

Book Reviews

Richard L. Engstrom, Editor

John C. Geer. *In Defense of Negativity: Attack Ads in Presidential Campaigns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 200. xvii, 201 pp. (\$47.50 cloth; \$19.00 paper).

Attack advertising is good for democracy. This is the main argument of John Geer's excellent book on negative ads in U.S. presidential elections. Negativity in political campaigns is on the rise, as many have argued, but Geer counters more alarming assessments. Using an impressive data set of advertisements from presidential races, he argues that despite all the negativity expressed about negative advertisements, from politicians, the public and political scientists, they actually outperform positive ads on a variety of desirable dimensions and enrich the information environment for voters. He argues that negative appeals have a greater need for precision and documentation. As one consultant in the text jokes, "the only difference between positive and negative ads is that negative ads have facts in them" (p. 53). Geer takes on his role in a similar fashion, countering the conventional negative view of attack advertising with careful empirical work. The argument and evidence in this book should prompt critics to rethink the merits of attack ads.

The core data analysis is based on presidential advertisements from 1960 to 2000. Most of the analysis is presented by appeal, rather than advertisement, which allows for a more nuanced study of all that can go into a brief television ad. Negativity is defined as "any criticism leveled by one candidate against another during a campaign" (p. 23), and all appeals are categorized as issue, trait, or value appeals. The data are limited in important ways. Given the rise of 527s and their high profile ads, readers might want to know how third party advertisements measure up. Geer chooses to focus on advertisements authorized by major party campaigns. He is also cautious not to generalize his findings to state and local elections, where competitiveness and candidate quality are widely variable. With these and a few other caveats in place, Geer is able to make a powerful case in favor of negativity in presidential campaigns.

Geer compares negative and positive appeals on four sensible criteria: whether they are issues based, contain evidence, are relevant to governing, and present clear differences between the candidates. In Chapter 3 he demonstrates that negative appeals are more likely to be about issues than

positive appeals and are more likely to reference evidence. Geer also confronts the idea that the intensified media scrutiny of more recent campaign seasons is driving the evidence trend. He demonstrates that in each year, negative appeals are much more likely than positive appeals to reference evidence. The text often demonstrates this sort of attention to alternate hypotheses. The major contributions of the empirical work are found in Chapter 5, which offers a careful examination of issue appeals and addresses the latter two of his criteria. Negative issue ads, which are driving the rise in negativity, track well on “important” issues. Geer uses both public opinion data on “most important problem” and objective indicators of problems such as unemployment and inflation to demonstrate that candidates are attacked on issues that matter. Also, although the majority of all appeals are vague (valence issues, such as “good economy”), negative issue appeals are more likely to reference specifics. These are two of Geer’s most compelling arguments for negativity in campaigns. The analysis also offers interesting complements to previous work, such as his finding that candidates do campaign on their party’s “owned” issues (Petrocik 1996), but that the relationship between partisanship and owned issues is strongest in negative appeals. And while overall, the text offers a strong defense of negative ads, they are not completely redeemed. The data support the long-held criticism that campaigns are talking past each other, and negative ads are no exception. Candidates are attacking each other on important, but distinct issues.

Readers are reassured that negative character attacks are less frequent than issue appeals and are not increasing. Still, Geer takes them seriously in Chapter 4 and notes that political scientists and the mass public are particularly concerned about these types of negative appeals. His main argument here is that the substance of negative trait attacks correlates with the public’s concerns about candidates, suggesting that these attacks are grounded and that generally, candidates can’t pull character attacks out of thin air. However, negative appeals about integrity are the one exception to this trend. Candidates seem to attack on this trait whether or not the public is concerned, and these form the plurality of character attacks.

Geer repeatedly confronts the issue of defining standards. For instance, the analysis of evidence in advertisements relies on a simple dichotomous measure, while we might question if a higher standard is warranted. A piece of evidence might obscure the broader picture, such as a candidate’s single vote that is at odds with his larger voting record. Evidence might also reference outright lies. Geer acknowledges these possibilities but refrains from evaluating the quality of evidence, because “efforts to establish whether information in campaigns is misleading strike (him) as a very slippery slope” (p. 49). While the blunt measure is somewhat unsatisfying, the main argument is nicely illustrated with a discussion of the 1964 election. A similar

difficulty in defining standards is also confronted in Geer's interesting analysis of the 1988 race (Chapter 7): "When does negativity 'cross the line?'" This presidential race offers a tough test of his hypothesis; after all, 1988 has a well-deserved reputation as a nasty race with several high profile attack ads. Critics of negativity might not be reassured by Geer's assessment. However, Geer is upfront about the difficulty in defining standards and makes his assumptions clear. The sheer volume of analysis in the text should also assure the reader that, even if one or two of Geer's conceptualizations might be questioned, there is still a powerful case for attack ads in politics.

An important question that follows from this impressive study is, does negative advertising live up to its potential? Do citizens take advantage of the enriched information environment that negative ads create, or does their distaste for attack ads cause them to ignore or question the information? Of course, this is another project, but Geer has set it up well by demonstrating the democratic capability of negative advertising.

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Peter Judson Richards. *Extraordinary Justice: Military Tribunals in Historical and International Context.* New York: New York University Press, 2007. xi, 267 pp. (\$45.00 cloth.)

Despite the significant expansion of the laws of war in the twentieth century, states have achieved limited consensus on the appropriate legal instruments for enforcing justice in wartime. Indeed, prosecuting war crimes and carrying out legal adjudication in wartime has remained an arena of legal uncertainty, especially when the conflicts involve domestic civil strife or when the political conditions cannot be easily classified as international war. The ambiguity and uncertainty surrounding legal accountability for alleged illegal and immoral violence has led to contentious debates within and among Western nations. These acrimonious debates, which surfaced in the 1998 London detention of former Chilean president Augusto Pinochet and more recently in the trials of Slobodan Milosevic and Charles Taylor, were especially evident in the development of policies on how to prosecute the "war or terror" in the aftermath of the terror bombings in New York City and Washington, DC, on September 11, 2001. How should Al Qaeda terrorists be classified—as criminals, subject to the American domestic justice system, or as combatants, subject to the laws of war? If they are combatants

but not under the authority of a state, are such unlawful warriors entitled to the same protections as soldiers?

As Peter Richards shows in *Extraordinary Justice*, military tribunals (known as commissions in the United States) have played a significant role in wars in Western nations. Since the criminal justice system of states is designed to deal with the crimes of individuals, not the offenses arising from interstate armed conflict, states have used military tribunals to prosecute enemy combatants for war crimes and to address other wartime offenses by civilians. Since the nature and role of tribunals can only be adequately evaluated in the context in which they arise, a goal of Richard's analysis is to illuminate the environment in which such tribunals have functioned. He writes that a major aim of the study "is to remove the analysis from the realm of arid legalistic abstraction in order to better evaluate practical consequences" (p. 9). To this end, the author examines the nature and role of military tribunals in a variety of armed conflicts, including the American Civil War, the Boer War in South Africa, World War I, and World War II. His most important and extended analysis is on the contemporary role of military tribunals in the detention and prosecution of detainees from the ongoing war on terror.

Military tribunals are quasi-judicial bodies that allow the military lawyers to try war-related crimes in an expeditious manner. Although there is a widespread belief that civilian courts are best able to adjudicate offenses, whether in peacetime or war, Richards challenges this assessment. He writes: "The presumption that civilian tribunals, simply by virtue of their non-military character, would operate at a higher level of equity and fairness lacks warrant" (p. 175). Richards recognizes that tribunals are much less constrained by legal procedures that can delay and impede the judicial process, and argues convincingly that such quasi-legal bodies have an important role in confronting wartime offenses. In his view, military tribunals have several advantages over regular courts when confronting war crimes: first, enemy combatants are less likely to manipulate the tribunal's proceedings; second, tribunals can render a judgment expeditiously; third, such bodies allow for greater security and thus help protect sensitive information; and finally, military judges are better equipped to adjudicate war crimes offenses since they are more knowledgeable about the rules of armed conflict than their civilian counterparts.

Despite the important role that military tribunals have played in past wars, Richards argues that contemporary developments in the West threaten the future of military commissions. He bases this judgment partly on the growing antistate and antiwar sentiment in Western societies as well as on the rising influence of legalism. The legalist perspective—which has led to the creation of the International Criminal Court and The Hague War Crimes

Tribunals (for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda)—presumes that the most effective way to address gross human rights violations and prevent future atrocities is by prosecuting major offenders. While the growth of legalism has undoubtedly increased awareness about human rights abuses, Richards challenges the belief that domestic legal adjudication is the most appropriate instrument for addressing political violence. Indeed, despite their juridical limitations, he claims that military tribunals are indispensable in providing timely justice in armed conflicts involving regular and irregular forces.

The debate over the relative merits of military tribunals surfaced anew after President Bush issued an Executive Order on November 13, 2001, reinstating military commissions. Even though the 9/11 terrorist attacks were carried out by Al Qaeda, a nonstate actor, the President decided that the offenses needed to be addressed as war crimes. He therefore directed the Department of Defense to develop procedures for detaining and prosecuting alleged foreign enemy combatants. A number of jurists and observers immediately challenged the legitimacy of the president's order, calling into question not only the warrant for creating such courts but the wisdom of relying on tribunals rather than regularly constituted courts to prosecute offenders. Richards notes that when national security is threatened, the authority of the executive necessarily expands to address such challenges. Thus, when extraordinary dangers arise, the state must be prepared to use extraordinary measures, including military tribunals, to safeguard its vital interests and institutions.

