

## Book Reviews

Richard L. Engstrom, Editor

**Wendy Brown.** *Walled States, Waning Sovereignty*. New York: Zone Books, 2010. 168 pp. (\$25.95/£19.95 cloth).

The concept of sovereignty, demarcating nation-state boundaries and authority, has been credited as being pivotal to the field of international relations and has been the subject of serious examination. While classical readings of sovereignty have generally focused on its Westphalian origins and its unchanging universality (Waltz 1979), approaches more critical of this concept have ranged from those that focus on deviations in the practice of sovereignty (Krasner 1999; 2001) to constructivists who suggest that sovereignty is not pre-ordained in world politics, but rather the practices of nation-states that shape and construct it (Reus-Smit 1999; Wendt 1992). In recent years postcolonial and other critical scholars have further interrogated the concept to include, for example, its co-constitution with imperialism, its dubious inside/outside delineation, and the ways in which borders integral to sovereign authority enable racialized, classed and gendered exclusions (see for example Barkawi and Laffey 2002; Chowdhry and Rai 2009). Much of this new thinking about sovereignty and borders has been further invigorated by the increasing scope and intensity of globalization and its impacts on state sovereignty as well. It is within these conversations and contexts that Wendy Brown's *Walled States, Waning Sovereignities* can be understood.

Brown starts with the acknowledgement that “. . . it is no news that nation-state sovereignty is challenged by global movements of capital and the growing power of transnational; legal, economic, and political institutions” (pp. 22-23). While the book is indeed informed by the interdisciplinary conversations on sovereignty, nation-states, borders, globalization and the exclusions engendered through their intersections, the uniqueness of Brown's project stems from its examination of “walling” as the site where “tensions between opening and barricading, fusion and partition, erasure and inscription” are embedded (p. 7). Focusing on the modern and increasingly prevalent phenomenon of wall building by nation-states and other actors to secure states and other places (for example gated communities), Brown argues that these walls are rarely “built as defenses against potential attacks by other sovereigns . . . these walls target nonstate transnational actors—individuals, groups, movements, organizations and industries,” and are “signs of a post-Westphalian world.” (p. 21). However, Brown does not use the “post” in post-Westphalian world to refer to the death of nation-states

and sovereignty, rather the post is similar to its usage in postcolonialism in which the past structures the present even as the present emerges in a changed form.

One of the more noteworthy features of the book is Brown's assertion that the waning of nation-state sovereignty does not imply the "decline in power or significance" of states and sovereignty. Instead, she writes, states and sovereignty simply "come apart from each other" and sovereignty finds a home in "the unrelieved domination of capital and God-sanctioned political violence" even though states continue to remain important actors (pp. 23-24). Walls reflect this "predicament of state power" (p. 24). They appear as denizens of state power but represent its attenuation vis-à-vis other global forces. Similar to "old walls," these contemporary walls seek to perform power and yet are the markers of cartographic and other anxieties of nation-states that have emerged in the era of "globalization and late modern colonization" (p. 24). In the rest of Chapter 1, Brown explores, albeit briefly, the Israeli Security Fence and the U.S. Border Fence to argue that contemporary walls are a "single historical phenomenon despite their formally disparate purposes and effects" (p. 26).

The next few chapters examine the paradoxes reflected in the current walling phenomenon, including the psychic need for the building of walls and shoring state borders as state borders are increasingly infiltrated, the subjectivities shaping and shaped by their construction, the nationalisms re-enacted by their presence, and their limited efficacy. Some noteworthy points developed in each chapter bear repeating. For example, Chapter 2 traces the theoretical genealogy of enclosures to discuss the tensions inherent in the relationship between sovereignty and democracy. The "inherent splitting" of democracy between the people and the state lies at the very heart of its anti-democratic bent (pp. 51-52). Additionally, enclosures like the walls structure the conversion of passive theological presence, which Brown claims remains foundational to sovereignty even in the face of its claim to secular origins, to an "openly and aggressively theological" stance. This argument is brilliantly developed in Chapter 2.

The focus of Chapter 3 on *States and Subjectivities* explores the political discourses addressing perceived and real threats to state sovereignty. The intimate identification of individual and state sovereignty, the engagement of "state policies and subject desires" and the nexus of economic and political security is explored to explain the co-constitution of "material and subjective forces that together generate the frenzy of wall building today" (p. 79). The final chapter, *Desiring Walls*, examines the impact of a prospective state-sovereignty separation on the desires, anxieties and fears of "late modern subjects" (p. 107). The resulting separation anxiety not only produces walling, it produces discourses of fantasy—the fantasies of "Dangerous Aliens,"

“Containment,” “Impermeability,” “Purity, Innocence, and Goodness”—to frame the iconography of walls. Brown uses psychoanalytic theory to explain how walling is an effort to control these state-subject anxieties and restore the sacred place of the state.

*Walled States, Waning Sovereignty* is an important contribution to the debates on sovereignty. It is brilliantly and thoughtfully executed providing systematic theoretical and empirical backing for its claims. Whether the future will see a further waning of state sovereignty or the state regaining its sovereign foothold among multiple emergent sovereignties jockeying for power, the role and scope of the state will remain a defining question for scholars in multiple fields. Despite the valuable contributions made by the book, several quibbles remain for me. Some readers, like me, may be troubled by one error relating to a geographical fact. On page 74, the author states “the Great Wall of China carries a thousand years of South Asian history, . . .” This of course could be the result of oversight or a slip of the pen, but the Great Wall of China, as we all well know, is in the North and has little to do with South Asian history. But this is a minor quibble. On a more substantive note, it is hard to buy into Brown’s argument that the Israeli Security Fence is a testament to the waning sovereignty of the Israeli state, particularly in light of the increasing power of the Israeli state. Additionally, many of the challenges discussed have been faced by the Israeli state since its origin. A discussion of new and emergent challenges to the Israeli state would add important and much needed depth to the argument. Yet, Brown is right on in her assessment of the paradoxes inherent in the security fence.

Brown’s assessment of the new and emerging challenges faced by states in the era of globalization appear to be more reflective of western states. These are not new to many developing countries that have faced economic, political and cultural challenges to their sovereign status since their birth, even though the construction of walls and fences is certainly more recent. Greater attentiveness to these nuances would enhance Brown’s arguments. Nonetheless, despite these quibbles the book provides a coherent, and systematically developed argument and contributes significantly to the debates on states, sovereignty, globalization and walling.

Geeta Chowdhry  
Northern Arizona University

#### References

- Barkawi, Tarak, and Mark Laffey. 2002. Retrieving the Imperial: Empire and International Relations. *Millennium* 31(1):109-127.
- Chowdhry, Geeta, and Shirin Rai. 2009. The Geographies of Exclusion and the Politics of Inclusion: Race-Based Exclusions in the Teaching of International Relations. *International Studies Perspective* 10(1):84-91.

- Krasner, Stephen D. 1999. *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Krasner, Stephen D, ed. 2001. *Problematic Sovereignty: Contested Rules and Political Possibilities*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Reus-Smit, Christian. 1999. *The Moral Purpose of the State: Culture, Social Identity and Institutional Rationality in International Relations*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Wendt, Alexander. 1992. Anarchy is What States make of It: The Social Constitution of Power Politics. *International Organization* 46(Spring):391-425.
- Wendt, Alexander. 1999. *Social Theory of International Relations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Waltz, Kenneth. 1979. *Theory of International Politics*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

**Douglas L. Kriner and Francis X. Shen.** *The Casualty Gap: The Causes and Consequences of American Inequalities*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. xi, 302 pp. (\$29.95 cloth).

Since the publication of the American Political Science Association's Task Force "American Democracy in an Age of Inequality" (2004) there has been a renewed focus on the politics of economic inequality in the United States. Douglas Kriner and Francis X. Shen's book, *The Casualty Gap*, presents a convincing examination of how socioeconomic factors result in the uneven distribution of wartime casualties, or a casualty gap. In addition, the authors find that information about the casualty gaps alters public opinion in a way that reduces support for military efforts through both attitudes and voting. The extensive data and empirical analysis over four major wars makes this book required reading for anyone interested in the politics of income inequality and public opinion.

The authors put forth two theoretical arguments in this book: one, concerning the causes of the casualty gap, and the second, on how knowledge of this gap is disseminated and used by citizens to update their preferences for military intervention. The cause of a socioeconomic breach in American wartime fatalities is a function of both the military recruitment and assignment processes. The military recruits in economically depressed areas based upon past successes and knowing that the career calculation in impoverished areas makes military service attractive. Once people enter the military there is a second round of selection bias filtered through income and education in the form of skill-based evaluation. Those who score higher on the initial evaluations are assigned to non-combat positions and therefore less likely to die during their military service. The result is a two-stage sequence in which citizens from poorer, less educated communities bear the risk and consequences of combat.

In first part of the book, Kriner and Shen argue that the burden of military casualties is not evenly distributed across communities in the United States. The authors find not only that there is a casualty gap among communities based upon wealth and education but more importantly that this gap has widened over time. The strongest aspect of this book was the wealth of evidence marshaled to support the main claim that there is socioeconomic cause to the distribution of battlefield casualties. This uneven distribution of combat deaths hides both the human and financial costs of military conflict from the majority of American citizens. There are some analytical shortcomings. First, given the consistent and strong effect of race in predicting higher community-level casualties across various models, this relationship warranted much more discussion than was given in the analysis. Second, I question the extent to which World War II was really an outlier in not showing an income effect given that community-income was measured differently in this theater as compared to the other three. Next, I was surprised that the income, education, and race variables were not interacted in the model given the established relationship among these concepts. Finally, the evidence for income and education being strong determinants of the recruiting and assignment processes were supported though mainly through indirect analysis, which somewhat muted the strength of the theoretical argument.

In the second part of the analysis, the authors address how the casualty gap might influence political behavior by using a unique survey experiment along with other public opinion data. Kriner and Shen use an experimental design dividing people into three groups: a control group who receives just a raw casualty number, a group that receives this piece of information and is told the casualties are equally distributed, and a third group given the casualty numbers and told about the gap. Next, they posit that citizens who live in communities with high casualty rates should discover the gap through media coverage, elite heuristics, and intimate experience with battlefield fatalities. This theory is tested across multiple wars.

