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Book reviews

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Book Reviews

Australian and New Zealand Politics

Frank Cain, *Jack Lang and the Great Depression* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2005), x + 393 pp., $34.95, ISBN 1740970748

This book is an exercise in revisionism. Frank Cain has an axe to grind with those who depict Jack Lang as a 'dodgy character', a political manipulator who got what he deserved: summary dismissal by New South Wales Governor Game, political marginalisation, and consistent condemnation by historians ever since. Cain has conducted an extraordinarily well-researched study that should demonstrate once and for all that everyone got it wrong: Jack Lang was a noble and wise statesman who did what he could to shelter the many NSW workers and unemployed against the burdens of poverty imposed on them by the combination of massive war debts and the Great Depression, and he was destroyed politically by a series of irresponsible, short-sighted federal governments acting in collusion with the British government, the British banks, big business, a bigoted governor and other reactionary forces. Yes, this is a study that analyses politics according to a classic good guys–bad guys scheme. Lang, whose own motives and actions are treated remarkably briefly and superficially in an otherwise well-documented study that bears his name in its title, is the tragic hero of the story, who ultimately is forced to a heroic defeat by forces too big for even him to handle.

Cain's painstaking research has enabled him to reconstruct not only the public rhetoric and personal correspondence of the chief players in this seven-year drama but also the actual movement of money in the very complex web of loans, repayments, deferments, seizures and evasive manoeuvres that took place during this creeping politico-financial crisis in Australia's most important economy. He is quite convincing in showing how actions of the federal government in the wake of the Great War constrained the ability of the States to raise their own money and arrange their own debt repayments so as to develop arrangements that fit their needs and priorities. In fact, his entire book can be read as an impassioned plea for States' rights and against centralisation of the Australian federation. At the same time, it bears an uncanny resemblance to the debt relief controversies that rage in contemporary Africa and Latin America, in particular. Cain's good guys–bad guys scheme can easily be supplanted: the IMF, the G7 and the big banks are the bad guys, and Hugo Chavez and various other Left-leaning, neo-nationalist, anti-globalist Latin American presidents are the good guys. Whether they will end up as Lang-like Don Quixotes or successful odds-defying heroes remains to be seen. If the case of New South Wales in the 1920s and 1930s is any guide, the former is more likely than the latter.

Cain's minute reconstruction of the saga is entertaining and gripping at times, although very densely spiced with intricate economic data. More importantly, the relentless hammering home of the good guys–bad guys scheme that overlays the entire project begins to irritate even the most neutral reader. Being a recent migrant to Australia and completely unprejudiced about the Lang-era battles, I found it impossible to escape the impression that the author's sheer drive to prove the mainstream opinion about Lang wrong got in the way of dispassionate, balanced analysis. Put simply: Lang is depicted consistently as a benevolent leader who is 'unsuspecting' of the vile plots being hatched against him by a federal government and its foreign co-conspirators bent on conducting a 'war' against him (military metaphors are employed consistently to describe the behaviour of anti-Lang actors). This is just too good to be true, particularly in view of the rather weighty evidence—almost completely ignored by Cain—unearthed over the years that Jack Lang was not exactly an angel. The sheer ferocity of the 'attack' of both Labor- and non-Labor-led federal governments against the Lang government remains incomprehensible, because the various actors' motives are assumed from rather simplistic ideological or positional schemes and subsequently framed negatively by liberal use of disqualifying and condemnatory adjectives rather than investigated empirically. Moreover, the wider political context of the times and the political style and position of Lang himself are left largely

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undiscussed. The reader is thus left wondering why virtually everybody turned against this man. Simply to assume that he was a mere victim and did not bring at least some of this enmity upon himself is stretching the limits of credulity.

Revisionism is a pivotal task in history writing. Cain is to be commended for his courage in undertaking it for this particularly sensitive case. But he has done his study and its readers a disservice by getting carried away with it.