In June 2006, the Supreme Court ruled (in *Hamdan v. Rumsfeld*) that the administration's military tribunals and its procedures did not fully comply with international law on the detention of prisoners. In particular, the Court asserted that Article 3 of the Geneva Convention, which deals with "armed conflict not of an international character," applied to Al Qaeda and the Taliban. This meant, among other things, that detainees needed to be treated humanely and were entitled to receive "all judicial guarantees." Although the Bush administration had consistently claimed that it would treat detainees humanely, it had also claimed that Al Qaeda fighters were not entitled to Geneva Convention protections since they were unlawful combatants. Because Richards considers the distinction between lawful and unlawful combatant as fundamental to the law of war, he regards the Hamdan ruling as deeply flawed, blurring the distinction between violence by state and nonstate actors.

This is a timely and important book, providing a much needed historical overview on war tribunals. Given the complexity of the issues, the analysis would have been more compelling had the author highlighted important juridical principles illuminated by the case studies and emphasized

further the legal challenges involved in confronting war crimes by unlawful combatants.

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Stephen Holmes. *The Matador's Cape: America's Reckless Responses to Terror.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 378 pp. (\$30.00 cloth.)

Stephen Holmes presents a scathing condemnation of the Bush administration and its mishandling of the war on terror since 9/11, and he concludes that the United States seriously needs to re-evaluate its counter terrorism policies. Holmes argues that ultimately this country is no safer six years after the attacks because hidden agendas, bureaucratic domination in foreign policy matters, and emotional and domestic political considerations derailed the country's effective response. Ideological, religious, and partisan zealots within and outside of the administration exacerbated the situation. The combination of these factors contributed to the selection of disastrously expedient "solutions" that led decision makers to lose sight of the immediate threats the nation faced, including the securing of highly enriched uranium materials at various locations around the globe, the threat posed by North Korea, and the flow of petrodollars to politically unstable countries that oppose United States interests.

Holmes claims the United States is no safer largely because the country has become embroiled in "a disastrous war launched and conducted under deceitful pretenses" (p. 196). In his estimation the war is consuming an exorbitant amount of finite counter terrorism resources. Holmes argues persuasively that the United States did not adequately focus on the more serious threats to our national security, contending that the Bush administration's unilateral preemptive response "overestimated the threat posed by a hostile tyranny and underestimated the threats posed by state collapse" (p. 322). The war on terror is doomed to failure because the United States foreign policy pursues an "enemy-centered approach" when it should be focusing on a "threat-centered approach." Although acknowledging that his threat-centered approach is much harder to sustain politically and psychologically because it requires transparency and effective leadership, Holmes asserts the current enemy-centered approach is flawed because it fails to reconcile how international terrorism fits into the crime or war paradigm. Should terrorists be viewed as criminals or enemy war combatants? By declaring war on generic terrorism, decision makers drastically reduced their ability to

identify the clear and present dangers that exist and to develop an effective and focused counter terrorism policy (p. 121). Holmes's threat-centered approach acknowledges that many of the threats to national security require a weighted approach that relies not only on the military option, but also employs diplomatic efforts to gain the cooperation and support of other nations. For this approach to be successful, a massive investment of resources in developing intelligence gathering techniques and pursuing diplomatic efforts is required. Holmes presents a series of scenarios to explain why foreign policy makers followed the path they did, which led to the conclusion that governmental change is the only clear resolution to the current predicament. Holmes repeats an ominous warning throughout the book that the present reckless path has laid the groundwork for more violent future attacks against the United States.

The tendency of liberal regimes to overreact to crises is a continuing theme in Holmes's investigation. Overreaction results in the use of repressive measures, which can be counterproductive because their use increases the probability of alienating the general population and thus may breed further violence. My own research has led to a similar conclusion that democracies, because they are caught in extremely precarious situations in which decision makers are affected by trepidation, arrogance, or the inability to consider the unintended consequences, unfortunately overreact. If decision makers rely too much on force and ignore accommodation or diplomatic avenues they may find it extremely difficult to extricate themselves from the spiral of violence that their policies initiate.

The question of torture became a significant issue during Senate hearings to confirm Michael Mukasey as United States Attorney General. Holmes's examination of the Bush administration's misuse and abuse of interrogation techniques in an effort to enhance national security is perhaps the most substantial and informative chapter. Holmes examines what he considers the blatant hypocrisy of the administration's use of questionable interrogation techniques, stating that, "The most flagrantly paradoxical justification for what would otherwise be an odious violation of America's system of values is that such behavior alone makes it possible to protect America's system of values" (p. 258). Is waterboarding torture? If the newly confirmed United States Attorney General responds in the affirmative then violations of the Geneva Convention would have to be acknowledged. Holmes argues that although the administration will continue to claim that necessity permits such measures in order to save innocent American lives, current policies doom the United States to failure by rapidly decaying the nation's credibility and fuelling the fires of revenge.

A few minor stylistic considerations distracted from Holmes's discussion. Holmes could have focused in greater depth on his own ideas

rather than presenting at length his interpretations of other authors' views. The discussion in some instances is so intertwined that it is difficult to discern Holmes's views from the authors he is critiquing. Although these in-depth critiques are exceptionally well written and thought provoking and lend support to Holmes's arguments, several chapters are reminiscent of book reviews and more space could have been allocated to developing and expanding the author's own views. Holmes's outright contempt for members of the Bush administration is palpable. Such skewed, confrontational name-calling as "gung-ho officials," "autistic clique," and "amateurish president," tend to undermine the objectivity of the arguments he is trying to develop. Finally, although Holmes spends a great deal of space analyzing the causes and negative consequences of the decision to invade Iraq, he fails to present an exit strategy he would recommend in order to release severely encumbered resources for more productive counter terrorism strategies.

Despite these limitations, the author certainly has achieved his purpose of highlighting why United States policymakers must re-examine counter terrorism strategies and policies. Holmes has effectively introduced more clarity and understanding to this tragic unfolding epic and thus has made an important contribution to the literature.

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Jeremi Suri. *Henry Kissinger and the American Century.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. 358 pp. (\$27.95 cloth.)

Jeremi Suri refers to his latest effort as an unconventional biography of Henry Kissinger. What makes this biography unconventional is Suri's explicit effort to marry, in Wendt's formulation, agency and structure. As an agent, Kissinger the "purposeful actor" pursued actions that contributed to the society he inhabits (i.e., structure). But Kissinger was also a product of forces emanating from the structure he sought to influence. The story of Kissinger's life and "agency," from his upbringing in Germany to his ascent to Secretary of State, cannot be divorced from the larger structure with which Kissinger had to contend—a Weimar democracy that gave voice and opportunity to popular discrimination against German minorities; a global war which provided opportunities for useful immigrants to contribute to American hegemony; an ongoing world-wide competition between super-powers that fomented a series of crises; and a society's reinvention of itself to accommodate and celebrate cultural diversity. These structures served to

shape Kissinger's interpretations of the world around him, constrained his choices, and guided his policies. Suri identifies three themes that the story of Kissinger and his times illuminates—democratic weakness, identity, and U.S. foreign policy.

Democratic weakness shaped Kissinger's life and policies in fundamental ways. Kissinger the "statesman" would probably take issue with Suri's characterization of the role of structure in shaping Kissinger's agency. While Kissinger denies that the trauma of his youth in Fürth had any bearing on his later life (p. 48), Suri argues that his childhood experiences led to his deep distrust of democracy. In Weimar Germany, democracy allowed the venting of seething hatreds and scape-goating, and facilitated the rise of the Nazi menace. In America, democracy is marked by weak leadership and indecision. During the Cold War, democracy threatened to undermine U.S. policy by facilitating opportunities for communists to take power in other countries.

Kissinger's identity was a product of structural forces. As a Jew in pre-Nazi Germany, Kissinger was brought up to adhere to the transcendent German principles of *Bildung*—identifying with the intellectual culture of Germany rather than Germany's ethnic culture. But democracy and the rise of the Nazis fomented structural changes, which made adherence to this identity impossible. Kissinger's service in the U.S. armed forces during World War II facilitated his metamorphosis into a "bridge figure" for America—using his special knowledge to address "the basic, often unstated, assumptions of multiple societies" (p. 56). During the early occupation of Germany, Kissinger (a non-commissioned officer) exercised a good deal of authority as the military administrator of two sizable towns, Krefeld and, later, Bensheim. He was especially well-suited to such tasks. As a Jewish exile, he was committed to the denazification of Germany. As a German émigré, he was committed to the reconstruction of his childhood home and the locals were eager to deal with him. During the same time, and continuing throughout the Cold War, public intellectuals and policy makers in the U.S. began to emphasize a new American identity centered on Judeo-Christian values in order to distinguish American society from "godless" fascism and communism, bringing Kissinger closer to the American "mainstream." Again, Kissinger profited from structural change that sought to solidify trans-Atlantic links between America and Europe—as a student and faculty member at Harvard, he highlighted his "bridge figure" identity linking America with Europe, cultivating a global network of contacts from Konrad Adenauer to Nelson Rockefeller. As an advisor and, later, Nixon's Secretary of State, Kissinger the cosmopolitan was well situated to advocate trans-Atlantic ties and an active U.S. foreign policy.

Kissinger's suspicion of democracy and (western-centric) cosmopolitanism held important implications for U.S. foreign policy. The implications of American democracy were centered on inflexibility. The citizenry tended to support extreme policies—appeasement or total war; international dominance or isolationism—but was reluctant to support imaginative policies that steered between the extremes. Consensus within a decentralized government meant a rigid focus on a set of narrow policies—containment, perpetuation of a stable nuclear stalemate—that, to Kissinger's mind, held little promise of advancing the U.S.'s global position. Kissinger sought to free U.S. foreign policy from the bonds of democracy. During Kissinger's years in government, U.S. foreign policy increasingly came to rely on the survival of strong leaders who were not beholden to the problematic preferences of their societies. Around the world, Kissinger cobbled together a federation of stability that reflected the will of a select few elites, many of whom were willing to brutally repress their people if they dared challenge the wisdom of government policy.

