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dents in past years. Neustadt argues that each president, especially those "habitually rising 'above' details" (p. ix), needs a disinterested and politically astute insider (played by Nancy Reagan for her husband during Iran-Contra) to synthesize information from multiple sources and to guide the president's thinking. This early observation further allows for a sharper read of the main text and provides an important analytical vantage point.

Ambassador Abshire's tenure as the White House's "Mr. Clean" is briefly expanded in a final chapter to include his impressions of other second-term presidential scandals: Watergate and the Bill Clinton impeachment. Although the personalities of the presidents and the circumstances were quite different, Abshire offers contemporary insight on how the White Houses of Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton might have managed the scandals they faced (each largely of their own making). Fundamentally, the intention to conceal critical information from the public and Congress is argued to be the common factor in presidential scandal and one that Abshire argues can be avoided.

Ambassador Abshire's book could (and likely should) be read as a "how to" in presidential management rather than a theoretical or academic inquiry. All second-term presidents should heed his battle-tested advice, and all those interested in presidential resilience should read this book.

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The Talk of the Party: Political Labels, Symbolic Capital and American Life *by Sharon E. Jarvis. Lanham, MD, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005. 304 pp. Cloth, $80.00; paper, $27.95.*

In an era of personalistic and media-oriented politics, it is impressive that political parties remain important organizers of government, campaigns, and communications. In this book, Sharon Jarvis examines the language of partisanship and sees how it has affected more than fifty years of American public life, from 1948 to 2004. Using an in-depth content analysis of six words (*Republican*, *Democrat*, *conservative*, *liberal*, *party*, and *independent*) that appear in presidential speeches, news coverage of those speeches, congressional debates, and civics textbooks drawn from the Campaign Mapping Project directed by Roderick Hart and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Jarvis investigates how the word *liberal* became a dirty word, how Republicans used consistency to build a brand name around their party label, and why slogans such as "compassionate conservative" helped George W. Bush win the presidency.

Jarvis argues that political labels are important because of their symbolic imagery and their ability to encapsulate key themes in public life. Naming something, in her view, frames political discussions. It is not just a rhetorical act, but a process that structures civic dialogue. Labels become shorthand communications devices for leaders, reporters, and voters trying to make sense of the complexity of contemporary life. From the standpoint

of political parties, names and labels are part of the branding process in mass communications.

For example, Jarvis looks at the history of the term *liberal* and shows how the word has changed meaning over five decades. In 1948, Democratic presidential candidate Harry Truman bragged about being a liberal. Within two to three decades, though, Republicans were criticizing the word and the philosophy that stood behind it, and Democrats were back-pedaling in their use of and support for that terminology. Rather than meaning open-minded and tolerant of opposing beliefs, liberalism was redefined as being soft on crime, national defense, and patriotism.

In looking historically, she distinguishes four eras of party talk. The period from 1948 to 1960 was a monolithic time, when elites emphasized party labels in clear and unambiguous terms and used these appeals to unite supporters. From 1961 to 1979 was a period of liminal time, in which the political environment was undergoing change and elites were struggling with how to redefine their appeals for a mass audience. From 1980 to 1999, party labels were fragmented, as voters turned against the political establishment and delegitimized previous constructions of party. This challenged the ability of leaders to hold their parties together at a time in which these organizations were under great pressure. By 2000, though, parties were in a "moment of resurgence" (pp. 94, 95), as partisanship was revived and voters were polarized over the talk of the parties. The problem for leaders during this period is uniting voters divided by ideology and background.

Interestingly, Jarvis finds that even during periods of party weakness, elites never stopped referring to parties. On the campaign trail and in the halls of government, leaders drew on party names to mobilize supporters and attack the opposition. She concludes that political parties "command attention, even when they are not universally loved" (p. 2).

For scholars interested in parties, campaigns, and political communications, this is an important book. Jarvis presents thoughtful ideas on the history and evolution of party labels and on how elites use these names in symbolic ways. She makes use of persuasive data on speeches and news coverage, and on how they have changed over the last five decades. The book is a readable and up-to-date account of how parties structure civic life in the United States.

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Prophetic Politics: Christian Social Movements and American Democracy *by David S. Gutterman. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2005. 222 pp. $34.95.*

The biblical story of the Exodus figures prominently in the self-concept of many religious social movements. David S. Gutterman begins his book by examining the role of the Exodus narrative in American political life. He finds