In the statistical analysis, knowledge of the casualty cap has a negative effect on attitudes about military intervention, the extension of conflict, and the number of “acceptable” war fatalities. Additionally, communities with higher than average casualty rates respond in later periods with less participation in the political process. As Kriner and Shen note, this finding adds to the existing literature on the resource effect of political participation. They argue “the casualty gap concentrates the human costs of war among the very segment of the citizenry that possesses the fewest resources needed to engage government. . . . As a result, the pressure brought to bear on political leaders to change course is less than what would have emerged in the absence of a casualty gap” (p. 154). The result is that low-income citizens lose trust in government from their personnel experience with the tragedies

of wars, which causes them to recast the war effort as another failed government policy. This book missed the opportunity to place the analysis of the casualty gap and public opinion in the context of recent work on the politics of income inequality. Bartels (2008) and Gilens (2005) demonstrate that political leaders are more likely to reflect the opinion changes of wealthier constituents than those down the income ladder. If working-class communities are bearing the burden of wartime casualties and this results in greater support for withdrawal from Iraq in these communities, it is possible that this change of opinion is being ignored by political elites. Also in some of the models, the effect of the casualty gap goes away when interacted with partisan identification. The analysis seems to indicate that the information about the casualty gap has a greater influence on independents than it does on strong partisans.

Extant research on the politics of war and many of our national debates have centered mainly on how the total number of wartime casualties affect support for political leaders and feedback into public opinion. This book takes a big step forward in adding more clarity to that relationship by demonstrating that the distribution of casualties matters as much or more to changes in public opinion.

Christopher Faricy

*Washington State University*

#### References

- Bartels, Larry M. 2008. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Gilens, Martin. 2005. Inequality and Democratic Responsiveness. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 69(5):778-796.

**Light, Steven Andrew.** *"The Law is Good," The Voting Rights Act, Redistricting, and Black Regime Politics*. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2010. 282 pp. (\$33.00 paper).

In his recent work *"The Law is Good," The Voting Rights Act, Redistricting, and Black Regime Politics*, Steven Andrew Light presents a detailed historical analysis of the Voting Rights Act (VRA) while attempting to address the limitations of the VRA as a result of structural conditions within many communities that the VRA significantly impacted. Light served as a Civil Rights Analyst in the Voting Section of the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department during the administration of President George H.W. Bush. Bush's Justice Department interpretation and enforcement of the VRA led to critical Supreme Court decisions and a renewed discussion of the necessity to encourage descriptive representation for the implementation of

substantive representation. During his tenure, Light says he developed an appreciation not for statistical packages that drew congressional lines, but detailed historical analysis of communities and the politics of redistricting in relation to VRA enforcement.

The author argues that the book's overarching goal is to explore how African American leadership strategically utilized the Act's provisions to implement opportunities for increased representation and effective governance along with voting rights advocates and the U.S. Department of Justice. Light views this as a necessary discussion considering the recent round of Supreme Court decisions, along with the idea of America's evolution into a "post-racial" society as a result of President Barack Obama. Along with this goal the book has multiple objectives which include exploring that the "VRA's significance lies in the intersections of the theoretical and real-world relationships between the right to vote and the promise of democracy" (p. ix). In doing this the author provides a comprehensive discussion of the evolution of the VRA, the implications of its policy goals and legal interpretation. The book also provides a brief case study of Tallulah, Louisiana, and how the VRA allowed for African American political incorporation.

Light's objectives become a tall and difficult order to fulfill in 163 pages of text. Chapter I primarily focus on providing an introduction to "Voting Rights Act and Minority Representation" as well key terminology that will be presented throughout the book. This review provides the mandatory discussion of democratic theory and representation that all books on the topic of VRA include. The author attempts to expand this standard discussion by incorporating a discussion of black urban regime politics. This brief discussion is designed to introduce the reader to the intricacies of governance that developed following African American incorporation into leadership positions in major urban areas such as Atlanta, Detroit and Washington, DC, as well in smaller southern communities. The "regimes" that developed were challenged to provide substantive representation to their black constituents due to climate of eroding industrial economic development, white flight and suburbanization. The author raises this discussion as a prelude to his case study in Chapter 5 of how small communities still face challenges due to the legacy of failed economies and the legacy of Jim Crow.

Part II of the book consists of Chapters 2-4 which provides a detailed discussion of voting rights and the efforts to increase access and representation. These chapters provide a thorough narrative of the maze of political and legal interpretation of Sections 2 and 5 of the Act. While reviewing the relevant Supreme Court decisions along with the political maneuvers to continue provisions of the Act, Light cautiously argues that the VRA has been central to the ultimate goal of removing barriers to minority enfranchisement and that the Act is still necessary to achieve the full potential of democracy.

The work's limitation is in what it claims to discuss. In the briefly written Chapter 5 concerning the plight of Tallulah, Louisiana, Light attempts to expose the plight of rural communities' limitations in accessing economic empowerment after Blacks gained political incorporation by utilizing the VRA to challenge efforts to continue political disenfranchisement of Blacks. This case study unfortunately provides a limited analysis of this town and what the author argues is his objective. The work correctly identifies that increased research should be given to understand the current political climate and quality of life within small southern communities, which provides a unique prism towards viewing race, African American political participation and the significant legacy of the VRA. These communities also allow for an analysis of structural factors that doggedly persist which hinder economic advancement for these communities.

Like the previous chapters there is historical discussion of events that lead to African American leaders using the VRA to challenge Louisiana's efforts to avoid compliance with the VRA and ultimately the implementation of single member districts, which allow for African American political participation and leadership. Light accurately acknowledges the difficulty of small rural communities to invigorate staggering economies largely populated with impoverished and under educated citizens. This is evident in the discussion of the town's failed efforts to jump start its economic development with the Tallulah Correctional Center for Youth. Like many rural areas, Tallulah saw the privatization of correctional facilities as a means to increase employment, while responding to an increase in the prison population. Light's limited discussion of the structural factors which contributed to high prison populations and also contributed to the failure to successfully manage this institution (the facility was closed in 2004 due to civil rights violations of inmates and embezzlement of funds by both the private contractor and state officials) hinders the opportunity to understand the climate that necessitates the VRA today.

Light concludes his work with a chapter on the relevancy of the VRA in the 21st century while maintaining a consistent theme that is presented in the later chapters of the book, race still matters. Throughout the book the author is clear that racism is an impediment to the fullness of democracy, therefore justifying the continued need of the VRA. His concluding chapter reviews the current climate of the still limited number of minority elected officials nationwide, continued racial priming in elections, and the current Supreme Court under Justice Robert's efforts to address the constitutionality of the VRA. In reviewing the Robert's court, the author accurately states the Court has "adopted a pragmatic balance between colorblindness and color-consciousness, albeit embodied in the cover of the technicalities jurisprudence rather than acknowledgment of racial realities" (p. 149). This book's



most significant accomplishment is providing a concise narrative of what the VRA is, how it works, and why it is still needed. Light's most sound and accurate argument is that the VRA has been successful in removing barriers to minority enfranchisement although it is not a perfect piece of legislation, but according to former African American mayor Theodore Lindsey of Tallulah, "the law is good."

Pearl K. Ford Dowe  
*University of Arkansas*

**Robert P. Saldin.** *War, the American State, and Politics since 1898*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. xii, 258 pp. (\$90.00 cloth).

At the time of his death in the influenza epidemic of 1918, the radical American social critic Randolph Bourne left behind part of an unfinished book on the modern state. In that fragment, and with America's war mobilization in mind, he famously warned that "war is the health of the state" (*Untimely Papers*, 145). State power advances in times of international crisis, Bourne feared, and it does so at the expense of individual liberty, dissenting minorities, academic freedom, and the autonomy of the church.

The question of precisely how war builds the state lies at the heart of Robert Saldin's careful study, *War, the American State, and Politics since 1898*. Saldin tracks the impact of five foreign policy crises—the Spanish-American War, the two World Wars, the Korean conflict, and Vietnam—on centralized government, democratic rights, and party politics and ideology. "American involvement in foreign affairs, and particularly major wars," he argues, "has had a significant and often even dominating influence on the state and domestic politics" (233). In light of that interdependence, he challenges his fellow political theorists to take these crises seriously in their accounts of state-building and to break free from explanatory models that attribute too much to election-cycle paradigms and other domestic factors at the expense of war's formative and at times determinative role in making the state and shaping the contours of politics.

Saldin tells his story of war and the state in chronological order, spanning the eight decades from the 1890s to the 1970s. Within that framework, he provides a quick overview of each of America's five major wars, followed by the consequences of those conflicts for the growth of government, the expansion of democratic institutions, and the behavior, ideology, and electoral success—or failure—of the major parties. Convincing patterns emerge from Saldin's account, and they give narrative clarity to a turbulent century of warfare and domestic unrest. He produces a coherent picture of

war's formative role in the development of the American state from the day the nation debuted as a major player among the great powers to the day that power faltered in the jungles of Vietnam.

While Saldin adds a new level of complexity to the purposes that drove Congress to extend democratic rights in the twentieth century and makes the old saw that "all politics is local" impossible to repeat without serious qualifications, his handling of state power alone suffices to illustrate his approach. The Spanish-American War, he begins, exposed the limited ability of a small, decentralized home army and militia system to meet the challenges and to seize the opportunities of an emerging world power. The war left the United States with the beginnings of a modern, centralized, professionalized standing army closer to the European model than to America's tradition of a more limited and improvised defense force.

Likewise, the First World War made the progressive income tax a permanent feature of state power in the U.S. and gave a moral and patriotic urgency to the crusade against alcohol. The war emergency enabled swift passage of the Prohibition amendment that had otherwise languished without enough votes in the House and Senate. Twenty years later, the Second World War dramatically broadened the reach of the federal income tax (from a tax affecting about 3 percent of the population to a remarkable 77 percent in only a short time), making it the "mass-based" revenue generator still in place today as a handy way to pay for far more than national defense.

Saldin rounds out his survey with the Cold War's two "hot" and costly conflicts. While taxation, the scope and reach of government, and the military establishment contracted after World War II, the Korean War soon seemed to justify the kind of grand strategy outlined in 1950 by NSC-68. Congress increased personal and corporate income taxes. It also ratcheted-up the draft, institutionalizing a system that would endure after the war as the nation's first peace-time conscription. More striking still was President Truman's decision to justify war as a United Nations police action and not seek a congressional declaration—a precedent that has remained in place ever since. For some reason, Saldin overlooks Truman's unilateral decision to seize the nation's steel industry in 1952 and the president's reasoning that such a bold move lay within his war powers under Article II of the Constitution. This further example of the expansion of executive power at the expense of Congress and private corporations would only have strengthened Saldin's case.