PAUL 'T HART
Australian National University

Louise A. Chappell, *Gendering Government: Feminist Engagement with the State in Australia and Canada* (Vancouver and Toronto: University of British Columbia Press, 2002), 212 pp., $27.95, ISBN 0774809663

This welcome study provides a thoroughly solid coverage of an important area. State feminism has been widely and well analysed by feminist scholars in Australia, Europe and North America, and this book provides a comprehensive survey of the literature specific to Australia and Canada, albeit within a distinctive framework. Louise Chappell argues that political institutions have 'shaped' the nature of women's policies and policy outcomes in Australia and Canada. Part of a new Institutionalist school, her basic frame is that institutions matter and are not simply reflective of broader social and economic forces such as capitalism, class or globalisation. Chappell's particular contribution is the idea that institutions may interact with individuals and ideas to become 'co-constitutive' (p. 179). Chappell's metaphor is interesting and contrasts with earlier Australian ones such as Sara Dowse's idea of a dance—'fandango', or Anne Summers' famous choice of 'mandarins' or 'missionaries'.

Chappell's visions are more optimistic than many earlier views. She maintains that feminist policy makers in Australia and Canada have 'successfully' engaged with the state to achieve greater equality for women (p. 5). This generalisation is not strongly supported by the evidence she presents, which relates more to political processes than to policy outcomes. She has no need of such a bold claim, as her argument that women's activism and engagement with the state has been equally extensive in both countries is sufficiently strong and interesting. Her sub-argument is that the nature and direction of women's activism has differed—shaped, for example, by the contrasting nature of the two federations, and, as a consequence, the two party systems. And she has not outlined her definitions of success in terms of gender equality versus gender difference approaches, nor whether aspects of equality, such as the diminishing gender wage gap and greater wage equality, particularly in Australia, are caused by market forces rather than state intervention.

The book is strongest in its systematic and comprehensive treatment of political and legal institutions. Chappell presents her material in a very well-organised and comprehensive fashion and outlines the similarities and differences between the shape of women's activism and policy machinery in Australia and Canada in a series of well-chosen chapters. The historical element enriches the discussion and Chappell plots the emergence of crucial new debates and institutions in Australia and Canada from the late 1960s to the mid-1990s. The most interesting examples are the Canadian Charter of Rights debate and the Australian Labor Party's adoption of internal Affirmative Action. The comparisons provide the richest dimension of the book and cover the women's movements, bureaucracies, courts and federal jurisdictions of both countries. Useful tables and charts supplement the discussion.

The book will undoubtedly continue to provoke debate and discussion amongst feminist scholars and provide a very handy introduction to women's policy debates for honours and graduate students.

MARIAN SIMMS
University of Otago

Annemarie Devereux, *Australia and the Birth of the International Bill of Human Rights 1946–1966* (Sydney: Federation Press, 2005), x + 306 pp., $49.95, ISBN 1862875626

Scholars of Australian politics have long been accustomed to citing H.V. Evatt's important contribution to the birth of the international human rights regime as evidence of Australia's long-standing commitment to human rights. For current human rights advocates and critics of Australian federal government policy in areas including refugees and Indigenous rights, Evatt's contribution represented a milestone against which contemporary commitments to human rights norms and standards may be measured and found wanting. By contrast, government representatives like to speak of their ongoing commitment to those same human rights norms and standards as though it is part of an unbroken and consistent tradition since Evatt's contribution.

A dispute remains about the meaning and impact of Evatt's undoubtedly influential personal involvement in the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its subsequent implementing covenants, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights. This debate centres on the longevity of the Australian government's commitment towards these documents and the principles they enshrine, given the relatively short-lived participation of Evatt himself in the drafting of what has become known as the international bill of human rights.