If his distrust of democracy was accompanied by a pragmatic recognition of power and its limits, Kissinger's cosmopolitanism, Suri argues, was narrower than U.S. foreign policy required. His identity as a bridge figure linking Europe and America failed to accommodate non-western cultures and preferences. Kissinger saw crises and opportunities through a trans-Atlantic lens—viewing “newly independent states as recipients of the history made in the capitals of the great states” (pp. 186-187). Kissinger's application of the lens led to some successes (e.g., the opening of China) and some failures (e.g., Vietnam War).

Suri sometimes struggles to make this an unconventional biography. For example, his references to the plight of American minorities in contrast to the rise of Jews after World War II seem awkward. However, Suri's discussion of Kissinger's practical theory of international relations is interesting. Kissinger seems to have been an adherent of Power Transition theory (e.g., Kugler and Lemke 2000), seeing the world as a hierarchy of power with the U.S. at the apex. But rather than use its power to impose its will on weak and dissatisfied states, Kissinger advocated a federal system of world politics in which the U.S. would delegate decision making responsibility to states that shared its foreign policy preferences. This world view led to U.S. support for the likes of Mao, Pinochet, Sadat, and Faisal. But Suri cannot resist contrasting Kissinger's prudent approach toward diplomacy—which includes tolerating and, at times, championing dictatorships—with George W. Bush's efforts to spread democracy. Although the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have sought to strike at the root of terrorism by giving voice to popular preferences through the construction of democratic institutions, these popular preferences tend to be incoherent within states and incom-

patible with U.S. foreign policy goals (see e.g., Bueno de Mesquita and Downs 2006).

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Matthew J. Streb, ed. *Running for Judge: The Rising Political, Financial, and Legal Stakes of Judicial Elections*. New York: New York University Press, 2007. 253 pp. (\$45.00 cloth.)

Matthew Streb's edited work, *Running for Judge: The Rising Political, Financial, and Legal Stakes of Judicial Elections*, is undoubtedly one of the most important studies on the politics of judicial elections to date. The major contribution of this work is that it highlights one of the most significant and salient topics of the judicial selection literature: the politics of electing state judges. The work also fills a major gap in the literature on the politics of judicial selection—one that is too heavily oriented towards the federal model in my view. Overall, the book focuses on a range of topics that will have a broad appeal to a diverse audience of scholars, practitioners, politicians and interest groups. This book should be required reading for any political science graduate course that seeks to understand the politics of judicial selection. Streb's edited work raises many important questions for further investigation; therefore, it is an excellent resource for doctoral students pursuing dissertation research and scholars whose interests lie in understanding the complexities and nuances of the politics of selecting state judges.

Running for Judge consists of eleven chapters that address a range of issues affecting judicial elections: the impact of *Republican Party of Minnesota v. White* (2002) on judicial election campaigns, the impact of campaign spending on judicial elections, an analysis of interest group participation in judicial elections, understanding the role of party in partisan and nonpartisan elections, media coverage of judicial elections, how voters respond to high visibility campaigns, whether judicial elections promote accountability and whether the practice of electing judges affects judicial behavior in capital punishment cases. Streb introduces *Running for Judge* in the first chapter on

“The Study of Judicial Elections.” Here, Streb offers a good but much too brief overview of the significance of studying judicial elections in the broader context of state judicial selection. I think readers unfamiliar with the political science literature on state judicial selection, and in particular elections, could have benefited from a more exhaustive examination of the dominant themes in the literature. To his credit, Streb raises a very important question for scholars of state courts: whether the complexity of state judicial selection prohibits generalizations about judicial election politics?

Chapters 2 and 3 examine the impact of *Republican Party of Minnesota v. White* (2002) on judicial elections from two interrelated perspectives. Richard L. Hasen, in “First Amendment Limits on Regulating Judicial Campaigns,” analyzes the impact of *White* on judicial campaign regulations; in particular, the provisions concerning the pledges or promises clause, the commit or appear to commit clause, prohibitions against partisan political activity, personal solicitation of campaign funds and the misrepresentation clause. Hansen draws two important conclusions about *White*—that it is too early to tell about its impact on judicial campaigns and that the Supreme Court’s majority opinion is properly read as one hostile toward judicial elections. Rachel P. Caufield, in “The Changing Tone of Judicial Election Campaigns as a Result of *White*,” argues that judicial elections were already becoming political prior to *White* (e.g., increasing polarization in the electorate). Her analysis did not reveal conclusive evidence that *White* was the major contributing factor in costly, negative judicial campaigns. According to Caufield, only subsequent election cycles will reveal what *White*’s true impact is likely to be.

Chris W. Bonneau’s important contribution in “The Dynamics of Campaign Spending in State Supreme Court Elections” raises more questions than answers on the problem of out of control campaign spending in state supreme court elections which necessitates the need for additional empirical analyses in this area. Bonneau highlights the role interest groups play in judicial elections; that is, it is more efficient for them to capture control of state supreme courts in order to influence policymaking rather than state legislatures. What Bonneau’s analysis amply illustrates is that legal reformers lost the battle to transform state judicial selection into the federal model. Deborah Goldberg’s insightful analysis in her chapter, “Interest Group Participation in Judicial Elections,” should be read in tandem with Bonneau’s chapter. Goldberg gets to the heart of the matter; that is, it is increasing interest group involvement in judicial elections that has contributed to monied interests in judicial campaigns, negative television advertising in supreme court campaigns and the battle over tort reform—a battle that moved from state legislatures to state courts. Although Goldberg investigates the role of interest groups as educators in judicial elections, she ultimately concludes that interest group involvement in judicial campaigns is largely political and

ideological. Beneath her excellent analysis is an important normative question—whether the increasing politicization of judicial elections will ultimately jeopardize the legitimacy of the courts.

The remaining chapters of the book cover more disparate terrain. In “Partisan Involvement in Partisan and Nonpartisan Trial Court Elections,” Streb’s findings show how partisan politics infiltrates nonpartisan elections, thus calling into question the reformist nature of nonpartisan elections. Brian F. Schaffner and Jennifer Segal Diascro extends Streb’s analysis by asking whether an informed electorate leads to judicial accountability in judicial elections. Not surprisingly, the authors found in their chapter, “Judicial Elections in the News,” that citizens lack information about judicial elections due to uneven or very little coverage in chain and independently owned newspapers. Lawrence Baum and David Klein asked a different question: how do voters respond to high-visibility and low visibility judicial campaigns? In their examination of Ohio Supreme Court elections in 1998 and 2002, Baum and Klein found that voter participation was higher in the high-visibility 2002 election, but the determinants of vote choice changed very little. Their more nuanced study clearly demonstrated that researchers must probe, and not assume, consequences of large-scale judicial campaigns.

State court scholar Melinda Gann Hall makes a major contribution to the state judicial selection literature in her chapter, “Competition as Accountability in State Supreme Court Elections.” Hall grapples with a more complex question inherent in the controversy surrounding electing judges: does electoral competition in judicial elections promote accountability? Her findings challenge conventional wisdom that judicial elections do not promote accountability. To the contrary, Hall’s findings demonstrate that state supreme court elections are increasingly contested and competitive, and incumbents are more likely to be defeated, except of course in retention elections which were not designed to be accountable.

Paul Brace and Brent D. Boyea’s contribution to the edited work examines whether judicial selection methods influence judges’ rulings in the area of capital punishment. Their research revealed that state supreme court judges in death penalty cases are more sensitive to public opinion on the death penalty compared to their appointed colleagues on the bench. Streb’s and Brian Federick’s final chapter examines attempts at reforming state judicial elections. Their survey of states’ attempts to reform judicial elections suggests that: (1) states are reluctant to eliminate judicial elections, (2) public financing of judicial elections has occurred in a substantial way only in one state, North Carolina, (3) nonpartisan elections do not eliminate partisan activity in judicial elections, (4) only ten states use campaign conduct committees to address negative campaigning in judicial elections, and (5) no clear evidence exists that voter information guides aid the public in casting their votes in judicial elections. I argue that much of the normative debate

surrounding the propriety of electing judges is a red herring and the empirical evidence presented in Streb's work and elsewhere has marginalized this argument.

Although Streb's work does not purport to address all major issues underlying state judicial elections, one area where the work could have shed important insight is on the politics of representation on state courts. Considerable controversy exists on the question of whether selection systems, particularly elections, matter when examining the success of women's and minorities' efforts to attain seats on state courts. In addition, investigations on whether the role of money in judicial campaign will have a negative impact on increasing the numbers of women and minorities on the bench is a question worthy of systematic examination. Up-to-date research on the question of the linkage between judicial appointments in states with electoral systems would have strengthened the book. In many states that elect judges, quite a few are initially appointed to these positions (interim appointments) and then these judges go on to win elections as "incumbents." Research on whether these systems are truly "elective" would reveal important insights into the complexities and nuances of electing judges in states. Stated another way, does judicial appointment play a greater role in selecting state judges than conventional wisdom suggests? Another area ripe for research lies in a reexamination of the role of party and party elites in electing state judges. Do these factors still figure prominently in our understanding of election outcomes or is money in judicial campaigns a more robust explanatory factor?