The Vietnam War reinforces Saldin's larger account of the expansion of democratic rights and war's impact on party politics, but he also concludes that in some significant ways Vietnam serves as the exception to state-building that proves the rule. By making the draft increasingly and enduringly unpopular among the electorate, the war in Southeast Asia

reversed this one aspect of state power. Without this example near the end of the book, Saldin's argument would have been one-sided. His question—how war built the modern American state—leads naturally into what can otherwise look like an unbroken story of growth and advancement that misses the costs of war. But ultimately he makes it clear that not all foreign policy crises lead inevitably to gains for the state, and not all gains are permanent. Indeed, he acknowledges that modern war has undermined federalism by nationalizing and centralizing power over the military and taxation at the expense of the states. Moreover, both colonialism and Prohibition ended, indicating that war's impact can be temporary and some of its consequences reversed. And, as in the case of the draft, the state can even lose power under the strain of war.

Explicitly and implicitly, Saldin calls for political scientists to be more interdisciplinary in the questions they ask and the research they conduct. Their work can only benefit from the insights of other sub-disciplines within their own field and the scholarship of historians who have covered the same ground. To his credit, Saldin recognizes that specialization has been both a blessing and a curse to the modern academy. He also exemplifies a refreshing sensitivity to the role of contingency and unintended consequences in the making of the modern American state. Whether current wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Libya will prove to be the making or unmaking of the American state will be the task of future scholarship.

Richard M. Gamble  
Hillsdale College

**John Gastil, E. Pierre Deess, Philip J. Weister, and Cindy Simmons.** *The Jury and Democracy: How Jury Deliberation Promotes Civic Engagement and Political Participation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. xvii, 288 pp. (\$99.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper).

The American jury, a much maligned and little used institution, is considered by some to be an anachronistic remnant of an earlier age, ill-suited for complex, modern legal decision making. This contemporary view, which relies on the OJ Simpson murder trial and the McDonald's hot coffee civil suits as Exhibits A and B, contrasts sharply with the idealized characterization of the jury by Alexis de Toqueville posited in the early days of the republic. Toqueville believed that jury service had valuable civic education effects, linking citizens and their government in important ways. "The jury," he wrote, "invests each citizen with a kind of magistracy; it makes them all

feel the duties which they are bound to discharge towards society; and the part which they take in the Government” (quoted on p. 9).

The authors of *The Jury and Democracy* cast their lot with Toqueville. This impressively researched book relies on modern social science data collection and analysis to confirm Toqueville’s claims about the educational effect of jury duty. They conclude that jury service has a measurable impact on political and civic behavior. Jury service “is more than a noble civic duty,” they argue. For many jurors it “can be an invigorating experience . . . that changes their understanding of themselves and their sense of political power and broader civic responsibilities” (p. 4).

Gastil et al. test the Toquevillian claims through an extensive data gathering effort that includes the collection of jury service and voting records from eight counties across the United States, surveys of thousands of citizens called for jury service in King County, Washington, and in-depth interviews with a smaller set of the surveyed jurors. The juror surveys provide longitudinal data, asking about their perceptions and experience when they report for service, at the end of their service, and several months after their service.

The book begins appropriately by setting the jury in the context of democratic theory, particularly that strand that focuses on deliberation and the education of citizens. The jury, they argued, occupies an important and unique space where the state, civil society, and political society intersect. The jury is “the only institution that can compel the average individual to step out of the private sphere and into a brief but powerful role as a public official” (p. 14).

The four chapters in the middle of the book present the results of the authors’ attempts to measure the impact of jury service. They find that service on complex criminal cases makes it more likely that infrequent voters will vote more often after their service. The jury experience also produces increased admiration of judges, lawyers, and the courts more generally, and has an impact beyond voting on their attention to the news and the frequency with which they engage in discussion about community issues with their neighbors.

The book concludes with two chapters that explore the implications of these findings for public policy and the construction of deliberative democratic institutions. Given the positive impact of jury service on public engagement, political efficacy, and confidence in governmental institutions, the authors caution against further efforts to diminish the use of juries, especially in criminal cases where the effects of the deliberative experience is the greatest. They also suggest that building into our decision making processes more opportunities for citizens to deliberate could spread more broadly the positive effects they found from jury service.

There is much to praise about this book. It is a model of what thoughtful and multi-method social science research can accomplish. It takes big, important ideas in democratic theory and puts them to an empirical test. It acknowledges potential weaknesses in the data (i.e., whether the surveyed jurors were sufficiently racially diverse) and considers potential alternative explanations for the findings. For readers who want to know the nitty-gritty of their research design there is a detailed appendix, but they don't subject every reader to that level of detail about methods in the body of the book. This allows their findings to be understood even by those who are not interested in or do not understand their methodology. Finally, after a number of chapters of detailed explanation of how they used the data and what they found, they provide an enormously helpful summary of their findings in table form in the last chapter. Nonetheless, some readers will find the chapters in the center of the book hard going because they are heavy with data and the attempt to unravel all the complex variables that might explain their findings sometimes obscures the overall importance of the findings.

*The Jury and Democracy* is an important book that makes a significant contribution to the literature on democratic theory, deliberation, law and courts, and civic engagement. It should be read by scholars and practitioners alike and should require those who attack the jury as an outdated institution to rethink their position.

Katy J. Harriger  
Wake Forest University

**Horace Campbell.** *Barack Obama and Twenty-First Century Politics: A Revolutionary Moment in the USA*. London: Pluto Press, 2010. xi, 319 pp. (\$95.00 cloth, \$29.00 paper).

Literarily, we have come to know Barack Obama from his best selling books, *Dreams from My Father: A Story of Race and Inheritance* (2004) and *The Audacity of Hope: Thoughts on Reclaiming the American Dream* (2006). Since Obama's election to the Presidency in 2008, there have been books written questioning his birth, his citizenship, his patriotism, his racial authenticity, his stance on American exceptionalism in the world, and his mettle to stand strong and unflinching against the nation's enemies. Most such books have been written by right-wing, conservative hacks. However, there is a second coterie of scholars, not representing a unitary political bent, who have attempted to assess Obama within the American tradition of pragmatism and have sought to explain his public philosophy within the continuum of change colored by the polity's long history of racism and racial

domination. Horace Campbell's *Barack Obama* easily fits into this category of books.

Campbell's book is "*based on the proposition that a new concept of shared humanity must be the basis of social collectivism if humans are to survive the challenges of the twenty-first century.*" Campbell argues that Obama's election is revolutionary, but not revolutionary in the traditional sense of revolutions. Obama's election signals a "*technological revolution,*" in large measure, because "*Obama's winning strategy has completely changed the face of electoral politics.*"

Campbell employs the concept *Ubuntu* to argue that Obama's campaign and election were the result of the ancient liberationist philosophical principles of "*cooperation, forgiveness, healing, and willingness to share.*" Concomitantly, he submits that *new areas* for "*active citizenship*" have appeared in this current revolutionary process pushed forward by Obama. He cites five:

- (1) the end of the financial and economic hegemony of the United States, (2) the idea that American society can consume the wealth and resources of the planet by the militarization of the Earth (with a promise of domination of space) and the unlimited expansion of wars and military bases, (3) the restriction on scientific research and creativity by Newtonian concepts of hierarchy and conservative religious values, (4) the end of the Fordist consumer-led economy that is destroying the planet Earth, and (5) the effort to entrench the most racist and eugenic ideas to support racism and racist government policies at all levels.

While these *new areas* do call for "*active citizenship,*" there is no evidence that the character of the "*active citizenship*" will be revolutionary in nature nor that Obama's presidency will lead the way.

Campbell argues that the "*election of Barack Obama as the president of the United States was an extraordinary event in world history.*" However, he does not present convincing evidence that Obama's presidency will provide the kind of systemic and structural transformations that are needed to sustain a "*revolutionary moment*" of any consequence. Campbell does argue that Obama's election will "*deepen the traditions of self-liberation, . . . self-mobilization, self-organization, and the politics of inclusion*" to "*create new spaces*" for the "*producers and working people,*" because "*the campaign of Barack Obama is the story of hundreds of thousands of ordinary people.*" Moreover, Campbell submits, "*these are the people who are participating because they believe that politics can mean something again.*" This may well be the case, but Campbell does not present evidence that the Obama election has brought with it a sustaining base of support transformative enough to overcome backlash, retrenchment, and Obama's own policy diffidence.

He provides a very good description of Obama's political evolution. He locates Obama within the Black political tradition and "*a progressive grassroots*" politics. Campbell appropriates the general dynamics of fractal geometry to argue that the Obama 2008 campaign built upon "*bottom-up principles of empowerment*" that "*drew new networks into the political process.*" Like fractals, Campbell observes, "*the repetition of building community action across the country involved repeating self-similar patterns of community organizing by the grassroots.*"

So, where does Campbell's analysis leave us? Campbell believes Obama's election was "*inspired by the history of freedom fighters and the premise of the optimism of the will and the healing of the human spirit,*" as evident by (1) "*New progressive grassroots political leadership, ideas, and forms of organization (that) are germinating to make a break with top-down politics and the multi-million-dollar political consulting business,*" (2) the "*contradictory presence of revolution in counter-revolution seeking to derail revolutionary breakthroughs,*" (3) the "*challenge (is) to dig deep for a philosophy of life that can repair the human spirit and unleash new energies for transformation,*" and (4) the "*signposts*" of the "*fractal optimistic future*" and the "*road to self-realization and self-confidence of the people.*"

In the final analysis, while there maybe something of great value to hope for from the Obama Regime, and while optimism may abound, Campbell leaves us wanting in our efforts to identify and put all the pieces of the Obama revolution together in the present cultural and political moment where the concept of "*revolution*" is used to characterize change no matter how marginal in historical dimension. He offers us an optimistic view that emanates from the long tradition of progressive struggle in the United States and the world, but one that is, seemingly, falling under the weight of the piety of "*hope and change*" in a society and world in desperate need of real structural *revolution*.

Nevertheless, Campbell gives us much to think about and to discourse on over the remaining two years of Obama's first term. History has recorded some revolutionary moments that only reveal their structural rupture after much germination. Campbell's *Barack Obama* is more than worth reading. It may help determine if his epilogue, of sorts, that "*optimism as a political act*" is worth experimenting with on the road to fermenting Obama's revolutionary moment.

Rickey Hill  
Mississippi Valley State University

**Roderic Ai Camp.** *The Metamorphosis of Leadership in a Democratic Mexico*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010. vii, 301 pp. (\$65.00 cloth).

Roderic Ai Camp is one of the world's leading authorities on Mexican political elites. In this outstanding contribution, Professor Camp utilizes his profound understanding, amassed over forty years of careful study, of Mexican politics and history, and of Mexican elites especially, to analyze the evolution of political leadership in Mexico in the post Revolution (circa 1935) era through 2009. In particular, Camp expertly identifies those areas in which the political career paths and the sociological traits of members of Mexico's elite political class have changed, and not changed, as the country has transitioned over the past three decades from an authoritarian one-party (i.e., the Institutional Revolutionary Party, or PRI) dictatorship to a competitive multi-party democracy.