Devereux's book presents a detailed, extremely well-researched and factual account of the engagement of the Australian government in the drafting of these documents from 1946 to 1966. She has mined archival material in Australia and internationally to present a comprehensive account of the Australia's negotiations and bargaining positions. The period in which H.V. Evatt was Minister for External Affairs (1941–49) covers only a relatively brief component of the 20 years analysed. Later periods are the 'Spender' period (when Percy Spender assumed responsibility for the external affairs portfolio under the newly elected Conservative government of 1949, but lasted only 18 months) and the 'bureaucratic' period. This was characterised by ministers who showed 'comparatively little interest' in Australia's position on human rights issues at the United Nations (p. 21) and who instead continued the policies advocated by Spender more or less unchanged. Thus the period from 1951 to 1966 was one of bureaucratic, rather than ministerial, control.

Based on the empirical evidence, references by current politicians to Australia's consistent support for human rights are disingenuous at best. The picture of Australia's piecemeal commitment, attempts to lessen the impact and coverage of human rights norms, and interpretation of standards as consistent with rights-infringing policies (such as in immigration or towards Indigenous people) is not pretty. Although Devereux emphasises inconsistencies and policy fluctuations, it is difficult not to get an overall sense of negativity from her empirical research, which she understates in her conclusions.

Devereux acknowledges a series of poor positions from a rights-advocacy point of view. For example, economic and social rights were treated not as 'true rights' but rather as 'aspirations' (p. 36). As early as 1950, the Australian government was advocating that rights be associated in express terms with the 'mutuality of obligation' (p. 44). Effort was put into interpreting obligations in such a way as to minimise their impact on domestic policy (p. 50). Concrete steps to enforce rights domestically, such as anti-discrimination laws, were actively opposed during the Spender period and beyond, with the government expressing a preference for education over legislation (p. 63). Australia strongly opposed international clauses that would override a state's right to determine immigration and asylum policies (p. 70). Equality clauses were interpreted in such a way as to exclude their application to Indigenous people (p. 78), and so as to adopt a 'formal equality' approach (meaning that the law applied to all people) rather than a substantive equality approach, cognisant of the law's impact (p. 80). Australia opposed the idea of self-determination (p. 87), agreeing to minority rights only on the basis of their interpretation as privately realised rights, and not rights requiring any action by government to ensure (p. 97). Where the 'national interest' determined it to be so, rights were regarded as able to be derogated or suspended (p. 127). Women were frequently omitted from human rights concerns (p. 136).

While some of these failures in relation to Indigenous rights, immigration and women's equality may be explained partially in light of historical contingencies, one of the most interesting aspects of Devereux's book appears in her conclusion. Here, she argues, in somewhat of an understatement, that the

period 1946–66 demonstrated a 'narrowing of approach' towards human rights principles (p. 233) and then draws striking comparisons with the recent human rights approach of the Australian government. She demonstrates strong consanguinities, raising the prospect that they are not purely coincidental. Rather, reluctance on the part of the Australian government to conform to international human rights standards has a long, rich and shameful history.

KATHARINE GELBER
University of New South Wales

David M. Farrell and Ian McAllister (eds), *The Australian Electoral System: Origins, Variations, and Consequences* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2006), 215 pp., $49.95, ISBN 0868408581

The authors set two main goals: first, to explain why Australia is one of the few countries in the world using preferential voting systems—in particular, the alternative vote (AV) and the single transferable vote (STV)—and, second, 'to locate preferential voting in the comparative study of electoral systems'. The book addresses two audiences, namely those interested in electoral systems, who can learn more from the study of an important case, and those interested in Australian politics.

Theories of electoral system choice and change almost universally focus on the interests of political elites controlling the levers of power. AV and STV systems are said to be unpopular among power-brokers because such systems deliver more power to voters in terms of candidate choice. Farrell and McAllister implicitly question this rational choice assumption in favour of path dependency, concluding that Australia's choice of the preferential model can be explained by patterns of elite opinion dominant at the time of consolidation of the country's institutions. In English-speaking countries, the list proportional representation (PR) systems being adopted in European countries at about the same time were not on the agenda. The frame included only plurality and preferential systems. Calculations of party interest were in the picture, but the views of 'experts' were more influential.