Running for Judge does not purport to delve into the theoretical underpinnings of judicial selection in our federal system, nor does the book spend much time on the normative arguments surrounding the debate about electing or appointing judges that dominate legal scholarship. It is a rich volume that should influence and shape subsequent research on state judicial elections and more generally state judicial selection. The volume clearly illustrates the necessity of studying judicial elections as political scientists study other statewide elections against a framework that investigates the role of judges as power wielders, who are engaged in policymaking, and at times must make controversial policy choices that matter to other legislative and executive power wielders, political parties, interest groups, and to the electorate at large.

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Charles L. Pritchard. *Failed Diplomacy: The Tragic Story of How North Korea Got the Bomb.* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2007. 228 pp. (\$26.95 cloth.)

Charles L. “Jack” Pritchard, a former U.S. special envoy for negotiations with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), former Brookings Institution visiting fellow, and current president of the Korea Economic Institute, has written a revealing account of the past half-decade of arduous U.S.-DPRK diplomacy over the North’s nuclear weapons program. Pritchard—who served for 28 years in the U.S. Army, including a post as the Army attaché in Tokyo—joined the staff of the National Security Council under the Clinton administration, serving as Special Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs and Senior Director for Asia. As a civilian, Ambassador Pritchard served under the George W. Bush administration, as the State Department’s special envoy for North Korea, but resigned in 2003 when he perceived that he—and, indeed, the State Department generally—had become marginalized in the policy process by hard-liners in the Bush administration.

As this background suggests, *Failed Diplomacy* is a somewhat unusual book. It is tempting to describe it as an “insider’s account”—and the Brookings Press publicity material does exactly that—but a key point is that Pritchard was *not* an insider for most of the 2002-07 period that he focuses on. How could he have been? In the book’s preface, Pritchard makes clear his respect for his former boss, Colin Powell. He describes Powell as a well-intended “plate-spinner,” who as Secretary of State had to keep a series of plates spinning on poles simultaneously; North Korea policy was just one moving piece. Quoting Powell’s former chief of staff, Larry Wilkerson, Pritchard argues that a preoccupied Powell was sidelined by “a cabal of two, Vice President Cheney and Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld,” who, with respect to DPRK policy, “made decisions in secret, contradicting the formal decisions in which Powell participated.” “In short,” Pritchard tells us, “Powell was *not* an insider” (p. xi, emphasis added). If the secretary of state was marginalized, where would that leave Pritchard?

Not surprisingly, Pritchard is seriously critical of Bush administration policies; the fact that North Korea continued uranium enrichment after its secret program was discovered in 2002, and tested a low-yield nuclear device (probably plutonium-based) in October 2006, certainly warrants his judgment that American-led diplomacy has “failed.” The basic problem for the administration, Pritchard argues, is that it couldn’t decide which goal it valued more: encouraging the collapse of the Kim Jong-il regime, or preventing its development of nuclear weapons.

Bush entered office with extreme skepticism toward the Agreed Framework negotiated by the Clinton administration in 1994, which essentially traded DPRK pledges to shut down its nuclear reactor at Yongbyong, allow International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) inspectors to verify that it had suspended plutonium reprocessing, and remain a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in exchange for U.S. and South Korean provision of light water reactor power plants, fuel oil for heating and electricity, and U.S. assurances that it would not attack the North and would move toward the normalization of political and economic relations (the Korean War, of course, has never been ended by formal treaty).

To leading Bush administration officials, as to the Republicans who had taken control of Congress in 1994 just after the Agreed Framework was inked, U.S. deal-making with Kim Jong-il was tantamount to rewarding bad behavior, legitimizing an odious dictator, and possibly prolonging the survival of the regime itself (in contrast, some former Clinton administration officials have suggested that they only pursued the Agreed Framework as a stopgap, and believed the regime was likely to collapse before long). Candidate Bush, in Pritchard's view, had imbibed such a categorically contemptuous image of Kim Jong-il during his briefings that his preferred policy was, in a sense, a sloganeering non-policy, encouraged by the administration hardliners: bilateral U.S.-DPRK talks would be avoided, not least *because* North Korea desired them. Pritchard also laments that the basic White House ethos toward DPRK policy was ABC—Anything But Clinton.

This may not be entirely fair. Pritchard himself offers a more recent (early 2005) press conference excerpt, in which Bush explains, "It used to be that it was just America dealing with North Korea. And when Kim Jong Il would make a move that would scare people, everybody would say, America, go fix it. I felt it didn't work. In other words, the bilateral approach didn't work. . . . So I felt a better approach would be to include the people in the neighborhood into a consortium to deal with him." (p. 16).

For his part, Pritchard finds little value—thus far, at least—in the "six-party talks" framework (U.S., DPRK, China, South Korea, Japan, and Russia) that the administration introduced in 2003 following the discovery of uranium enrichment. Or rather, broadening the diplomacy was "objectively the right decision," but it was chosen for the wrong reasons: "to avoid bilateral contact with Pyongyang" (p. 57). In Pritchard's view, a better approach would have combined the introduction of a multilateral dialogue with sustained parallel bilateral talks—ironically, just the balance that the administration began to strike in mid-2005, with more flexibility afforded to the key U.S. negotiator, Assistant Secretary of State Christopher Hill. Unfortunately, in Pritchard's view, the right balance came too late; the avoidance of any serious U.S.-DPRK negotiations during Bush's first term, combined

with frequent exchanges of bellicose rhetoric by both sides, may have permanently damaged any prospects the U.S. might have had to prevent the North from “going nuclear.” The genie may never go back in the bottle.

And yet, Pritchard concludes the book by calling for the establishment of a “permanent security forum” for Northeast Asia. Could it be that we are now witnessing the nascent phase of just such an institution? Pritchard is reluctant to credit the administration.

On other points Pritchard is more convincing. North Korea, he concedes, is an exasperating and duplicitous negotiator; in one humorous aside, he calls its incessant insistence that any and all American behavior constitutes proof of “hostile intent” “the equivalent of a scam artist’s claim of whiplash injury in a minor fender bender. . . . There is no satisfactory way for [the U.S.] to prove that it does not have any hostile intent unless Pyongyang declares itself satisfied” (p. 8). Still, he argues, the Bush team significantly increased Pyongyang’s paranoia and unnecessarily played into its self-righteous bargaining positions when it famously rolled it into the “Axis of Evil” in the January 2002 State of the Union address.

Some of the book’s most revealing sections come in 2002-03, when Pritchard still had “insider” access. In his very first post-inauguration phone call to the South Korean president, Kim Dae-jung, in February 2001, Bush half-listened to his ally’s remarks about the need for engagement with the North (the “sunshine policy”), then “put his hand over the mouthpiece of the telephone and said, ‘Who is this guy? I can’t believe how naïve he is!’” (p. 52; Pritchard, apparently, was in the room). Thus, we get a by-now familiar portrait of the Bush administration, with its hubris and lack of regional expertise combining to produce totally self-assured but utterly misguided policies. In this case, Pritchard argues, the collateral damage to U.S. relations with a key regional ally in South Korea has been significant.

But again, Pritchard’s resignation in 2003 means that for the rest of the period he writes about in *Failed Diplomacy*, he was effectively an outsider, albeit a highly experienced and well-informed one. There is an inevitable quality of score-settling to some parts of his account. Pritchard is not a partisan; on the contrary, he regrets the politicization of the policy process in the early Bush years, and the derisive “you guys at the State Department . . .” lectures he heard from Pentagon civilians, before finally getting out. Such dynamics will be depressingly familiar to readers who have followed the spate of “what went wrong” books on Iraq over the past couple of years.

Failed Diplomacy is not a definitive account of U.S.-DPRK diplomacy over the nuclear issue, and it would not be the best place for a non-specialist to try to become acquainted with the subject matter. But for what it is—a knowledgeable insider-turned-outsider’s account of what was, and what might have been—it will serve as a useful primary source for specialists on

Northeast Asian security affairs, presidential decision-making, and foreign policy.

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Alan Gibson. *Understanding the Founding: The Crucial Questions.* Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2007. xi, 314 pp. (\$29.95 cloth.)

Alan Gibson's *Understanding the Founding: The Crucial Questions* is an urgent and compelling plea for taking on historiography as part of the stuff of political theory. Gibson's analysis suggests that a grasp of the diverse ways in which intellectual historians have pieced together the founders work and world can make valuable contributions to our philosophical understanding of this crucial and oft-invoked period. The Founding is a particularly effective place to pursue this kind of methodology. The amount of ink spilled on the meaning of the Founding is exceeded only by the number of readings of that meaning and the ways those meanings are used in American political discourse. Indeed, an interesting if underexplored subtext of Gibson's discussion is the political relevance of his line of inquiry: the intent of the Framers, what it was, whether it can be determined, and whether it can be deployed all inform debates in the American judicial system, in American political campaigns, and in the myriad fora in which Americans get their "information." But Gibson's larger point is methodological—and he makes it well.

Gibson's work proceeds from the assumption that problems of interpretation necessarily precede debates about the meaning of the American Founding. Consequently, those interpretations themselves are worthy of analysis. The debates of intellectual historians over that meaning reveal a diversity of perspectives that would assist any theorist interested in the period and its work. To demonstrate, Gibson identifies and then pursues what he calls the crucial debates in the scholarship on the Founding. He engages the persistence of (1) Charles Beard's economic thesis of the Founding; (2) the ongoing discussion about whether the political system created in 1787 was democratic or intended to be so; (3) whether we should study the Founding using a historical and contextual approach or in terms of the enduring questions of political theory; and finally (4) whether the intellectual foundations of the American Republic are found in liberalism, republicanism or some synthesis of these and other traditions of thought. In each instance, Gibson takes a dialogic approach to the voluminous and important scholarship he discusses. For example, in the first chapter Beard's thesis is

duly challenged by the work of Forrest MacDonald among others. Gibson lays out the broad outlines of complex arguments, defending them in their strengths but without letting them off the scholarly hook. In addition to Beard, influential scholars like Gordon Wood, Bernard Bailyn and J.G.A. Pocock, Michael Zuckert and Rogers Smith, to name but a few, have their arguments effectively presented and defended. Gibson carefully acknowledges their contributions, mapping out how their work has shaped the scholarly discussion of the issues surrounding our understanding of the Founding. As might be expected from a work in part interested in explicating a methodology, he keeps these scholars in dialogue with their critics and others.