As scholars such as Joseph Schlesinger, Scott Morgenstern, and Peter Siavelis have convincingly argued, to truly understand a political system, one has to have a solid grasp of its political leaders' origins and political career pathways. This wonderful book provides this indispensable information for the Mexican case, and at the same time also serves a valuable model for those studying other countries, especially formerly authoritarian dominant party systems such as Malaysia and Taiwan as well as emerging federal democracies such as Argentina and Brazil.

*The Metamorphosis of Leadership in a Democratic Mexico* is divided into eleven chapters which cover a near comprehensive set of important topics related to the origins and traits of political elites, elite career pathways, and the impact of the country's transition to democracy on political leadership in Mexico. All of these chapters make invaluable contributions to our understanding of Mexican political elites and especially the impact of these elites on the functioning of the Mexican political system. They cover topics ranging from the evolution of the role of political party militants in the political system, to the impact of the political generation associated with the presidency of Miguel Alemán (1946-52) on political institutionalization and policymaking in the country, to the relationship between violence and democracy in Mexico. Given space constraints however, here I limit my discussion to three chapters which I consider to be of particular interest for students of Mexican politics, dominant party systems, Latin American democracies, and democratic transitions.

In Chapter 2, "All Politics is Local: Mexico's Local Path to Democracy?," Camp details the great importance of local politics for national political careers, with many national level politicians utilizing state and municipal posts as stepping stones on their journey to political office at the



national level. He highlights the continuity of this important relationship as the country passed from the authoritarian to post-authoritarian era (albeit with some variations resulting from the introduction of competitive multi-party politics into the equation). Camp also underscores the continued relevance of local familial networking for political careers in the democratic period. His analysis and discussion of the influential Atlacomulco clan (named for the State of Mexico hometown of its nineteenth century founder and continued home base) is particularly timely given that the clan's current leader, former State of Mexico Governor Enrique Peña Nieto (2005-11) of the PRI, is widely considered to be the odds on favorite to win the July 2012 Mexican presidential election.

In Chapter 4, "Democratic Demographics: Does Democracy Alter Politicians' Origins?," Camp takes advantage of the natural experiment provided by the Mexican democratic transition to evaluate whether the class origins of political elites change as one moves from an authoritarian to democratic political system. He concludes that the Mexican system did over time witness a salient drop in the presence of political elites with working class backgrounds, and that this decrease occurred in the 1970s, prior to the democratic transition. Many factors contributed to this decline, but Camp pinpoints as the most prominent the increasing dominance of middle class politicians from Mexico City within the governing PRI. One especially interesting finding in this chapter is that individuals from working class and middle class backgrounds tend to pursue distinct political career paths, with politicians with working class origins more prominently represented among elected officials (especially legislators) and politicians with middle class origins more prominently represented among appointed officials (especially executive branch appointees).

In Chapter 10, "Governors: National Democrats of the Future?," Camp highlights the prominent political role played by Mexico's state governors in the country's political system, both in the past, and especially in the current democratic era. He underscores the powerful impact which governors throughout Mexico's modern history have had on the composition of the country's political elite. Without the presence of current and former governors in the highest strata of the country's elite political class, the dominance of political elites from the Mexico City would have been much more profound than was actually the case (and, as Camp makes clear throughout the book, politicians from Mexico City have always been dramatically over-represented within Mexico's elite political class). In the democratic era, Camp profiles the increased presence of governors from rural areas compared to the authoritarian period, with the post of governor providing an excellent vehicle for ambitious and talented politicians from rural areas to catapult themselves to the national political stage.

Understanding the social origins and political career pathways of a country's political elite is of paramount importance if one is to fully understand the country's political system. Roderic Camp expertly combines his tremendous grasp of Mexican political history with an impressive set of diverse data on the Mexican political elite to provide a landmark study of political leadership in this extremely important country. This is without question a book which every Mexicanist should read. It also represents a valuable resource for U.S. politicians and policymakers, who would benefit greatly from having a better understanding of their Mexican counterparts, as well as for scholars of former and current dominant party systems for whom the book provides a model for studies of these systems.

Mark P. Jones  
Rice University

**Michael Berkman and Eric Plutzer.** *Evolution, Creationism, and the Battle to Control America's Classrooms*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. xii, 287 pp. (\$85.00 cloth, \$27.99 paper).

Michael Berkman and Eric Plutzer's book on the teaching of evolution and creationism in the United States is an excellent example of political science research at its best. The authors offer rigorous empirical analyses grounded in clear theories while revealing important insights about an enduring political controversy. The book's research design and organization allow the authors to address two broad questions (p. 4): "How is education policy made in each of the fifty states? How is policy actually implemented in each of the thousands of individual classrooms across the nation?"

Although Berkman and Plutzer focus specifically on the evolution controversy and education policy, their study speaks to much broader issues about where ideas come from, how they make their way into policy, and what happens during implementation at the ground level. Understanding the forces that influence what students learn in science classrooms requires much more than studying just broad public preferences or the content of education policy or the beliefs and behaviors of teachers. Rather, Berkman and Plutzer show why one must attend to all of these issues simultaneously while paying special attention to choices made at the classroom level. As they explain in their concluding chapter (p. 227), "Whether the official curriculum reflects majority wishes or the ideals of the scientific community, control of the nation's classrooms will depend on the training, values, and constraints placed on the nation's biology teachers—they will remain the central figures in the battle to control America's classrooms."

The authors reach that primary conclusion by walking the reader through a series of logical empirical steps, beginning with a bird's eye view of the evolution controversy and ending in the public schools where America's biology teachers design their lessons and teach their students. An introductory chapter describes how debates about evolution have changed over time. Those changes have produced important judicial decisions that have "narrowed the policy space" (p. 24) in ways that have favored teaching scientific perspectives on evolution rather than religious perspectives that favor creationism. In the second and third chapters the authors perform their own secondary analysis of several public opinion surveys in light of these prior court decisions. They find that the public generally prefers more balance between the teaching of evolution and creationism than courts seem to have allowed. The authors use this analysis in the opening chapters to help readers reflect on the tensions between majoritarian and anti-majoritarian institutions of governance.

The fourth, fifth, and sixth chapters bridge the various gaps, often present in other studies, between public preferences, state policy, and classroom teaching. Here Berkman and Plutzer draw on theoretical concepts from the literatures on political behavior, subnational policymaking, and bureaucracy. They present evidence from their own original empirical work, which includes coding of state science standards and a survey of the nation's high school biology teachers. Readers learn many things in these chapters including the factors that influence the development of science and evolution standards by state policymakers. They also discover the extent to which those standards affect how teachers teach evolution in biology classrooms. Importantly, the authors find that standards have minimal influence on teachers' classroom behaviors; they appear to have their greatest impact on "younger teachers who lack self-confidence in their understanding of evolution" (p. 170).

If standards do not shape the teaching of evolution then what does? The authors probe that question in chapters seven and eight where they use their biology teacher survey to examine how teachers' personal beliefs and the characteristics of the communities in which teachers live might be relevant. Berkman and Plutzer draw on prior work on street-level bureaucracy and how bureaucracies serve representative functions to help them reach two key conclusions. First, teachers' beliefs and prior training appear to play major roles in how they address evolution and creationism in their classrooms. Second, the authors find evidence of "bottom up democratic control" (p. 213) of the bureaucracy given that teacher characteristics and practices tend to reflect the preferences of their local communities. The book's ninth chapter concludes by recapping the main findings and offering some predictions about how the evolution versus creationism debate may unfold in

the future. Finally, five methodological appendices provide technical details on the empirical work that appears in chapters two through six.

In all, Berkman and Plutzer's work is an inviting read for scholars and students with broad interests in how the American political system addresses enduring political controversies. Readers will not find new theoretical insights in the book but rather a marshalling of relevant and useful theoretical perspectives that guide the empirical analysis and help the authors to draw out important implications. Based on its substantive focus and connections to broad themes in political science the book would be a great supplement for introductory or advanced courses on American politics, public policy, or public administration, especially. It would be equally valuable for courses on research methods given the range of evidence that the authors use—survey data that others collected, original coding of state policies, execution of an original survey containing closed- and open-ended questions—and the care with which they draw inferences from their data. Perhaps one of the book's greatest strengths is its ability to show readers how researchers can engage in heated political debates while remaining true to the evidence before them. In an area as charged as the teaching of evolution and creationism, what the book's title reminds us is literally a "battle to control America's classrooms," that is no small accomplishment.

Paul Manna  
*College of William & Mary*

**David M. O'Brien.** *Congress Shall Make No Law: The First Amendment, Unprotected Expression, and the U.S. Supreme Court.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010. 136 pp. (\$29.95 cloth).

In *Congress Shall Make No Law* David O'Brien, the Leone Reaves and George W. Spicer Professor at the University of Virginia, provides a handy and insightful, if limited, précis of the Supreme Court's jurisprudence covering the free speech and press protections of the First Amendment. As O'Brien's subtitle suggests, the focus of *Congress Shall Make No Law* is unprotected expression. O'Brien emphasizes at the outset that the language of the First Amendment is unequivocal: "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press." Yet despite this categorical language both Congress and states have sought to impose restrictions on speech and the press. As a result a number of exceptions to First Amendment protection have emerged in Supreme Court jurisprudence. O'Brien focuses on four of these exceptions: obscenity, defamation, commercial speech, and "fighting words."

Originally, there was a significant dispute about what precisely the First Amendment protected. Did it only provide against “prior restraints,” those prohibitions on publications before they are published, or did it also protect against punishments that might be imposed after something is said or published? It was not until the twentieth century that clarity with respect to these questions began to emerge. This was a consequence of the Supreme Court applying the First Amendment to the states through the vehicle of the Fourteenth Amendment, once again ignoring the plain text of the amendment, which applied only to Congress. These innovations in First Amendment law took place in the 1920s and 1930s. Accordingly, it would be in the twentieth century that the most fundamental questions concerning the purposes of freedom of expression would be addressed.

What those purposes are are not discussed in great detail in O’Brien’s book since his focus is on Supreme Court jurisprudence, but their contours become evident in the survey of Court opinions O’Brien provides. He demonstrates how once the Court entered the fray of policing state and federal restrictions on speech it encountered difficulties coming up with tests that adequately accounted for the various interests at play in the constitutional disputes. The bad tendency and clear and present danger tests were in vogue for a short period of time. Then a more explicit balancing approach was adopted. Later, in 1968, Justice Hugo Black famously proposed in a speech his absolutist approach to the First Amendment, one that prohibited *all* governmental restrictions on speech or the press. Although the Court has never adopted such a categorical position with respect to free speech under the Constitution, O’Brien highlights how messy things get, doctrinally and legally, once the Court starts making distinctions between the categories of speech that will or will not be protected.