The authors agree with Bernard Grofman's argument that electoral systems are 'embedded institutions', not working in the same ways in different contexts because of the effects of other factors. Australian political parties have reduced voter choice by requiring the completion of all preferences, making it possible for parties to influence those preferences, and through compulsory voting. This conclusion does not entirely jibe with another claim: that these systems do not confuse voters because invalid voting is low. With the extent of party control the book demonstrates, one would not expect it. Given these arguments about party control, when the analysis moves into international comparisons one is also not entirely convinced of the rationale behind the scale developed to represent party-centred versus candidate-centred electoral systems that puts Australia very near the candidate-centred end.

Farrell and McAllister see Australia's electoral systems as 'overdue for reform'. Too much is required of voters: 'In no other system are voters required to express a preference for candidates they do not support.' Ticket voting for the Senate works like 'an extreme version of closed list PR' and is unfair to Independent candidates. Some effects of confusion are acknowledged. There are more spoilt ballots than is acceptable because of variations in ballot structure between concurrent elections to different institutions. The authors recommend a simple reform that would address many of these issues: the adoption of optional preferential voting.

This is a very good book, clearly written, nicely blending institutional, historical, and behavioural analysis. It assigns the appropriate credit to previous work and builds on it. In Australia in particular, and in terms of a more general understanding of value to students of electoral systems around the world, Farrell and McAllister move our knowledge of preferential voting systems several steps further forward.

JACK VOWLES
University of Auckland

Clinton Fernandes, *Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the Independence of East Timor* (Melbourne: Scribe, 2004), 144 pp., $22.00, ISBN 1920769285

Clinton Fernandes' *Reluctant Saviour: Australia, Indonesia and the Independence of East Timor* is an analysis of the events leading up to the referendum on East Timorese independence.

Fernandes argues that successive Australian governments recognised Indonesia's claim to East Timor largely because stability in Indonesia served the interests of 'Australian capitalism'. He describes a 'Jakarta lobby' in Australia rather than an 'Indonesian lobby' to 'highlight the elitist nature of the relationship'.

Fernandes argues that, when the status quo in East Timor became untenable, the Australian government conducted a sustained rearguard action in order to delay, if not entirely thwart, East Timorese independence. Events, he says, moved faster than the government, with it reluctantly recognising the need for a referendum and the later deployment of an Australian peacekeeping force.

The eventual Australian intervention occurred primarily as the result of 'people power', Fernandes argues. The troops were 'not sent in because of the goodwill of the Australian government, but because of massive protests that increased in both fury and size'.

Pre-1999 Australian policy is explained by an almost neo-Marxist analysis, which sees elites in Indonesia and Australia colluding in the interests of 'those who control the central economic and political institutions'. In this manner, he concludes that Australians should see Indonesians 'as fellow workers who face a harsher, more brutal version of the exploitation they themselves endure'.

While Fernandes' research is adequate, and his detailing of events leading up to the referendum is sound, his analysis is too simplistic to be convincing. His explanation for the Australian intervention as simply the result of 'people power' stretches credulity.

There can be no doubt that public opinion supported intervention in East Timor. However, equally it may be said that there were large protests against Australia's involvement in Iraq and yet there has been no subsequent shift in the Howard government's policy. A more convincing explanation is simply that new circumstances precipitated a shift in Australia's national interests and a subsequent change in policy.

As a regional power, Australia had an interest in stabilising the situation in East Timor once it became clear that the status quo was untenable. Equally, as a near neighbour of a nation of two hundred million, Australia had to be careful to avoiding being seen as advocating the gradual dismemberment of Indonesia. These competing demands required careful balancing. Rather than shedding new light on this complex power play, Fernandes resorts to highly strung caricatures of global capitalism.

Furthermore, Fernandes is at times disingenuous. He goes so far as to argue that the difficulties experienced in deploying an Australian Joint Task Force to Timor, not least the transition from Operation Spitfire to Operation Warden, was evidence of the government's reluctance to intervene in East Timor. As an army officer Fernandes would know that this probably had more to do with the neglect of the army under the Defence of Australia doctrine rather than the influence of the pro-Jakarta lobby.