Gibson's concern with advocating his methodology means that, in addition to surveying the main arguments on these four crucial debates, he offers up areas of inquiry that need exploring. In the appropriate places, Gibson suggests the needs for an empirical study "testing the relationship between the delegates' economic interests" and their support for "provisions giving the people control over public officials" (p. 41). He argues for closer attention to be paid to "the different foundational assumptions, standards for judgment, and strategies of argumentation between the Progressive and democratic interpretations of the Constitution" (p. 87). In addition, he makes an urgent plea for keen attention to be paid to the way we appropriate the Founders for our present political purposes. Always lurking in his analysis is the implication that despite the fact that the Founders' ideas are often taken as articles of faith, their deployment in our political discourse is as contestable and potentially interesting as the varieties of interpretations given by scholars. Scholarly interpretation, then, both substantiates and calls into question the ways in which we use the Founders. Gibson builds cases for both a patient, mature and a discussion-generating approach to the Founding and a similarly careful approach to the interpretations we rely upon as we try to make sense of our present in terms of our past.

If there were no other value to Gibson's work, the scope of the literature surveyed, and the clarity with which it is presented would mark his book a worthwhile read. But, in the midst of his survey of these myriad arguments, Gibson allows his own insights to come through—and they are worth seeking. For example, in his discussion regarding democracy and the Founding, Gibson takes on those espousing the democratic nature of the founding who argue that "it is simply improper to judge historical actors against modern standards of inclusion or political equality" (p. 88). Gibson is keenly aware that the views of historical actors do not represent the only possibilities available in what Carl Becker called "the climate of opinion." There were, for instance, those who anomalously argued at the time of the Framing for the enfranchisement of women and some states periodically redrew legislative districts in order to promote political equality. The scholar

who, Gibson writes, “admonishes the Framers for not guaranteeing women and African-Americans full rights or criticizes them for not adopting policies that promote one person, one vote, is therefore not being anachronistic” but rather “judging all the Framers against the most progressive standards of their day” (p. 89). It is a singular strength of Gibson’s work that, while he is always ready to take seriously the received wisdom about the Framers, he is equally ready to offer a thoughtful, substantial counterpoint, sometimes building on extant critiques of the scholars in question and sometimes offered from the perspective of Gibson the theorist who takes history and historiography seriously. Like scholars who read literature and literary theory for the context they provide the political theorist, Gibson’s embrace of historiography reminds us of the value of attending to critical issues of interpretation and understanding. Ideas function in contexts and influence behavior—both in the past and in how we have read that past.

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Joseph P. Viteritti. *The Last Freedom: Religion from the Public School to the Public Square.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2007. xvi, 273 pp. (\$27.05 cloth.)

As recent presidential elections have shown, religious pluralism is a vital part of the American political landscape. Those who would understand the shifting dynamics of the country’s political culture as it relates to religion would do well to examine Joseph P. Viteritti’s latest book, *The Last Freedom: Religion from the Pubic School to the Public Square*. Viteritti is the Blanche D. Blank Professor of Public Policy at Hunter College, CUNY, and he has a long history of advocating vouchers and other unconventional forms of choice for urban minority students. The central purpose of Viteritti’s book is to “define religious freedom in predominately secular society” (p. xv). Viteritti deconstructs the traditional wall of separation between religion and government that America has inherited from Thomas Jefferson, Justice Hugo Black, and the Warren and Burger Courts. In its place, he posits the values of the early James Madison, specifically the primacy of freedom of conscience and religious egalitarianism in First Amendment jurisprudence. The core of his argument is that over the past seventy-five years, the Supreme Court has failed to protect religious minorities from political and cultural majorities and has undermined the freedom of conscience that is at the heart of the First Amendment.

As Viteritti sees it, the “overarching secularism” of contemporary American life can be traced back to the late Justice Hugo Black’s interpretation of the establishment clause in *Everson v. Board of Education* (1947) and *McCullum v. Board of Education* (1948). Viteritti faults Black for incorporating the Jeffersonian metaphor of a “wall of separation” between church and state into his interpretations of the establishment clause and for leaving the religion clauses of the First Amendment in a state of tension, with the establishment clause protecting the rights of non-believers and the free exercise clause protecting the rights of believers. Under his revisionist framework, parents who object to the public school curriculum on religious grounds should be permitted to start their own counter-institutions with public funding. The twin bases for this conclusion are a broad interpretation of the Court’s early substantive due process decisions, such as *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923) and *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925), as well as Madison’s argument that the primacy of conscience and obedience to the will of God should prevail over all civic obligations. Allegedly, these cases and principles create both a “prima facie rule” that the “rights of parents to oversee the education of their children are inviolable” (p. 84) and a substantive right, grounded in public policy and the First Amendment, that public school boards should not be permitted to say, “My way or the highway,” without providing funding for sectarian schools organized by religious minorities who prefer to educate their children in an environment that nurtures parental values rather than the secular themes of majoritarian culture.

Although Viteritti’s rhetoric is engaging, his constitutional and public policy arguments suffer from his failure to examine more fully the legal and scholarly literature on the topics he addresses. His appeal to the “ageless wisdom” of the framers when it comes to the original meaning of the First Amendment, together with his attack on Justice Black, rests on the tacit and unsupported assumption that originalism is the proper framework for constitutional interpretation. Given the vast amount of scholarly and judicial attention that this controversial hypothesis has engendered in recent years, it is simply too late in the day to adopt this position without defending it from its many critics. On the merits, Viteritti’s attack on Justice Black seems particularly unfair, given the fact that Black’s eloquent concurrence in the second *Jehovah’s Witnesses* flag salute case adopts the very same sensitivity to freedom of conscience that Viteritti himself advocates. Black’s opinion in *Everson*, which is based in part on the free exercise clause, can hardly be singled out for criticism given the fact that *none* of the justices in *Everson* disagreed with Black’s proposition that “no tax in any amount, large or small, can be levied to support any religious activities or institutions, whatever they may be called, or whatever form they may adopt to teach or practice religion.” Thus, to the extent that Black got it wrong, his was a sin of commission, shared with his other eight colleagues on the Court.

But did Black get it wrong? His strict separation approach to the First Amendment, as articulated in *Everson*, stresses the problem of social conflict that arises when public funds support religious messages that may offend others. For example, taxpayer money may be given to sectarian schools associated with the Baptist Convention and thereby emphasize the duty of wives to obey the dictates of their husbands. As Justices Breyer, Stevens, and Souter repeatedly have emphasized in their recent dissenting opinions, the intractable problem of religious intolerance and civil discord is pervasive in contemporary life. Black's approach to the First Amendment also stresses the threat that government funding poses to the autonomy of sectarian groups if public laws such as those forbidding certain forms of discrimination are imposed upon them. The consequence for sectarian institutions is that they may be forced to curtail their doctrinal expression in the interest of preserving their access to public funds.

Viteritti's contrary view, which reflects the influence of former Chief Justice Rehnquist and Justices Thomas and Scalia, is associated with the accommodation school. Under this approach, the only constraint that the establishment clause places on public policy is the principle that government may not set up an official religion. While this narrow standard would make it possible for states to adopt the voucher and other programs that Viteritti advocates, the proposition that taxpayers must support sectarian schools whenever parents object on religious grounds to the public school curriculum, is particularly suspect. This aspect of Viteritti's argument rests on the dubious proposition that since substantive due process decisions from the 1920s give parents the right to enroll their children in private schools of their own curricular design, this necessarily means that the public must pay for it. In the final analysis, Viteritti's unmitigated praise for the religious decisions of the Rehnquist Court leads him to overlook the role this Court played in weakening the very free exercise protection he demands. As John T. Noonan Jr. (2002, p. 73) has forcefully argued, the Rehnquist Court continually classified religious rights as speech and then used the principle of freedom of speech rather than the free exercise clause to protect religious minorities. Likewise, it discounted the free exercise rights of prisoners, Native Americans, and Muslims in the name of social order.

While the central argument of Viteritti's book is problematic, on other levels the text has merit, including its overview of the legal history of religion in America and its discussion of diversification of religion since the 1960s. Taken as a whole, the book provides a useful exercise in critical thinking, as well as way for students to engage the broader literature on the religion clauses.

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Suzanne J. Piotrowski. *Governmental Transparency in the Path of Administrative Reform*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007. 139 pp. (\$55.00 cloth.)

Suzanne Piotrowski's book on *Government Transparency* is a case study of the impact of the National Performance Review (NPR) and its components on the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). While this relationship may seem a little vague, the book uses the NPR and FOIA as proxies for the principles associated with the New Public Management and government transparency respectively. The concept of the book is intriguing, "how do public management reforms relate to open government initiatives?" (p. 1). The use of the NPR and FOIA, however, obscures whatever relationship may exist between the New Public Management and traditional democratic principles of governance.

The author introduces her case using the framework of Madison's vision of accountability and transparency in government (p. 3) contrasted with Hamilton's concept of efficiency and energy in government (p. 5). Exploring the impact of new initiatives to promote government efficiency on the purposes and values of government is an important exercise that all students of public administration should pursue. The NPR purported to be that new initiative to improve efficiency and effectiveness and the FOIA is a good example of a tool to enhance transparency in government. However, as the author points out, the "relationship between the NPR and the FOIA is complicated" (p. 47) and for good reason.