What is the difference, for instance, between obscene and non-obscene communications? Can the Court intelligibly distinguish between nudity in “high art,” such as that in movies or operas, and “low art,” such as that in strip clubs? In the law of defamation, who is a public official or public figure who must therefore prove “actual malice”—reckless disregard for the truth—in libel actions, and who is a private individual subject to a lower standard of proof in such cases? Is the distinction between private and public figures the Court has established sound? Commercial speech or the advertising of goods and services became an unprotected category of speech in the mid-twentieth century. Why the Court chose to leave commercial speech unprotected has never been fully answered but in the latter decades of the twentieth century the Court began to afford it greater protection.

O’Brien concludes that “The First Amendment is not absolute, nor could (or should) it be.” There are various communications Congress regulates, such as false advertising, fraud, and perjury, which it must punish.

Regulations against obscenity, defamation, commercial speech, and fighting words emerged against a backdrop in which “the Supreme Court in the twentieth century expanded First Amendment protection for a broad range of expression” (p. 81). Although O’Brien anticipates further difficulties the Court will have to face, such as those involving the advance of communications technology, these will not alter the fundamental questions it has always had to face regarding the purposes of the First Amendment.

Yet it is on the question of these purposes that O’Brien’s book suffers its most significant drawback. Although providing an otherwise fine summary of many challenges to First Amendment freedoms the Supreme Court has dealt with, O’Brien never discusses what many consider to be the most draconian restriction on First Amendment freedoms today: campaign finance reform. Critics such as Bradley A. Smith, former chairman of the Federal Election Commission, have outlined in detail how regulations such as the *Federal Election Campaign Act* of 1971, key parts of which the Court has upheld, violate the free speech protections of the First Amendment. Smith and other campaign finance reform critics have pointed out that legislation like *FECA* and more recently the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, which amended *FECA*, have limited electoral competition, handicapped grassroots political movements, failed to transform legislative behavior as promised, and created a caste system in which America’s political class has been allowed to silence ordinary Americans by creating a campaign regime so labyrinthine and punitive that only the rich, with the financial wherewithal to hire the teams of lawyers necessary to comply with *FECA* or *BCRA*, can afford to speak.

Whether one agrees with the critics or not, the failure of O’Brien’s book to discuss the litany of cases the Court has issued dealing with political speech and campaign finance reform is a significant omission. Indeed his entire book focuses on what many would consider low forms of speech while ignoring the most fundamental speech the First Amendment was intended to protect—political speech. Although it remains an excellent summary of a complicated area of law, the book is incomplete in this regard.

Anthony A. Peacock  
Utah State University

**Michel Balinski and Rida Laraki.** *Majority Judgment: Measuring, Ranking, and Electing*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2010. xv, 414 pp. (\$40.00 cloth).

The main title of this provocative, wide-ranging, and well-written book by Balinski and Laraki refers to a new voting method that has voters give a grade to each candidate and then chooses the winner to be the candidate with the highest median grade. More precisely, majority judgment uses an ingenious process for breaking any ties for the median (which can occur frequently, at least in a large electorate) by successively discarding votes on each side of the median until a tie is broken.

A rudimentary example (not given in the book) both illustrates the method and highlights what strikes me as being its most troublesome deficiency. Suppose that there are just two candidates, X and Y, and three voters, whose grades for X and Y, respectively, are 0 and 1, 3 and 2, and 4 and 5. Then Y receives a higher (better) grade than X from two voters and a lower grade from the other one. But the two collections of grades are 0, 3, 4 for X and 1, 2, 5 for Y, so X has a median grade of 3 versus 2 for Y. Thus majority judgment makes X the winner even though two-thirds of the voters grade Y higher.

For the case where one winner is to be chosen from three or more candidates, sundry voting systems are available with no consensus as to which is best. But in the far simpler case of just two candidates, there is, except for the authors' proposal, little controversy that the winner should be the contender favored by the greater number of voters.

The authors do not shy away from acknowledging this issue, stating (p. 291) that "one must accept that the winner between two candidates is not necessarily preferred by a majority of voters." In fact, their Example 16.2 is even harsher than the one above. Respective grades for X and Y are 12 and 16 for  $k$  voters, 4 and 8 for another  $k$ , and 12 and 8 for one voter ( $k$  can be indefinitely large). Then X wins with a median of 12 versus 8 for Y, even though all but one of the  $(2k + 1)$  voters grade Y above X. The authors react to this example by saying, first, that the situation is artificial and rare, and second, that "it is perfectly reasonable for X to be the winner" since "a majority gives X the grade 12 and a majority gives Y the grade 8" (p. 282).

The results of Example 16.2 could be overturned if (e.g.) just one of the first  $k$  voters voted 4 and 16 instead of 12 and 16. Such strategic voting (which the authors generally want to avoid) would drop the median for X from 12 to 4 and thereby make Y the winner.

Majority judgment would normally be applied to more than two competitors, of course. The authors not only analyze the setting with political candidates seeking election but also closely examine settings in which

judges evaluate (e.g.) wines, pianists, figure skaters, gymnasts, or divers. These latter settings are arguably more suitable for majority judgment than political elections are, both because they may be less vulnerable to strategic manipulation (judges' votes may be public knowledge, thus deterring strategic voting; wines are tasted blindly) and because they may put more emphasis on grading and evaluation and less on winning.

In an effort to avoid the traps of the Arrow impossibility theorem and of violating independence of irrelevant alternatives, the authors resist ranking and comparison of competitors and focus instead on grading and evaluation. They believe that the grades need to have a "common language" and are better expressed in words rather than numerically (although, for convenience, grades are numerical in some illustrations). The authors take six to be the best number of grades for French elections. "The number was deliberately chosen" they write, "to be even so that there would be no middle grade, and there are four positive and only two negative grades, in keeping with a sense that candidates for public office should be in any case exceptional persons" (p. 253). The six grades are *très bien*, *bien*, *assez bien*, *passable*, *insuffisant*, and *à rejeter*, which the authors translate as excellent, very good, good, acceptable, poor, and to reject, respectively. If a voter refrains from grading a candidate, the lowest grade is tallied.

The authors intersperse nonmathematical and mathematical segments throughout the book. Readers who wish to do so can easily skip over the latter.

A major strength of the book is its abundance of analyses based on voting experiments run successfully in conjunction with actual elections. The main such experiment used majority judgment with six grades and was done in Orsay, a Paris suburb, simultaneously with the first round of the 2007 French presidential contest. Other experiments included ones that were concurrent with the first round of the 2002 or 2007 French presidential election, and used approval voting; used both a point-summing method (with 0, 1, or 2 points) and approval voting; or used rank-ordering of the candidates.

Voting methods other than majority judgment receive negative assessments from the authors. The oft-noted manipulability of the Borda system is cited as one of its "glaring failures" (p. 65). Point-summing methods, such as range voting, are likewise deemed highly manipulable. The alternative vote (or instant-runoff voting) and the kindred two-past-the-post system (where the top two in an initial election vie in a runoff election) are criticized not only for manipulability but also for lack of monotonicity; the authors maintain (p. 54) that "any method that is not monotonic should be disqualified." The widely-used first-past-the-post (plurality) system is appraised as quite manipulable. It is also rated as heavily biased against centrist candidates, an assessment that applies as well (though to a lesser degree) to two-past-the-



post. But the Borda method and point-summing systems, and Condorcet systems to a lesser extent, are seen as overly biased *in favor of* centrist candidates, a viewpoint that is explainable in light of the assertion (p. 126) that “A good election mechanism should eliminate extremes and give all major poles—left, center, and right—a fighting chance to win.” Condorcet methods also receive other criticisms, although some of them apply only when there is no Condorcet winner. In sum, the authors feel that majority judgment is relatively resistant to manipulation, achieves the proper balance regarding centrist candidates, produces meaningful results, and is better than any other method.

As for approval voting, a claim about it that is especially puzzling concerns Example 16.2, already described above. The authors argue (p. 318; again on pp. 328-329) that approval voting, just like majority judgment, is subject to the complaint that X wins. This conclusion follows under an assumption that all voters cast an approval vote for those candidates, and only those candidates, whom they grade 10 or higher. Thus the first  $k$  voters would vote for both candidates and the last  $k$  for neither. It seems implausible that all but one voter would effectively abstain.

The authors observe (p. 352) that “We know firsthand of many sophisticated voters—economists and social choice theorists—who, in the 2007 French presidential election, preferred Bayrou [centrist] to Sarkozy, were sure Sarkozy would be in the second round and that in the second round he would defeat Royal and be defeated by Bayrou, and yet voted for Royal in the first round.” The aversion to strategic voting among such voters is somewhat paradoxical.

Chapter 2, though largely unrelated to the rest of the book, provides interesting insights. It deals with voting and elections in the U.S., Zürich, Mexico, the United Kingdom, and Australia, as well as France. Two tidbits: At a time in Australia when candidates were listed on ballots in alphabetical rather than randomized sequence (with voters required to rank-order *all* the candidates), one election produced winners “named Armour, Armstrong, Arthur, and Ashley” (p. 33); and, in early twentieth-century France, “the left had been, by and large, opposed to granting the vote to women: its members claimed that priests would dictate their votes” (p. 36).

The book contains some controversial elements. But the authors also provide valuable results, information, and data, and much food for thought.

Richard F. Potthoff  
*Duke University*

**Jason Casellas.** *Latino Representation in State Houses and Congress.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. xvii, 189 pp. (\$80.00 cloth).

Latinos are now the largest minority group in the United States. By the year 2050 the Latino population is expected to increase to about 30 percent. In that same time period non-Hispanic whites will decrease in size to about 42 percent, and will no longer be the dominant majority group in the country. This rapidly changing face of America, motivated by the ever growing Latino populous, has significant political and social implications.

At the forefront of this entailment is that a rise in the Latino population has meant an increase in the number of Latinos elected to Congress and state legislatures. Although these gains are not proportional at the national level or in most states, this growth in “descriptive” representation is a significant development. Some of the most important questions these changes raise are: How do we explain the election of Latino representatives to state legislatures and Congress? Do Latinos have unique obstacles in being elected to legislative office? To what extent have Latinos benefited from the creation of majority-Latino districts in order to be elected? Are Latino candidates advantaged when they run in homogenous districts (i.e., districts with citizens who largely share their ethnic heritage) and are they disadvantaged when they run in heterogeneous districts? Is the increase in Latino representation simply a product of population growth or do other factors have a significant influence?