There can be no doubt that successive Australia governments supported Indonesia's occupation of East Timor and that the Howard government was initially reluctant to deploy a peacekeeping force to East Timor. However, Fernandes' explanation, written while a serving army officer and displaying no little moral courage, is far too simplistic to offer any real insight.

STEPHEN BARTON
Edith Cowan University

Barbara A. Hocking, *Unfinished Constitutional Business? Rethinking Indigenous Self-determination* (Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press, 2005), xxiii + 293 pp., $39.95, ISBN 0855754664

This collection of essays draws on a conference held in Brisbane in 2001 as part of a project on Rethinking Indigenous Self-determination funded by an Australian Research Council Large Grant. The collection contains five papers focused on Indigenous self-determination in Australia, two focused on Aotearoa/New Zealand and one each focused on Canada, Hawaii, the Continental United States, and

the Solomon Islands. It also contains three or four papers that are more international or comparative across countries. As such, it is a bit of potpourri, both of richness and eclecticism.

The five Australian papers serve to remind us just how far the Australian Indigenous affairs debate has moved in the last five years. They are written from perspectives in 2001 that were supportive of Indigenous self-determination and wished to take it further than had been the practice of the previous 25 years. Some of the papers note the Howard government's turning away from self-determination as the guiding policy philosophy of Indigenous affairs during its first five years in office, but this now looks tame compared to the more extensive turning away since. Indigenous affairs under the 'later' Howard has been seized by ideas of policy failure and complete policy revisionism away from self-determination, which these papers, because of their timing, cannot reflect. Phillip Morrisey's rather slight paper, entitled 'Trust, Truth and Fatuity' probably comes closest to pre-figuring this change, as its reflects unsympathetically on the first five years of the Howard government. Others of the Australian papers are, however, more substantial.

The paper by John Bradley and Kathryn Seton, on Aboriginal land claims in the Northern Territory and how, despite their post-colonial intentions, they have in fact been processes of 'deep colonising', is well argued and worthy of attention. Chris Cuneen's paper on policing, and how it has remained 'neo-colonial' in recent years—even under policies of Indigenous self-determination—is also well argued. Aileen Moreton-Robinson's paper on 'Patriarchal Whiteness' makes the useful point that racial discrimination is not just about aberrant individual behaviour, but more importantly about systemic or structured 'white race privilege'. Michael Mansell's paper jumps around a bit to give us some of his now familiar ideas as a long-time spokesperson of the Aboriginal Provisional Government, plus a few new ideas as well.

Helena Whall's paper on how the Commonwealth of Nations has dealt with calls for the recognition of Indigenous rights of self-determination also covers some interesting ground. It notes that states generally have some trouble recognising this right of Indigenous peoples, because they worry about what it might mean for their territorial integrity. But there are some notable instances of states in the Commonwealth being far more relaxed about the right of Indigenous peoples to self-determination, one of which was Australia up until 1996. From being 'the first state to support the unqualified inclusion of the principle of self-determination' in the Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Australia became after 1996 the most vociferous opponent. Canada, by contrast, maintained a slightly more measured level of support throughout, which sought to safeguard territorial integrity while respecting 'limited' self-determination for Indigenous peoples. This observation relates nicely to Peter Russell's paper, which argues that Canada on Indigenous self-determination in recent years is about 'as good as its gets'. He sees Indigenous self-determination in Canada as having moved ahead in a piecemeal, Burkean manner in recent years, on the back of Quebec's demand for separate society status and through a number of disparate constitutional, legal and political developments. However, he also observes some very divergent views among Indigenous and settler Canadians emerging during these processes, which leads him to be somewhat pessimistic about future further developments.

