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gional disputes, in the war against terrorism, and in the limitation of nuclear weapons, but he does not seem particularly optimistic about this possibility.

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Seeking Justices: The Judging of Supreme Court Nominees by Michael Comiskey. Lawrence, University Press of Kansas, 2004. 287 pp. Cloth, \$40.00; paper, \$17.95.

When George W. Bush became President in 2001, it appeared likely that he would make multiple Supreme Court nominations. After all, Justice John Paul Stevens was eighty years of age, Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist was seventy-six, and Justice Sandra Day O'Connor was seventy. It was also widely reported that Rehnquist and O'Connor would like to have a Republican president choose their successors. Although no justices retired during Bush's first term, and as of this writing, O'Connor has announced that she would be stepping down, most High Court observers feel that at least one additional justice may well step down during his second term. Thus, this book is a timely one that should be considered must reading for anyone wishing to better understand the process of selecting Supreme Court justices.

The book's focus is on the modern confirmation process, which began to change significantly in the latter half of the twentieth century. One major characteristic of the modern era is ideology, which the author argues emerged during this period as "the nearly exclusive focus of confirmation politics" (p. 6). The nominations of William Rehnquist (for chief justice) in 1986, Antonin Scalia in the same year, Robert Bork in 1987, and Clarence Thomas in 1991 are noted as being overtly ideological. The opposition to each nominee was also ideological, at least until charges of sexual harassment were lodged against Clarence Thomas.

The emergence of ideology as the major consideration of the confirmation process in the modern era has resulted in renewed conflicts between the president and the Senate. In the 1968–1994 period, four of eighteen nominations for the Court were rejected, compared to only one of forty-six nominees being rejected during the 1894–1968 period. In spite of this, the author argues that the president still maintains a preponderant influence over Supreme Court appointments. Once the president selects a nominee, the Senate can only react to that nominee and may be somewhat deferential because the senators know that the president could nominate someone worse. He argues that perhaps the most obvious example of senatorial deference in recent years occurred in the 1990 confirmation of David Souter, who was not a distinguished nominee.

The author also notes that confirmations in the modern era are marked by more-detailed scrutiny of nominees, a more open process, greater involvement by the White House, and a greater incidence of nominations being made

during a period of divided government. During the 1897–1954 period, only two of thirty-six nominations were made during a period of divided government compared to fifteen of thirty-one nominations during the 1954–1994 period.

Although some scholars (including Michael Comiskey) and journalists have a generally positive view of the process that now characterizes confirmation of Supreme Court nominees, others are critical. Adherents of the legalist school, for example, favor a less political and less sensational confirmation process that focuses more on the nominee's legal credentials and less on his or her political and constitutional ideologies. Even those who generally support the current process (the political school) sometimes express concerns about the Senate's inability to really determine a nominee's beliefs on legal issues.

Throughout the book's eight chapters, readers will find an in-depth analysis of these two competing critiques of the confirmation process. In the final analysis, the author rejects the legalist model almost entirely and concludes that "the political school correctly advocates an active role for the Senate" (p. 185). While no one will agree with all of Michael Comiskey's conclusions, there is no doubt that his book will inform the debate on the confirmation of Supreme Court nominations for years to come.

RONALD STIDHAM
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Gulliver Unbound: America's Imperial Temptation and the War in Iraq
by Stanley Hoffmann with Frédéric Bozo. Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2004. 168 pp. \$19.95.

Stanley Hoffmann has long been one of the academy's most insightful observers of both French and American politics, and he is thus uniquely qualified in the wake of the 2003 Iraq War to explain the United States to French audiences puzzled by the "hyperpower" and to explain France to American audiences so incensed as to rename their favorite "vegetable" the "freedom fry." This little book, conceived and presented largely as a series of conversations between Hoffmann and a French former student, does not disappoint.

For those familiar with the Hoffmann corpus, the book's title will resonate. Nearly forty years ago, as Vietnam weighed heavily on the American scene, Hoffmann published an influential—if today all too rarely read—cultural analysis of American foreign policy under the title *Gulliver's Troubles; or, The Setting of American Foreign Policy* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968). Many of Hoffmann's observations have withstood the test of time, and they are here applied with renewed vigor.

Not surprisingly, the most satisfying discussions in this book come as Hoffmann skillfully locates the grand strategic vision of President George W. Bush's administration within the "exceptionalist" foreign policy tradition. As others too have noted, Bush and his advisers are the latest in a long line of American statesmen who have asserted that the particular (that is, American values) is