing of the issue (chapters 2, 3). This is a nice case in which actual data are important in looking back and revealing something not necessarily obvious about income inequality: compared to the present, the 1990s are not commonly thought of as the heyday for this issue. Indeed, the book would have benefitted from more narrative regarding the relevant history of this period and also an examination of television news (for example, the Vanderbilt University Television

News Archive), which should matter most in tracking issue salience. The analysis after the 1990s is more complex and nuanced, and sometime less clear. One reason for this may be a complication affecting the opinion data that the book does not consider: public beliefs and opinions have tended to change when the presidency switches parties and the public then perceives, correctly or not, that government policies have moved too far in the new incumbent Party's ideological direction (a "thermostat effect"). One finding of note in the book is the lesser increase in negative beliefs about inequality in 2008 in tandem with an increase in media coverage; the puzzle here is why this increase in negative beliefs should have not been greater, given the financial crisis in which the government was bailing out Wall Street and the banking industry beneficiaries of rising inequality. It is somewhat surprising that McCall does not address this further.

Most important—and this is the big contribution of the book—there is an unfairness suggested in the more-pronounced beliefs in the 1990s, in which rising income inequality is seen as benefitting mainly the rich and not producing prosperity for all. McCall unpacks this further in the remainder of the book, in which this broader prosperity signifies opportunity, so that what has changed in the public's mind (or was not measurable in the past data due to lack of data—we do not know) is that rising income inequality can affect individuals' perceptions of opportunity. This is the reverse effect from past understandings that individuals' emphases on and acceptance of equal opportunity have made them more tolerant or ambivalent regarding inequality as an issue that called for a redistributive policy response. The effect of inequality on opportunity occurs because there is no longer a largely "deserving rich" who "are celebrated shepherds of equitable growth"; rather, there are "the undeserving rich…who are implicated in producing a form of inequality that is perceived to either symbolize or directly contribute to limited opportunities" (p. 51). The book's supporting evidence is persuasive: Individuals' expectations of their standard of living increasing were strongly related at the individual level to beliefs about income inequality (chapter 3), and McCall then devotes a full chapter (chapter 4) to reexamining this and trends over time, using many more measures of perceptions of economic opportunity—including the effects of perceptions of whether high-income earners make more than they deserve. These findings, collectively, point to income inequality strongly associated with perceptions of lack of opportunity.

How to deal, then, with inequality? A case could be made in the book for a wide range of policies, including redistributive ones that give the undeserving rich what they deserve. However, McCall's follow-up analysis of policy preferences (chapter 5), as well as the centrality of opportunity for the public, points to solutions that are not confiscatory but that rather "would entail regulating business, creating good jobs, and redistributing earnings in the labor market as much as redistributing income in order to enhance opportunity-creating programs such as education" (p. 52). This differs, however, from how policy proposals played out in the 2012 election. Still, as McCall herself notes, her analysis suggests how the issue of income inequality very likely resonated strongly during the election. This is an important empirical question that needs to be examined as deftly as the author's analysis in *The Undeserving Rich*.

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Coping with Crisis: Government Reactions to the Great Recession edited by Nancy Bermeo and Jonas Pontusson. New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 2012. 422 pp. Paper, $42.50.

Nancy Bermeo and Jonas Pontusson tackle an important part of the Great Recession that has escaped scholarly attention from political scientists: government responses to the crisis, and the drivers of these responses. *Coping with Crisis* is comparative in scope, with cross-national comparisons across the advanced industrial economies and historical comparisons between present and prior bouts of economic crisis. The chapters are empirically rich and informative, and draw closely on established theoretical literatures in comparative and international political economy. It is a fine volume that deserves to be widely read by scholars, policymakers, and anyone interested in understanding the Great Recession.

Bermeo and Pontusson deserve special praise for their introductory chapter, and whatever the strengths of the individual chapters, it is this chapter that makes the volume a coherent whole. Instead of a summary of arguments, Bermeo and Pontusson provide an overview of the volume's implications for existing scholarly research, both in the comparative political economy of advanced industrial societies and in the modern international political economy. Their points are three. First, while the Great Recession is a global crisis in a highly integrated global economy, policy responses were largely determined by domestic political factors within individual countries. Broad similarities across the advanced economies, such as they can be found, should be attributed to common experiences (two that they name are neoliberalism and deindustrialization) rather than efficacious, coordinated, or even deliberate international efforts.

Second, the menu of policy options facing national governments appears to have been far more constrained in the Great Recession than in previous crises.