Andrew Erueti's paper, on contemporary Maori representation issues, identifies two recent pieces of legislation that have attempted to put in place judicial mechanisms in the Maori Land Court for addressing disputes among Maori over representation issues. While acknowledging the useful role these mechanisms have sometimes played, Erueti also argues for mechanisms of dispute resolution that are more direct and open between the disputing parties and that are informed by tikanga Maori. Though not wanting to re-institute a traditional muru for such dispute resolution, Erueti believes that some of its principles are of relevance and could be more of a resource in contemporary Maori representation disputes.

John Buick-Constable's paper views contemporary Maori–state relations in Aotearoa/New Zealand as a return to a contractualist approach after 150 years of moving away from such an approach. He is supportive of this return and favourably discusses two recent Iwi claims settlement acts in terms of it. He argues that the:

> major advantage of these contemporary legislative agreements has been their capacity to address matters of self-determination for Maori in far greater detail and specificity than

> by way of treaty-making, constitutional clauses and the piecemeal contribution of judicial review. (p. 125)

However, Buick-Constable also acknowledges concerns that these claims settlement acts are ordinary legislation that could possibly in future be repealed or seen as having been negotiated under duress reflecting unequal bargaining power. Ultimately, he argues, the Maori–Crown relationship is ongoing and the contractualist approach aims to achieve 'continuing co-existence through consensus' (p. 127).

One of the more international papers—Catherine Iorns Magallanes' 'Indigenous Political Representation'—also has quite a lot to say about Aotearoa/New Zealand. It usefully recounts the history of the Maori seats in the New Zealand parliament and compares this with the history of Indian representation in the Maine State legislature in the United States. Iorns Magallanes identifies some major differences between these two schemes of Indigenous political representation, but argues that both amount in their own way to some recognition of Indigenous self-determination. She notes, in conclusion, that the constitutional position of Indigenous people in Australia is closer to that in New Zealand than Maine, and that this would probably be reflected in any future development of a scheme of specifically Indigenous parliamentary representation in Australia.

The paper by Anne Waters explores the concepts of indigeneity, self-determination and sovereignty in the context of 'American Indian sovereignty issues' (p. 190). It is philosophical, as much as empirical, and argues for the linking of these concepts at the level of individual and communal self-consciousness. Joshua Cooper's paper provides a useful history of Hawaii's annexation by the United States, politically, economically and militarily, interwoven with accounts of small, contemporary instances of the re-assertion of Hawaiian self-determination. Cleopatra Magwaro's paper argues that Indigenous dispute management should be viewed as a cultural property right. However, this paper tries to cover too much ground and is not sufficiently well organised to usefully develop its argument. Joseph Henry Vogel's paper on the inadequacies of the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity is, by way of contrast, extremely well organised and argued. It is an economist's view of politics as irrational and sub-optimising. His alternative economistic argument for a cartel over genetic resources is elegant and persuasive, if at times a little utopian and apolitical. The paper by Jennifer Corrin Care provides a useful history of post-colonial self-government in the Solomon Islands, which she sees as more imposed and 'off the peg' than 'made to measure' or appropriate. She argues for some fairly fundamental reconsideration of what might be a more appropriate, 'home-grown' form of government, rather than more 'papering over the cracks'. This seems a useful analysis in the light of events since.

The final substantial paper is by the editor of the collection, Barbara A. Hocking; not to be confused with Barbara J. Hocking who contributes a very brief and somewhat confusing conclusion, or rather concluding note. Barbara A. Hocking's more substantial paper looks at the development of Saami parliaments in Norway, Finland and Sweden since the 1980s and compares them with developments in Canada and Australia. In fact, however, Hocking writes more about the recognition of limited Indigenous rights in these countries through international law, case law and constitutional recognition. Hence, Mabo gets a Guernsey in her discussion of Australia, but the Australian and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) is referred to only fleetingly and rather dismissively. Australia is portrayed as the laggard compared to the Scandinavian countries and Canada. While this may be so in these legal areas, I think that in a discussion that sets out to be about Indigenous parliaments, ATSIC should have been more fully discussed. In this regard, my own paper to the conference in Brisbane in 2001 would have been a useful addition to the volume. For those with an interest, thanks to the modern posting of unpublished material on Websites, this paper can be viewed as Discussion Paper 230 on <www.anu.edu.au/caepr/>. Like the other Australian papers, this paper has now been well and truly overtaken by events since. However, it does provide a fuller analysis of ATSIC when it did exist, and how it related to ideas of Indigenous self-determination.