In one of the first book-length projects to examine these questions, Jason Casellas analyzes data on Latino elected officials in Congress and seven state legislatures—New Mexico, California, Texas, Arizona, New York, and New Jersey—and makes several important findings about Latino representation. The general conclusion of the book is that Latino representation is shaped not only by Latino demographic increases but by institutional differences among state legislatures. For Latino candidates at both the state and national levels, their chances of winning are best in Latino majority districts and in districts where they join forces with white voters. The opportunities for Latino candidates are also improving in districts where Latinos are not a majority.

Casellas points out that much of the earlier literature on Latino representation borrowed from the work on African-American representation in Congress. However, as more recent studies have discovered, the story for Latinos departs to a large extent from that of African Americans. First, Latinos do not have a comparable historical struggle with discrimination as blacks, which has guided much of the political and social agenda of blacks. Also, Latinos have much more of a choice as to whether or not to identify with their heritage, while skin color for blacks is not an option. And institu-

tionally, Latinos do not benefit from the creation of majority-minority districts to the extent that they have assisted in the election of African-American legislators. These differences should dictate how we study Latinos. For this reason, Casellas argues that work on Latino representation needs to take a step back and not automatically make a leap from descriptive representation to inquires about substantive representation, but explore the conditions under which these representatives are elected in the first place. He says, “insufficient attention [is] devoted to how Latino legislators are elected to legislative bodies, how Latino legislators view themselves, and the effects of institutional structures and public policies such as term limits on Latino representation” (p. 28). Despite this more focused objective, the project is ambitious and tries to address both the structural/institutional elements of Latino descriptive representation and to some extent the link between descriptive and substantive representation (mainly through legislator interviews and analysis of roll call votes). The book is much more rich and illuminating on its contribution of the former than the latter.

As a distinct minority group, Latinos face obstacles to becoming fully integrated in the political process. While one can surmise that electoral and institutional structures (e.g., term limits, majority-minority districts, professionalization of legislature) and contextual variables (e.g., state and/or district composition, percent Latinos in district, median income) will affect the election of Latino representatives, a systematic and detailed examination has been long overdue. Casellas reveals some obvious and expected findings (e.g., the percentage of Latinos in a given district is a strong predictor of whether or not a Latino represents that district), but also draws more interesting and nuanced conclusions (e.g., institutional design matters in that less professional legislatures coupled with percentage of Latino citizens in the population has a significant interactive effect) that help explain the election of Latino representatives.

Some results are a bit more descriptive than empirical and systematic. This is true for the findings on the conditions under which Latinos are elected in non-majority districts, which entail the use of elite-level strategies such as appointments to vacant seats, party recruitment, and the use of Anglo names by Latino candidates. Casellas concedes that the approach for this analysis is set up and presented in a way that “future research projects [can] test many of the hypotheses more systematically” (p. 78). Thus, determining with some level of confidence whether or not redistricting and other elite level strategies benefit Latino candidates in districts where they do not have a majority populous should be the subject of future examination.

The final two chapters of the book depart from inquiries about how Latinos get elected and move into the realm of how they represent. With qualitative interviews, Casellas shows how legislators view themselves as

representatives. First person accounts about how Latino legislators perceive their districts, what they view as issue priorities, and their understanding of the importance of descriptive representation adds a valuable dimension that other studies have lacked. However, Casellas could have better capitalized on this chapter by complimenting the quantitative analysis on structural and institutional determinants of how Latino legislators get elected with a qualitative inquiry of these same factors.

The final chapter on roll call voting behavior examines whether members of Congress and state legislators vote differently than their non-Latino counterparts. Here the book leaps into the area of legislative behavior as Casellas examines whether or not Latino legislators provide direct substantive representation to their constituents. He looks not only at the roll call behavior of members of Congress, but also that of state legislators (via DW-NOMINATE scores). I agree with Casellas as he underscores the value of including state level roll call voting data in the analyses—something that much of the previous work on Latino representation has neglected. The results show some significant effects for Latino constituencies on ideology measures and some degree of variance across the three states analyzed, but the overall findings reveal a lack of direct substantive representation by Latino legislators in both the U.S. House and state legislatures. Can we infer from these findings that Latinos simply do not receive substantive representation from their Latino representatives, or that descriptive representation is not necessary for substantive representation? These conclusions are difficult to draw based simply on roll call analysis (i.e., one legislative activity). Roll call voting is the most visible stage of the legislative process (and the most analyzed), but it may not be the most appropriate for disentangling the different conceptual meanings of representation. The link between Latino descriptive and substantive representation warrants a more systematic approach; one that examines other stages of the legislative process where ethnic differences may be more apparent.

*Latino Representation in State Houses and Congress* is a significant addition to the literature on Latino politics. The most meaningful contribution of the project is its comprehensive approach. Casellas uses both sub-national and national data as a way to inform the puzzle of Latino representation in a manner that has not been previously attempted. The increased variance provides leverage for some of the hypothesis and subsequent findings that should guide future work in this area. If I have one quibble it is perhaps that at times Casellas speculates about broader implications that may not be anchored in current results. In particular, he touts the “mainstreaming of Latinos” and their ability to assimilate and questions the future utility of majority-Latino districts for the election of Latino legislators. While his results indicate some success for Latinos outside these advan-

tageous districts, the fact remains that the percentage of Latinos in a district is the strongest and most consistent determinant of Latino candidate success. Therefore, it is still too early to say under what conditions Latinos will continue to make electoral gains in non-Latino districts and how significant these gains will be.

This book should have little trouble finding an audience among minority scholars, legislative scholars, and those who appreciate that any true study of representation significantly benefits from state level analysis. Additionally, readers will walk away with an understanding that Latinos are a group that needs to be at the forefront of any discussion about American politics.

Stella M. Rouse  
*University of Maryland-College Park*

**Danny Cooper.** *Neoconservatism and American Foreign Policy: A Critical Analysis*. New York: Routledge, 2011. xiii, 208 pp. (\$130.00 hardback).

In the preface to his book on neoconservatism, Danny Cooper tells the reader that he originally supported the Bush administration's decision to invade Iraq in 2003. He now believes, though, he was "wrong to support the 2003 invasion of Iraq" (p. x). Cooper's book is something of an act of contrition; he is seeking to "expunge the guilt" he feels for supporting the war. He attempts to explain the ideas that led to that war, hoping to "ensure that such a catastrophe will not again take place in America's future" (p. xi).

Cooper argues that there are various components of neoconservative foreign policy that make it distinct from realism and liberal internationalism. First, neoconservatives believe America has an exceptional role in the world. Second, that role consists of promoting human rights and liberal democracy. Next, the use of military force is often necessary to achieve this goal (p. 8). But, argues Cooper, neoconservatives are also distinct in viewing the world through the lens of the war of ideology (p. 10). Conflict in the world is the result of competing ideas about the good. Neoconservatives put stock in one particular conception of the good, that of liberal democracy, which they see as under attack from rival ideologies (such as communism and radical Islam) that hate freedom.

Cooper acknowledges that neoconservatism as a movement arose out of a loss of faith in the welfare state (pp. 34-36), but indicates that foreign policy rose in prominence in neoconservative circles after the 1972 presidential campaign of the dovish George McGovern. Those who had broken with the left over critiques of the welfare state now broke with the left's foreign

policy, which they perceived as far too accommodationist to the world's worst regimes, the Soviet Union and communist China.

Cooper argues that the neoconservatives interpret American history as being one of promotion of democracy and human rights around the world. These intellectuals define themselves against the realism of such luminaries as Hans Morgenthau and Henry Kissinger, who the neoconservatives view as introducing foreign ideas into American policy thinking (pp. 50-55). Unlike realists, neoconservatives believe that one should consider the internal politics of regimes. Their liberal democratic convictions tell neoconservatives that, for example, Iraqi grandmothers have the same rights as American grandmothers, and since America has the military capacity to protect the former against regimes perceived as evil, America should use that capacity (p. 56). Cooper argues that neoconservatives err in viewing any accommodation with an unjust regime as akin to the appeasement of Hitler, an appeasement that will only embolden these regimes (p. 64).

Neoconservatives are inclined to see the world in ideological terms that causes them to distrust international organizations. The UN, for example, is made up of the world's governments, only some of which can rightfully claim to speak for their citizens. As Robert Kagan and William Kristol put it, "The [UN] makes no distinction based on political systems; a tyranny is as welcome as a democracy" (p. 76). Given the fall of the Soviet Union, neoconservatives were on the lookout for the next rival ideological threat to liberal democracy, which they found in radical Islam (p. 89). But it is this commitment to ideology, argues Cooper, that blinds neoconservatives to the role statesmen can play in international affairs (p. 86). Cooper uses the example of Ronald Reagan, who, while being a dedicated anti-communist, was able to negotiate with Mikhail Gorbachev in non-ideological terms to reduce nuclear arms.

Neoconservatives also reject the realist commitment to balance of power politics. If the realist argument is that a multipolar world is necessary to balance power and provide for flexibility in alliances, neoconservatives believe a benign hegemon is needed to keep bad actors in check. Naturally, that benign hegemon is the United States (pp. 105-118). The neoconservative belief in unipolarity makes them unwilling to enter into coalitions, sometimes to the detriment of American interests, argues Cooper (p. 124).

This leads to Cooper's final area of investigation, the neoconservative argument for preventative war. Neoconservatives believe, Cooper claims, that there are some regimes that are so degenerate that they cannot be trusted with the deadliest of modern weapons. Rather than waiting until they actually use those weapons, the United States should use its considerable military might to remove those regimes (p. 143). Cooper, in contrast, puts his faith in deterrence to prevent the use of WMDs by "rogue" regimes

(p. 149). Why those regimes are pursuing the acquisition of weapons that Cooper thinks they will never use is left unexplained. He does rightly question why neoconservatives who doubt the competence of government in other matters believe it can create democracy in foreign lands.

While Cooper is more sober than many who analyze the neoconservatives, there are times when he commits the error of turning his ideological opponents into bogeymen, reading statements by neoconservatives in the worst possible light and neglecting the counterevidence to his own realist presuppositions. Also, Cooper does not do the heavy lifting required to analyze the Bush Iraq policy. Cooper believes that the post-surge Iraq may constitute a military success, but that this is not worth all the policy mistakes it took to get there (p. 142). Cooper does not attempt to show that the multiple failures that occurred pre-surge were connected to neoconservative beliefs by policy makers. In addition, given that Cooper himself describes Saddam Hussein as “a tyrant belonging to a rare class of genocidal dictators” who “supported terrorism” and “decimated minorities” within Iraq (p. 142), what does Cooper suggest should have been done?