The NPR was initiated in 1993 riding the wave of the reinventing government movement that washed over the country. The NPR sought to cut spending, improve customer service, empower employees, use market solutions, contract government services, and measure results (p. 17). All these principles had been introduced to government years before and were again in 1993 "reinvented" into a new package of so-called administrative reform. The author uses the NPR as the baseline for her analysis while administrative tools such as performance management, customer service,

employee empowerment, and contracting had been used in government for decades before the announcement of the NPR. As Piotrowski's research showed, the relationship between NPR and FOIA would be difficult to isolate given numerous earlier commissions, reports, and administrative initiatives to implement strategic planning, performance management, pay-for-performance, improve service, contract for services, and cut red tape.

The FOIA was enacted in 1966, 27 years before the NPR. The FOIA is an excellent example of promoting open government, but was probably more of a target of the NPR (cutting red tape) than a complimentary tool that could be used to demonstrate government reform through the NPR. A more effective approach to understanding the implementation of the FOIA may have been the motivations behind the amendments to the FOIA in 1974, 1976, 1986, and 1996 (pp. 23-24). These amendments were made with the same conflict in mind, that of the balance between the efficient operation of government and the importance of the values of transparency and accountability.

The author uses several research methods to determine the impact of the NPR on the FOIA including a content analysis of the Department of Justice publication *FOIA Post*, surveys of members of the American Society of Access Professionals and FOIA officers, structured interviews of key individuals in the field, and finally a content analysis of historical documents. The results of the research showed that the NPR did not have a direct effect on the FOIA. The effects that were found were linked to components of the NPR, such as performance management and customer service, but these could as easily be linked to other initiatives to improve the operations of government independent of the NPR.

Piotrowski summarizes her study by saying democratic accountability and accountability for results can be visualized on a continuum. "The objective is to find a point on that continuum that balances the need to have both types of accountability." (p. 107). The author claims no direct relationship between the NPR and FOIA, but rather that the indirect effects of certain components of NPR, such as performance management and outsourcing, had an adverse effect on democratic accountability, "It is in the unintended consequences of NPR on the FOIA that the intersection of democratic accountability and accountability for results are seen." (p. 107). This conclusion has been made by several notable authors critical of the reinventing movement and the New Public Management approach in general. H. George Fredrickson, in an article directly related to the focus of this book, said "There is no doubt that the near-term emphasis on efficiency in reinventing government has taken a toll on social equity" (Frederickson 1996, 269).

Ronald Moe, David Rosenbloom, Peter Drucker, and James Q. Wilson have all had similar concerns about the negative impact of the New Public

Management on the values of a democratic society, particularly the loss of accountability.

Governmental Transparency is a well researched and interesting book on the intervention of public management initiatives on programs that reflect democratic values in governance. The shortcoming of the book is a direct reflection of the shortcoming of the intervention selected, the National Performance Review. As the NPR was nothing particularly new or innovative, the impact of that intervention is difficult to distinguish from other initiatives. Since the NPR did little to make a difference in government other than shift services from direct government provision to contracted services, the effect of NPR can only be measured by its indirect consequences. As the author suggests, more research should be conducted on the impact of the new tools of governance on the traditional values of a democratic society (as in Salamon 2002). This book is a good early step in this needed research, although more will be needed to understand the state of governance in the modern world.

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Karch, Andrew. *Democratic Laboratories: Policy Diffusion among the American States*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007. 272 pp. (\$70 cloth, 24.95 paper).

Since the contributions by Jack Walker (1969) and Virginia Gray (1973), policy diffusion among American states has been one of the essential issues in the field of state politics. Policy diffusion is a process through which new, innovative policy programs spread across the states. In order to make a distinction from policy *congruence*, Andrew Karch in *Democratic Laboratories* clarifies that policy diffusion “occurs, in sum, when decision makers draw on others’ experiences to evaluate the effectiveness of a new political form or idea” (p. 3). Thus, the author stresses that policy diffusion entails *learning* from the previous linkage between policy alternatives and policy outcomes.

This book focuses on the question of what factors facilitate or hinder policy diffusion. In order to examine the research question, the book studies

three welfare and two health care policy programs in accordance with the author's unique policy process model. The examined policy programs include senior prescription drug programs, medical savings accounts (MSAs), individual development accounts (IDAs), time limits on welfare program benefits, and family caps on welfare program benefits. The policy process model includes stages of agenda-setting, information generation, customization, and enactment.

Chapter 2 focuses on the enactment of the programs in question and studies the influence of various explanatory factors. By using event history analysis, the author empirically examines the influence of neighboring state effect, problem severity, income per capita, professionalism of legislators, and political ideology in states. The results show that these variables have a substantial impact only on the enactment of MSAs, but not on the enactment of other programs. Next, the author proffers case studies of the enactment of some of the examined programs in Oregon and Virginia, and observes that institutional leaders, such as governors, legislative leaders, and committee chairs, have significant impact. These "institutionally critical actors" (p. 51) can in effect reject legislation because governors maintain veto power, and legislative leaders and committee chairs control legislative schedules. Thus, the author observes that the support of governors and legislative leaders are necessary for the enactment of the programs.

Chapter 3 studies agenda-setting, demonstrating that the author is in accordance with Kingdon's (1995) definition of agenda-setting as the process that "determines which policy alternatives they consider" (p. 28). Convincingly, the author examines bill introduction as a measurement of agenda-setting. The author taps the amount of national news coverage about the studied programs. In his study of Massachusetts, Oregon and Virginia, the author's analysis amply demonstrates that the five programs were enacted when the amount of news coverage significantly increased.

Chapter 4 compares the various sources for information generation. The author observes that media reports, legislative testimony, and administrative documents do not provide legal and programmatic details at the stage of information generation. In contrast, the author observes that professional organizations, such as the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), Council of State Governments (CSG) and National Governors Association (NGA), and policy think tanks, including the Council for Affordable Health Insurance (CAHI), Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) and Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), provide more detailed and programmable information about policy innovation.

Chapter 5 focuses on the customization process. The author explains customization as the process through which "officials tailor policy innovations to fit their states" and "policymakers take a proposal and mold it for

either political or technical reasons” (33). The author’s analysis demonstrates that the discrepancies in program content among Massachusetts, Oregon, and Virginia are caused by the differences in coalitions of supporting interest groups.

There are some questions about the author’s examination of policy diffusion. In Chapter 2, the variable of legislative professionalism is measured based upon salaries, time in session and staff. Also, the variable of state ideology is based upon the measurement by Erikson et al. (1993). While these measurements are generally credible, some explanations about the measurements and related descriptive statistics would have better clarified the empirical study. In the same chapter, the author studies two states and contends that institutional leaders’ negative power is very effective. This could indicate that the exercise of negative power by *only one* actor, either governor or chamber leader, could sufficiently reject policy innovation. Thus, divided government may increase the possibility of exercising negative power and decrease the possibility of policy enactment.

In Chapter 3, the author finds that the five programs were enacted when the amount of news coverage increased, and contends that time-constrained policymakers are responsive to salient programs. Nonetheless, the empirical finding is likely to suggest that innovative programs are more likely to be enacted when *their* salience is increasing. This indication is different from a postulation that salient programs are more likely to be enacted than less-salient programs.

Overall, the book is well-organized and offers credible comparative and multi-case studies. The policy process approach in the book greatly contributes to its strength. The process model enhances focus, variation and theoretical consistency in the author’s examination of the various explanatory factors influencing policy diffusion. The general finding is likely to suggest that issue salience and interest groups are effective on the early stages of policymaking while governmental leaders and professional organizations become influential on the later stages.

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Joel F. Handler and Yeheskel Hasenfeld. *Blame Welfare, Ignore Poverty and Inequality.* New York and Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 416 pp. (\$80.00/£45.00 cloth, \$29.99/£16.99 paper.)

The authors of *Blame Welfare, Ignore Poverty and Inequality* claim that they wrote this third in a series of books out of a passion for the structural conditions, public policies and social forces that affect the lives of the impoverished, especially single mothers with children. With this book, Joel Handler and Yeheskel Hasenfeld are intent on challenging the conventional wisdom that welfare reform of the mid-1990s “worked.” In order to do this, they provide a policy analysis that highlights the manner in which the American welfare state has often distributed its benefits disproportionately to those least in need. They also attempt to demonstrate that this is a welfare state whose policies historically have always had a numbing and negative impact on poor women and whose “street-level” implementation apparatus adversely distorts welfare programs.

These two well-known experts provide extensive coverage to all issues associated with poverty, inequality and welfare. After the introduction’s overall plan, Handler and Hasenfeld give the reader a social profile of poor Americans, the incidence of poverty over the life cycle, the duration of poverty “spells,” and the characteristics of welfare recipients. Chapter 3 offers a program-by-program overview of the U.S. welfare state, with detailed summaries of programs such as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), food stamps, the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), child care, housing, Head Start, health care, and much more. They then recount the historical path of welfare reform with its constant demonizing of the single-mother family from colonial times to the present. With Chapter 5 they move to the present by describing the new role our welfare bureaucracy has assumed in promoting welfare-to-work since the passage of the 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act. Chapter 6 shows the hurdles poor women face in the low-wage labor market. In Chapter 7 they turn to the moral goals of modern welfare reform with its entrepreneurial efforts to promote marriage, encourage responsible parenthood and prevent teenage pregnancy. The last chapter concludes with the author’s proposals for satisfactorily addressing poverty and inequality through comprehensive efforts to create jobs, provide income support, increase low-end market wages and to improve the both the quality of and access to child care.