Cooper ultimately performs a worthy service by taking a scholarly look at neoconservative thought. The book is largely well written and logically organized. It represents a useful addition to the literature on American foreign policy theory.

Jon D. Schaff  
*Northern State University*

**Ainsworth, Scott H. and Thad E. Hall.** *Abortion Politics in Congress: Strategic Incrementalism and Policy Change*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. v, 226 pp. (\$80 cloth, \$24.99 paper).

In their book, *Abortion Politics in Congress: Strategic Incrementalism and Policy Change*, Scott Ainsworth and Thad Hall use a game theoretic approach to explain the evolution of public policy on abortion in the U.S. House of Representatives. As the authors point out, there are a wealth of studies analyzing various aspects of abortion politics including the nature of public opinion, the strategies of interest groups and activists, and the development of legal theory on the issue. Yet, comparatively little attention has been devoted to tracking congressional efforts to deal with this highly charged issue. Instead contemporary congressional research neglects policy development in favor of more generalizable theories about the impact of political parties versus the chamber median and the importance of particular procedural rules and institutional structures. Hall and Ainsworth attempt to

bring policy back in by developing their model of strategic incrementalism and applying it to over thirty years of legislative activity on abortion from the 93rd Congress (1973-1974), which was confronted with the *Roe v. Wade* decision, to the 108th Congress (2003-2004).

The authors make a persuasive case that despite the heated rhetoric and sharp moral conflicts embodied in abortion politics, the electoral incentives and institutional design of Congress encourages members to adopt incremental strategies to achieve their policy goals rather than pursuing non-incremental policies that would achieve the more absolutist goals of pro-life and pro-choice activists. For example, Ainsworth and Hall argue that on morality issues like abortion, gay rights, gun control, and immigration politicians must contend with ambiguity rather than uncertainty in the political environment. Uncertainty implies a lack of information about how voters will react to policy alternatives, a condition that can be improved by gathering more information. With abortion the problem is not a lack of information but the ambiguity of public opinion. While the distribution of public opinion on abortion remains stable, the public holds conflicting attitudes, with the majority supporting the right to an abortion but favoring some restrictions. Given the ambiguity of opinion, politicians are better off adopting an incremental strategy in which they favor vote maximization over comprehensive policy change, making it easier to explain their votes to constituents and harder for activists to demonize legislators and their policy proposals. Within the institution, incremental legislation that moves policy in a pro-life direction is easier to pass than non-incremental legislation because the median member of the House, as captured by DW-NOMINATE scores, has grown increasingly conservative over time. However, capturing the supermajority necessary to override a veto requires persuading a group of legislators that includes a much more liberal segment of the House.

To support their theory, Ainsworth and Hall track sponsorship of incremental and non-incremental abortion proposals over a thirty-year period (1973-2004) and they evaluate the evolution of congressional committee jurisdictions on the issue. Incremental proposals include efforts to limit funding for abortion or impose additional regulations such as parental consent laws or conscience clauses for physicians and hospitals. Non-incremental proposals include legislation to codify the *Roe v. Wade* decision such as the Freedom of Choice Act or constitutional amendments to overturn *Roe*. Under this classification a very limited number of proposals fall into the non-incremental category, as most members do not sponsor constitutional amendments. The findings and the argument would be enhanced by subdividing the non-incremental category to examine whether certain groups of members are more likely to promote certain types of non-incremental policies such as funding bans versus policy restrictions. Moreover, the authors



should devote more attention to how promotion of particular non-incremental policies has affected public opinion and the overall legislative debate. For example, the partial birth abortion debate had profound effects on abortion politics, moving public opinion in a more pro-life direction more generally, while annual funding restrictions such as the Hyde amendment have had more of an impact on policy than opinion.

The authors' longitudinal analysis of sponsorship and committee referrals provides some very interesting insights into the evolution of the abortion debate. In the early years, legislators focused on abortion as a constitutional question with most bills referred to the Judiciary Committee. However, over time, as more incremental strategies took hold, other committees, particularly Appropriations and International Relations, saw an increasing number of bill referrals. Appropriations received the myriad of funding restriction proposals and International Relations gained jurisdiction when efforts turned to the human rights implications of abortion policies in China and other foreign countries.

At the individual level, the authors persuasively demonstrate that abortion politics did not follow partisan or ideological lines until 1992 and these lines continue to be blurred. For example, between 1973 and 1984 78 percent of Democratic and Republican proposals on abortion were pro-life and Democrats sponsored slightly more pro-life bills than Republicans, 202 v. 171 (See Table 5.3). Since 1993, the distribution of abortion legislation reflects a greater partisan divide with pro-life initiatives constituting 92 percent of the abortion legislation sponsored by Republicans between 1993 and 2004, 217 proposals. However, in this same period, Democrats offered 46 pro-life bills and these bills made up 55 percent of Democratic abortion proposals, more than a majority of the abortion related proposals sponsored by the presumed pro-choice party.

These statistics help place in context recent debates over the Stupak amendment, a Democratic sponsored pro-life amendment that almost derailed Obama's comprehensive health reform legislation in an effort to ensure that federal subsidies could not pay for insurance policies that include abortion coverage among their services on the state exchanges. In addition to these partisan trends, the authors also highlight the impact of religion on representatives' abortion activity with Catholic legislators among the most active proponents of pro-life legislation and Jewish legislators among the more prolific sponsors of pro-choice bills.

While Ainsworth and Hall conduct a comprehensive analysis of legislative activity over a long period of time, there are two areas that require more attention. First, as the authors point out, the majority of abortion legislation originates in the House and most studies of legislative politics focus on the House. Still, the theory of strategic incrementalism would be

enhanced if the authors included the Senate, as decisions by House leaders and rank and file members to pursue strategic incrementalism are likely impacted by what they believe will pass the Senate. Including the Senate would also allow the authors to examine the impact of abortion politics on the judicial confirmation process. Finally, the authors touch only briefly on the question of whether incremental abortion politics has taken over a larger portion of the legislative agenda. I would like to see more work on this question and on how often abortion politics has imperiled progress on major policies as conflicts over abortion have recently threatened the passage of comprehensive health reform legislation and congressional efforts to pass a budget and avoid a government shutdown.

Overall, Ainsworth and Hall's work provides a comprehensive analysis of policy development on an issue with a long history of debate in Congress and the public consciousness. Their theories and analytical techniques can be applied to other conflictual policy areas as scholars seek to meld the analytical tools of public policy and legislative scholarship. The book is written in an accessible prose that will appeal to graduate students and legislative politics scholars.

Michele L. Swers  
Georgetown University

**Hall, Matthew E.K.** *The Nature of Supreme Court Power*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011. vii, 248 pp. (\$90.00 cloth).

Debates about the degree of independent influence the Supreme Court exercises over the nation's policies and politics began with Alexander Hamilton's analysis of judicial power in *The Federalist* No. 78. Those who claim that the justices wield significant independent power often cite as evidence the Court's decisions in policy areas such as race relations, criminal procedure, and reproductive rights. But scholars such as Robert Dahl argue to the contrary that the Court rarely takes positions that are inconsistent with the preferences of the prevailing political majority. Especially fueling this debate was Gerald Rosenberg's book *The Hollow Hope* (1991) that portrayed the Court as incapable of effecting widespread social change on its own. Matthew Hall's *The Nature of Supreme Court Power* is a significant contribution to this ongoing controversy. He advances the notion that the true nature of Supreme Court power lies somewhere between the extremes presented in the literature.

Hall first explains his theoretical position. He defines judicial power as the actual or potential causal relation between the preferences of a judge or

judges regarding the outcome of a case and the outcome itself. Thus, the Supreme Court is powerful to the extent that its rulings cause the intended behavioral response from those to whom the decision is directed.

Whether the Court is successful at exerting such influence depends upon two factors. The first is the institutional context of the decision. Specifically, can the Court's decision be enforced by lower court judges alone (a vertical issue) or is implementation required by non-court government actors such as legislators, administrative agencies, or local officials (a lateral issue)? Hall argues that the Court has a much greater probability of being successful when the decision involves a vertical issue. Second, the Court's power is dependent on the public's reaction to its decisions. Thus, Hall would expect the Court to have the greatest impact when a decision can be implemented by the lower courts alone and when the ruling enjoys considerable public support. Conversely, the Court's power will be at its lowest when issuing a decision on a lateral issue that faces public opposition.

Hall's theoretical argument borrows heavily from past efforts to understand Supreme Court effectiveness, but his discussion is impressively organized and compellingly argued. Furthermore, it nicely flows into a research design allowing an empirical test of his theoretical expectations.

In the book's four central chapters Hall examines selected Supreme Court decisions that fall into each of his theoretical categories: popular vertical issues (the Religious Freedom Restoration Act, the Pentagon Papers case), unpopular vertical issues (abortion, flag desecration, Miranda warnings, etc.), popular lateral issues (reapportionment, aid to religious schools, etc.), and unpopular lateral issues (school desegregation, school prayer, minority set-aside programs, etc.). These chapters in all contain 27 case studies of Supreme Court decisions, their contexts, and their outcomes. Each of the cases involves a ruling in which the justices struck down a government action or policy in an important issue area. The case studies provide relevant tests of whether the effectiveness of the Court's rulings is determined by the public's reaction to them and the actors entrusted to implement the policy.

Hall has taken on a formidable task. At least three obstacles stand in his way. The first is determining what behavioral response the Court intended its decision to prompt. The justices, of course, do not include "Intended Consequences" sections in their opinions and their full intentions frequently are not clear. For example, was the Court's preference in *Furman v. Georgia* (1972) to eliminate capital punishment or just to reform the way it was administered? Or, did the justices in *Powell v. McCormack* (1969) want Adam Clayton Powell to retain his seat in Congress or just to have him expelled rather than excluded? In addition, we cannot say with any certainty

that all of the justices in the majority had the same expected behavioral response in mind. Identifying the intended consequence of a decision is a crucial issue because the Court's power, in Hall's perspective, rests on the degree to which the justices' intended outcome is realized.

Second, Hall's analysis requires knowledge of the public's reaction to the Court's policy pronouncements. In general, he uses public opinion data to measure this variable. Although his chosen indicator is surely a valid one, the lack of sufficient polling data specifically targeting the decisions under analysis is a consistent issue. For a majority of the case studies, public opinion data on the Court's ruling were not available, limited, only indirectly relevant, contradictory, or difficult to interpret. This is not surprising given that several of the issues were not the kind that would attract the attention of pollsters (e.g., sovereign immunity, the legislative veto). Hall does his very best, however, to put together as many related polls as possible to obtain an indication of public reaction to the Court's rulings.

Third, obtaining adequate measures of the outcome of the cases is often very difficult. In a project such as this one, the author cannot be expected to do independent research in 27 different issue areas spanning a half-century of Supreme Court decisions. Instead, Hall relies on studies done by others. Here Hall is at his best. He thoroughly scours the literature to cobble together an impressive array of studies that examine the consequences and impact of the Supreme Court rulings. Being forced to use data often collected for entirely different purposes, however, is less than ideal and occasionally results in conclusions that are somewhat tentative.

The inherent problems facing this research are such that several of Hall's case studies have inevitable weaknesses. But taken as a whole, the preponderance of the evidence is clearly supportive of Hall's thesis. The degree of independent power the Court is able to exert depends first on the nature of the actors implementing the decision and second on the degree of public support for the Court's policies.

Apart from the central thesis and its testing, *The Nature of Supreme Court Power* has a number of virtues. Hall writes in a craftsman-like fashion producing a highly readable volume. He displays a refreshing openness about his research, acknowledging where, for example, available data allow only a limited examination of his hypothesized relationships. The cases studies, while concisely written, provide a wealth of substantive information about the examined issue areas and Court rulings. The book is richly documented, the literature review is very thorough, and the appendices provide ample information necessary to evaluate the technical aspects of the project.

Hall's volume will certainly not settle the debate over the nature of Supreme Court power, but it will generously inform that debate. The book

stimulates a wide variety of unanswered substantive and theoretical questions and will undoubtedly encourage additional research efforts.

Thomas G. Walker  
*Emory University*

**Baodong Liu.** *The Election of Barack Obama: How He Won.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010. xvi, 160 pp. (\$ 80.00 cloth).

Professor Baodong Liu, a member of the Department of Political Science at the University of Utah, has written to date the most outstanding academic and scholarly book on the historic 2008 presidential election of African American United States Senator Barack Hussein Obama, Jr. Of the nearly thirty-five books currently on that election from both academics, laypersons, journalists, pundits and commentators, this book literally has no peer. Unlike most of these other books this one is carefully conceptualized, solidly grounded in the African American politics literature, the empirical coalition theory of William Riker and the powerful deracialization literature of Joseph P. McCormick and Charles E. Jones. This literature not only informs the definitional and theoretical approach of Professor Liu, he brings his own rich and pathbreaking research on African American mayoral politics, particularly biracial coalitions findings that was informed, tested and grounded in this literature. Few of the authors of these current books have had such a background and a thorough grounding in the said literatures.

One of the additional reasons that this book is so much better than the others is due to the fact that Liu tests many of the dominant theories in the political science literature that supposedly explained the outcomes of presidential primaries and general elections. Despite the rather large body of literature on determinants in presidential primaries, “momentum theory” inheres that victories and/or near victories in Iowa and New Hampshire determine the winner in the primary sweepstakes. His empirical analysis shows that Senator Obama never got this momentum despite the fact that he won Iowa. And he is also thorough enough in his research to show that Senator Obama’s victory in Iowa cannot alone explain his victory. (Some of the thirty-five books make this claim.)

Nor was it the media primary, the “invisible” primary, i.e., especially Senator Obama’s fundraising on the Internet, the high turnout in these primaries, particularly the African American electorate, the Superdelegates, or simply the Democratic rule changes. To be sure all of these variables helped Senator Obama defeat “Hillary Clinton, a much more experienced political opponent” (p. 69). Yet, many so-called analysts have ascribed one or more

of these variables as the reason for the outcome. Liu provides the empirical data to show that these analysts were looking in the wrong place. Besides revealing that the momentum and other single variable theories had significant flaws, weaknesses and limitations, Liu takes on the dominant race-based theory of African American conservatives, especially the favorite and only “white guilt” theory of African American Shelby Steele. Seeking to explain “the reason for white enthusiasm toward the Obama candidacy . . . Steele, grounded itself on the psychological need of the nation to give minorities, especially African Americans, a chance to heal its past racial wounds, rather than on rational judgment of Obama’s true qualifications” (p. 2). Steele’s book based on this theory, *Bound Man*, came out in December 2007 before the presidential primaries and used this theory to declare that Senator Obama could not win. It placed him on all of the conservative media talk shows and in *Time Magazine*. When just the opposite happened, he disappeared from the airwaves. And as Liu shows in a cautious and methodical analytical way, there was more than emotions and irrationality to Senator Obama supporters and voters. Clearly, Steele’s theory, like the momentum one, has its own flaws, weaknesses and limitation.

Moving from the presidential primaries to the general election, Liu lay bare the theories that it was a Democratic year and any generic Democrat could have won along with the one that blamed the economic meltdown on Wall Street as altering the political context in Senator Obama’s favor. And then there is the theory about the problems of Senator John McCain and his running mate Governor Sarah Palin. Embedded in these problems one finds Senator McCain’s age and the backfiring of the negative “Celebrity Ads” on Senator Obama that eventually entangled and engulfed Governor Palin. Again, the problems helped but they do not in and of themselves seal the historic general election victory for Senator Obama.

What then, according to Liu’s brilliant conceptualization and empirical analysis, made this extraordinary and unprecedented election victory possible? Simply put, “a minimum winning multiracial coalition.” Using the pioneering theorizing of game theorist Riker as a point of intellectual departure, Liu notes the necessity of using Riker as only a starting point because “Riker’s notion of a minimum winning coalition is especially valuable for studies of racial coalitions, though Riker himself never built any empirical model around race” (p. 21). Hence, Liu had to intellectually innovative on Riker’s efforts and remodel this concept into a new one which he called, “a minimum winning multiracial coalition.” He then defines it, develops a mathematical equation for it, and tests it with the general election data from Senator Obama’s victory. This original and rich empirical theorizing renders his book a breakthrough work and in comparison and contrast with the other thirty-five books put it in a class by itself. But the work does not stop at this

point. His original scholarship allows him to test for one more theory that arose from Senator Obama's historic election.

Many in the media, after witnessing Senator Obama's historic election and searching for some ultimate meaning, declared (as some pundits had done even before the race was finished) that we are now in Post-Racial America. Liu raises the question himself: "did the 2008 election indeed represent a true era of 'postracial politics'?" (p. 5). He answers the question by saying that his empirical findings "strongly suggest that far from a post-racial politics where race became irrelevant, all racial groups examined here made their voting decision in 2008 based on their perceived group interests. Voters, in general, voted against the candidate whom they perceived to be a potential threat to their racial interest" (p. 122). I highly recommend this volume.

Hanes Walton, Jr.  
University of Michigan

**Tate, Katherine.** *What's Going On? Political Incorporation and the Transformation of Black Public Opinion*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2010. 208 pp. (\$29.95 paper).

In *What's Going On? Political Incorporation and the Transformation of Black Public Opinion*, Katherine Tate brilliantly crafts a clear view of Black public opinion in the United States that is valuable to scholars in political science as well as many other fields and subfields, and to policy makers, members of the media and other social commentators and activists. She goes beyond the all so common tactic of simply exploring the surface and simply commenting on the public opinion of any group at any point about one or many issues. Tate takes the time to guide the reader through the details behind public opinions of a group and even variations of that opinion within a group. This tactic leads readers to consider more of the possible causes for variations in public opinion between groups, within groups and across time.

The central thesis of Tate's book is that the originally and historically radical nature of Black public opinion has been transformed into something much more moderate and even mainstream due in great part to the political incorporation of Blacks in the United States. Instead of the first thoughts in Black public opinion being about the plight or status of the Black community, now it seems as though the first thought is how certain issues will play within the established political arena in terms of political success and feasibility. This astute assessment shows ways in which Black public opinion has

transformed right along with the inclusion of many Blacks into more than just the political process in the United States. In the decades examined, the number of Blacks in the socio-economic middle class has grown as has the number of Blacks in positions of power in the public and private sectors and Tate takes those facts into account and uses them to bolster her claims. Traditionally, Black public opinion had been very liberal. As Tate mentions a number of times, the idea of inked fate had been shared across the Black community for many generations and that started to change as Black public opinion has become more centrist.

Nothing illustrates the political incorporation of Blacks more than the Presidency of Barack Obama. A Black man occupying the highest elected office in the nation shows that much of the Black political infrastructure has been absorbed into more traditional party politics with the Democrats being the main beneficiaries. Black political leaders of the past answered to their communities first. They were on the outside looking in. Now, as Tate clearly illustrates, most Black political leaders are part of the power structures already in place for elected officials. They have to deal with the government structures as well as the hierarchy of their political party. Barack Obama was not elected as Black America's President. He was elected to be President of the entire United States. Tate is very good in showing how the realities of now having leaders who are on the inside along with drastic changes to the political environment have worked together to shift Black public opinion.

By taking readers on a journey of sorts through some very key political times in modern American political history, Tate is able to provide a much clearer picture as to why and how Black public opinion got to the point it is at today. She goes into very clear detail on causes for and changes to Black public opinion from the early 1970s through 2004. The late 1960s and early 1970s was when national Black public opinion started to carry the political weight seen today in terms of electoral politics. Blacks in the South finally had access to the ballot box. In Tate's work, she takes the time to show readers how along the way from the 1970s through 2004 there have been forces both internal and external to the Black community that have changed and altered Black public opinion on a myriad of issues from welfare reform to crime policy and from education policies to views on social issues and even the environment. This is a very thorough assessment of these various aspects of public opinion.

Issue by issue, Tate takes the time to show how Black public opinions have been altered by some of the same factors that have pushed mainstream American public opinion away from the left, along with factors exclusive to the Black community. An example would be when she talks about the Clinton administration. She shows how some of his more conservative stances on social welfare and crime policy were not publicly challenged by many



Black elected officials and that, along with his high approval rating in the Black community, ended up with many Blacks adopting opinions that were less empathetic for those benefitting from various social welfare policy and less understanding of those being sentenced to harsher sentences than they were just a few years prior. All of this was happening even as many in the Black community were being hurt by these new policies.

Blacks are now much more incorporated into the political structures of the United States. Or should I say many Blacks are incorporated. Tate takes the time to show how having some Blacks in these positions of elected and appointed leadership has led many of these changes in Black public opinion. Tate even takes the time to explore the ways in which opinions on social issues, such as rights for women, gays and lesbians, have changed within the Black community over the years. This book provides the insight to understand Black public opinion in new ways and it gives a framework for reaching the Black community on a myriad of issues by showing how this community has already been reached in the recent past. The outcome of many of the actions and policies of the Obama administration will tell a lot about the nature of Black public opinion in the near future and Tate has given us the guidebook to understand any changes.

Christopher M. Whitt  
*Augustana College*