Throughout the multiple topics, presentation of data and catalog of events, the authors stick to their central theme. Each chapter challenges the broad consensus that welfare reform successfully “ended welfare as we

knew it” over the last decade. Handler and Hasenfeld insist that the conventional wisdom is wrong and argue that while reform caused many single mothers to leave welfare rolls, most of them have joined the working poor and are now unable to make a decent living. Welfare reform’s emphasis on employment (workfare) and family values (marriage promotion, sex education and abstinence) demonized female welfare recipients without improving their material conditions or dealing with the underlying sources of poverty and inequality. True social reform, they contend, must draw attention to the economic hardships low-income families face and concentrate on the development of substantive public anti-poverty programs. Toward this end, the book proposes an alternative approach that is centered on improving labor markets, expanding community services, and government provision of a basic income support along with both universal health and child-care.

There is much to be recommended in this book. It brings together an extensive body of research findings to make the case that the U.S. needs to move beyond current contentions over welfare reform and make a strong commitment to reducing poverty and inequality. The authors are especially good at exposing the myths about welfare programs and welfare recipients. They also provide an excellent exposition of the internal workings of welfare bureaucracies as well as the many reasons why welfare programs generate widespread public opposition but rarely achieve their intended goals. Assertions relevant to the issues under discussion are amply supported with references to studies and articles that represent the state of contemporary scholarship. And, anyone interested in the interconnectedness of poverty issues and the major alternatives to our current social welfare policy should read this book. Nevertheless, *Blame Welfare* also has some minor blemishes and at least two serious flaws.

The central thesis of this book, that “the country has demonized poor, single mothers,” is hardly a novel proposition. Nor is its assertion that the welfare reform legislation of the 1990s is seriously flawed. Most of the support for these propositions has been more thoroughly articulated in other works. Furthermore, while the book’s central argument is clear enough, there are so many other assertions competing for the reader’s attention, so many long lists of propositions, articles and evidence and so much other unrelated material within its pages, that this unifying focus can get lost. This “book of lists” could have been substantially shortened without much loss in content if the authors had not in each chapter summarized what they had said previously, tell you what they were going to say, say it and, then, summarized that. Moreover, many arguments in the text could have been discussed with greater precision, leaving detailed elaboration to the endnotes. Some of the book’s vast wealth of data might have been more productively presented in tables.

The least satisfactory feature of *Blame Welfare* is the weakness of its historical and comparative analysis. The authors present a version of welfare history in which America's response to poverty is unaffected by either economic upturns and downturns or by liberal and conservative periods. This largely ahistorical perspective prevents Handler and Hasenfeld from being able to explain why several relatively generous cycles in welfare legislation like those of the post-Civil War era, the New Deal, or the Great Society have been followed by eras of retrenchment. Because the authors do not explain why the U.S. welfare state developed differently from those in other industrial democracies, they have difficulty either in interpreting American exceptionalism or justifying their own preferred anti-poverty policies. If the authors are really correct in their belief that our political culture has always been consistently and systematically antagonistic to welfarism, there would be little reason for the reader to believe that their ambitious egalitarian proposals have any chance for success today.

In summary, *Blame Welfare* provides a strong cohesive argument, a comprehensive overview of the subject matter, important insights and an excellent literature review. However, Handler and Hasenfeld could have improved their book with better integration, sharper articulation of the material and less repetition. Perhaps more important is the fact that the book's negative reading of welfare history, elite priorities and public opinion in the United States undermines its conclusions. The authors own analysis of the trajectory of American welfarism suggests few prospects for substantial reform. They never tell us what social forces or which structural features of the U.S. political process would allow for the adoption and implementation of the comprehensive set of programmatic alternatives they favor. Nor do they provide any comparative analysis of comparable government policies and social outcomes in other Western welfare states that might persuade the reader that their preferred egalitarian programs might work as intended.

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Hugh Heclo with Mary Jo Bane, Michael Kazin, and Alan Wolfe.
Christianity and American Democracy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007. ix, 299 pp. (25.95 cloth.)

Given the historical and contemporary tensions between religion and politics, it is tempting to conclude that the ideal political outcome is one where divine revelation and human reason have as little to do with each other as is humanly possible. In this provocative book, Hugh Heclo firmly

rejects this conclusion. Growing out of the Alexis de Toqueville Lecture at Harvard University, Heclo argues that Christianity in general and Protestant Christianity in particular have been vitally important for the development of American democracy. Far from exacerbating political tensions, in the United States at least, democracy and Christianity have been mutually supportive of each other. Heclo concludes, however, that there has been a rupture in this relationship in recent decades that augurs ill for both.

The strongest part of the book is Heclo's account for how and why Christianity and democracy made their peace with each other in America. It was, as Heclo rightly notes, a "profound historical achievement" (p. 213) because claimants for democratic liberty had frequently been enemies of religion, while devotees of religion had oftentimes been foes of democracy. Yet, as Alexis de Tocqueville noted in his early 19th Century visit to America, Christianity and democracy supported one another in America and they flourished together. Like Tocqueville before him, Heclo highlights the cultural factors that made this union possible. He avoids the simplistic assumption that Protestantism inherently promotes democracy, wisely noting instead that in the United States "conditions were generally favorable for it to do so" (p. 52). One of those conditions was that America was a religiously pluralistic culture where no single sect could politically dominate. Heclo writes, "Americans tended to be driven toward religious tolerance because there were too many sects to allow them to get away with the intolerance they might have preferred" (p. 25). I might add that an important factor in securing religious peace in the United States was that the newly created American national state was weak on religious questions; state and local governments could decide for themselves how or if to recognize or accommodate particular churches.

Heclo astutely argues that religious harmony was not, however, simply a function of practical politics; Protestant churches embraced political ideas like individualism, religious toleration, and some form of church-state separation for *religious* reasons. Calling it "the Great Denouement," Heclo describes how American Christians developed the doctrine of religious liberty through theological, not simply practical, reasoning. It led to a circumstance where Tocqueville would describe religion as the first political institution of American democracy, not because of the partisan political role of the churches—which were minimal compared to his native France—but due to the critical contribution of Christian churches to democratic society.

This contribution was twofold. First, Christianity provided the moral order necessary to check "the juggernaut drive of democratic equality from running amok and degrading humanity" (p. 8). While sectarian divisions remained, believers were united by a common Christian morality and a shared view of the appropriate political role for religion. The democratic

ethos overtook the churches which dulled the sharp edges between traditions. Widely shared values became more important while doctrinal divisions became less salient. An ironic result was that “Christianity has probably been better for American democracy than American democracy has been for Christianity” (p. 79). Second, the Great Denouement solved the perennial question of the compatibility of Christianity and democracy, it “produced the twin tolerations that we can now see are essential for modern democracy anywhere in the world—the political freedom of elected governments from control by religious authorities, and the religious freedom of individuals and groups from control by the government” (p. 20).

Hecló contends that the entente between Christianity and democratic political order is breaking down, and that the decade of the 1960s was instrumental in the estrangement between the two. In education, the courts, and the arts “the sixties brought a moral fervor to secular doctrine that was in substantial tension with traditional Christianity” (p. 102). While acknowledging that it is a “myth” that there is a culture war among ordinary Americans, Hecló nonetheless argues that such conflict exists among elites “which is of vastly disproportionate importance for shaping a nation’s political future” (p. 123). Not only do we lack a common Christian morality to serve democracy as in the past, but we face the dangerous prospect that serious Christians have become alienated from democracy, and serious democrats are hostile to Christianity (p. 144).

There is much to appreciate in this book. Hecló offers a compelling account of Christianity’s role at the founding. More importantly, he provides a helpful corrective to a political science literature that has too often ignored religion as a factor in American political development.

As if he already anticipated some of the critiques of his work, Hecló writes that “without overgeneralization there can be no lectures, not even bad lectures” (p. 34). His three respondents effectively argue, nonetheless, that this hardly excuses the author for missing critical points in the history of American religion. Hecló’s account largely ignores the role of Roman Catholics and other religious minorities in the United States, and the book says very little about how those traditions wrestled with the issue of the compatibility of their faith and democratic governance. Moreover, as Alan Wolfe notes, the divisions within Protestant Christianity are and have been so great that “one generalizes about the whole at one’s peril” (p. 188). Slavery and prohibition are two of many examples where there was no commonly shared Protestant moral or political position.

Hecló is also on less sure footing in his concluding claim of a contemporary rupture between Christianity and democracy, for two reasons. First, it is a subset of Christians, largely traditionalist or orthodox Christians, who are alienated from certain social, cultural and political practices as Hecló

describes them. While they are a dwindling breed, mainline Protestant Christians, Jews, and progressive Roman Catholics are not deeply estranged from the political developments of the 1960s. Moreover, as Wolfe cogently argues, conservative Christians are not systematically withdrawing from the culture in ways that would suggest that they are fundamentally at odds with political democracy. There are numerous theologians who believe that American Christians should be more distant from culture, including John Richard Neuhaus from the political right and Stanley Hauerwas from the political left, but there is painfully little evidence that ordinary Christians are heeding their call. Still, Hecló's *Christianity and American Democracy* offers a provocative thesis about the nexus between Christianity and democracy in America, and he defends this idea forcefully and in a way that is sure to elicit good conversation and debate in a very important topic.

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Mark Philp. *Political Conduct*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. vi, 283 pp. (\$49.95 cloth.)

Mark Philp's nicely written and wide-ranging exploration of evaluating political conduct is consciously intended to provide an alternative to the approach to political theory that John Rawls and other liberal theorists have offered. Philp finds liberal political theory lacking in several ways, including the failure to give due consideration to political leadership (p. 79) and the inability to resolve the problem of motivating citizens to the level of political participation necessary to preserve "liberal civic cultures within modern, pluralist states" (p. 206). The essence of Philp's argument, in contrast to liberal theory, is that "in making judgments about political conduct, we have to start from the political context, the challenges that any competent political actor should recognize in that context, the obstacles and aspirations that set the agenda for the agent, and the abilities and commitments that he or she brings to the task" (p. 74). The author emphasizes the actual behavior of political actors in creating, as well as abiding by, established standards of political conduct. This concrete behavior can vary widely in space and time, and hence no universal principles for judging agents' political activities are applicable in all cases.

In advancing his project, Philp begins with an example from ancient Rome: the assessment of Julius Caesar's political conduct in the context of Niccolò Machiavelli's evaluation of that conduct. Philp proceeds to a generally sympathetic discussion of Machiavelli's own view of virtue and virtù,

noting that not only consequences, but also the actor's character, must play a role in evaluating political action. Philp explores several topics related to understanding and evaluating political conduct, including the circumstances and character of political rule; the exercise of leadership; the intriguing question of politics and corruption: whether participation in politics tends to corrupt the participants, or alternatively, whether those drawn to politics possess characters that necessarily lead to the misuse of power (Philp comes down on the side of the former possibility); when the loyalty of subordinates is a virtue and when it is a vice; the proper behavior of subordinates in public service; the appropriate role of civil disobedience and resistance in a liberal democratic polity; and the importance of institutional design in placing limits on political action.

Despite the inherently interesting nature of the subjects covered, Philp's treatment tends to move along with a minimum of structure, and he often makes pronouncements of unclear status and uncertain persuasiveness. In some instances, philosophers might be reminded of Ludwig Wittgenstein's comment that in doing logic (or philosophy), we strive to understand something that is already plainly in sight, something about which we need instead to remind ourselves. Philp's discussion contains many reminders to political philosophers and political scientists about what they already are (or ought to be) aware, bringing to mind what is sufficiently apparent. For instance, Philp mentions on at least two occasions (pp. 99 and 111) that political power presupposes a basic inequality between ruler and ruled, a point Hans Morgenthau many years ago mentioned as one of the perennial truths of politics. This and other statements—such as “If free-riding becomes widespread, general compliance collapses” (p. 196), “politicians do not value all individuals' judgment equally” (p. 85), and “Politics is a rule and norm governed activity” (p. 214)—appear to be tautologies, or at least truisms.

There are several instances in which Philp's assertions fail to persuade. In a discussion of accountability, Philp states that “Prison guards should not be held to account by prisoners; teachers by pupils; judges by defendants, prosecutors, and the beneficiaries or victims of crimes” (p. 224). However, these people *can* be “held to account” to the extent that prisoners, pupils, and defendants still possess certain legal rights that ought to protect them from the arbitrary actions of those in authority. In the discussion of the corrupting tendency of power, Philp comments that with the development of constitutional states and democratic participation, “absolute power is a rarer phenomenon” (p. 98), which, he continues, may mean that modern states need not have the same concerns about power that were raised in the classical tradition. However, unless I have misunderstood Philp's claim, the totalitarian states of the twentieth century and political philosophers' treatment of

such regimes (most obviously Hannah Arendt) certainly put into question such an assertion.

Other discussions, such as the character of the U.S. civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s, appear to miss alternative interpretations of historical events. Philp doesn't appear to notice that nonviolence was not just a strategy that could have acceptable or unacceptable consequences that in turn had ethical implications for movement leaders (p. 185), but was also a religious principle that guided many in the movement: to surrender the principle of nonviolence would have been to deny a fundamental aspect of their integrity as political actors. For such people, the possibility of a moral dilemma can take on even more profound meaning than Philp suggests. For those who *did not* accept a nonviolent strategy, the alternative was not necessarily violent resistance against the establishment, but instead the willingness to use violence in the constitutionally protected right of self-defense—an argument that Don B. Kates, a civil rights activist and gun rights advocate, has made so forcefully. Further, Philp gives insufficient weight to the additional complication that the civil rights movement was confronted by a federal system in which the question of the “nearly just” nature of government depended on which government—local, state, or federal—and which branch within the government was being confronted. Surely movement leaders were confident that their message, conveyed through acts of civil disobedience, would be received sympathetically at some level of the federal system.

Despite these reservations (and in part because of them), Philp's account of political conduct deserves serious consideration as a reminder of the nature of the political realm, as an alternative perspective on politics, and as a sounding board against which to clarify one's own political understanding of the important topics discussed.

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Orr, Marion, ed. *Transforming the City: Community Organizing and the Challenge of Political Change*. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2007. xii, 264 pp. (\$40.00 cloth; \$19.95 paper.)

Declining American participation in politics and in civic life has been noted by many recent observers. At the same time, grassroots groups organize, mobilize, and—sometimes even—empower citizens in urban communities. The focus of this edited collection is on the challenges facing community organizing.

Marion Orr of Brown University edited this excellent collection, which resulted from two workshops at Brown. The contributors are leading urban social scientists. A variety of cities and types of community organizations are examined from diverse perspectives. The editor contributes an introductory and a concluding chapter. Orr's aim is to assess "community organizing within the context of the cultural, political, social and economic forces that impact the local *ecology of civic engagement*" (p. 3; emphasis in original). His introduction includes a brief history of community organizing efforts, with an emphasis on Saul Alinsky and organizations employing an Alinsky model (institutional members, often churches, federate, and use conflict to improve neighborhood services). This history is very important for the student audience. Many have never heard of Alinsky organizations. Orr points out that a central challenge facing community organizations is "overcoming the strong influence of contemporary public culture" (p. 17). The standard overview of the book completes the introduction.

Chapters Two through Seven provide analytical case studies. Mark Santow's chapter examines Saul Alinsky's work in Chicago in the 1960s. Alinsky worked with an interracial group, the Organization for the Southwest Community (OSC), which had some success in stemming racial violence, stabilizing the housing market, and easing racial transition. Alinsky also worked with The Woodlawn Organization (TWO), a black community group, which stimulated a significant amount of citizen participation. Both organizations ran into a major difficulty facing community organizations today: community organizations tend to be neighborhood based, while the problems they confront are metropolitan and regional in nature (at least).

Peter Burns' chapter on New Orleans presents another challenge: community groups recognize problems and make demands, but leadership is too disorganized and lacks resources to respond. Burns provides a thorough account of the activities of the Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now (ACORN), All Congregations Together (ACT), and Jeremiah. ACORN is a membership organization, and is frequently confrontational. Churches comprise the membership of the other groups, and they prefer collaborative approaches. All have had successes over the years, and continue to work in post-Katrina New Orleans.

The challenge faced by community organizations in El Paso, Texas, is that of fragmentation in the midst of a significant international border. Katherine Staudt and Clarence Stone focus on the organization, El Paso Inter-religious Sponsoring Organization (EPISO), an affiliate of the Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF), which is the national Alinsky organization. El Paso's civic ecology is one of high fragmentation. Staudt and Stone find that the IAF's "narrow and ad hoc approach to issues adds to and therefore does not overcome fragmentation" (p. 105). The relative success of the

Coalition Against Violence toward Women and Families transcended the border. The dramatic nature of the problem limits transfer to other issue areas.

Dennis Shirley and Michael Evans look at the impact of the No Child Left Behind (NCBL) Act of 2002 on community organizations. They consider the organizations: ACORN in Chicago, People Acting for Community Together (PACT) in Miami, and the Texas Industrial Area Foundation (IAF). In particular, the NCBL drive for “accountability” was detrimental to educational reform efforts in Texas.

Heidi Swarts examines ACORN’s national-level approach. She begins with a comparison of ACORN to congregation-based community organizing. This should prove useful in classes. She reviews ACORN’s incremental groundswell approach (used in the living wage campaign), and the simultaneous local-state-national campaign (as used in community banking and lending policies). Her appendices provide substantial detail.

Richard Wood’s chapter considers the Pacific Institute for Community Organization’s (PICO) effort at state-level organizing in California, as well as its efforts at the national level. Based upon extensive interviewing, Wood makes a strong case that PICO had significant influence in Sacramento. Since 2002, PICO has undertaken a national level effort, the New Voice Campaign.

Two chapters provide a broader view. Robert Fisher and Eric Shragge give us an historical overview of community organizing. Some may prefer, in a teaching context, to use this chapter earlier. Fisher and Shragge focus on historic tensions in community organizing: the tension between different traditions and visions, tensions caused by varying success stories at different levels (local, national, etc.), tensions resulting from fragmentation, and tensions between local community organizing and social movements. In particular, Fisher and Shragge contrast the development and action approaches, and their relationship to the question of social change.

Peter Dreier’s chapter places community organizing into the larger context of progressive politics in the United States. Dreier uses five examples which show that community organizing is essential but insufficient to address America’s problems: community reinvestment, environmental justice, living wage, global sweatshops, and immigrant rights. Dreier argues that community organizations need to be part of a larger political coalition.

Orr’s concluding summary reviews the challenges facing community organizing. On the positive side, community organizing helps in engaging citizens in the democratic process. There is significant evidence of this in these case studies. Globalization and changing the contemporary public’s culture, however, are two challenges that may be beyond the capacity of

community organizations. The authors clearly recognize the limits, as well as the potential, of community organizing.

Overall, this is a very fine book. The individual chapters are of high quality. Orr has done an outstanding job in tying the case studies together, in his introduction and conclusion. The book can be used in a variety of courses. I will use it in my Urban Politics course, but any class addressing citizen participation or problems of American democracy might employ it. The issues raised here will continue after the 2008 election. This is another reason for highly recommending this collection.

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