WILL SANDERS
Australian National University

Nathan Hollier (ed.), *Ruling Australia: The Power, Privilege & Politics of the New Ruling Class* (Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Press, 2004), xi + 206 pp., $25.95, ISBN 1740970527

The core of *Ruling Australia* is papers from a conference, organised by the journal *Overland*, on the 25th anniversary of Bob Connell's influential *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture*, published in 1977.

Connell's own chapter, the first, charts changes in Australian capitalism, from high levels of state economic intervention to greater reliance on market mechanisms. Under this neo-liberal model, 'the corporate form becomes the norm for all social institutions', including schools, universities and public service departments (pp. 6–7). '[P]ublic services have been turned into commodities, citizens have been redefined as customers' (p. 9). There has been a wider distribution of share ownership in the population, but '[t]he percentage of people who actually derive a significant proportion of their income from property ownership remains small' (pp. 7–8). Paths into the tiny corporate elite have also diversified.

Despite its practical implementation, Connell points out 'the great secret about neo-liberalism, which can only be whispered, but which at some level everyone knows: neo-liberalism does not have popular support' (p. 16). The electoral success of New Right leaders such as John Howard has been due to their use of racism and nationalism and/or the failures of their predecessors. At the same time, the alienation that is an aspect of the increased commodification of social life 'makes, in the short term, for political passivity'.

Like *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture*, this collection includes chapters on specific features of the Australian capitalist class. Using information in *BRW*'s annual 'Rich 200' lists as his main source, Mike Gilding identifies some characteristics of, perhaps, a fifth of the Australian capitalist class. Mike Donaldson and Scott Poynting investigate how ruling-class men spend their time, particularly by drawing on biographies and autobiographies of Rupert Murdoch and Conrad Black. They conclude that '[f]or tycoon businessmen, work often resembles leisure, and leisure pursuits resemble work' (p. 148).

Verity Burgmann develops a theme touched on by Connell in this book (pp. 19–20) and its ancestor: the Australian Labor Party's relationship with the ruling class. She effectively documents Labor's embrace of neo-liberalism, the impact of the Hawke and Keating governments' policies on workers and changes in the party's relationship with the working class.

In his persuasive chapter on 'the radical neo-liberal movement' in Australia, Damien Cahill builds on another of Connell's concerns: the way the ruling class constructs its intellectual hegemony. He outlines corporate funding for New Right think tanks and the role that intellectuals from the movement play in formulating programs, strategies and rationales for business and government.

One of the myths of neo-liberalism is that it has led to a decline in the role of the state. Damian Grenfell takes this myth apart by examining state interventions against campaigns that 'opposed corporate interests', the 1998 waterfront dispute, protests over the uranium mine at Jabiluka in the late 1990s and the mobilisation against the World Economic Forum in Melbourne during September 2001 (p. 71). Grenfell proves his limited case, but he could have gone further. The state does not only 'continue . . . to intervene in both the market and society in order to defend against forms of social resistance that challenge corporate interests' (p. 72). Governments, courts and other public agencies also continue to play a crucial role in managing competition amongst 'corporate interests' in Australia and between Australian-based capital and its rivals overseas.

Two chapters in *Ruling Australia* deal with Connell's contributions to the understanding of Australian society. Demitris Dimitriou traces the development of the 'notion of structure' from the early 1970s to the early 1980s. Andrew Moore draws attention to Connell's first book, with Florence Gould, the 'pioneering' study *Politics of the Extreme Right: Warringah 1966*.

Despite some of its acute observations, the final chapter by Mark Davis, left over from a different *Overland* event in 2001, is out of place in this volume. The chapter does not refer to Connell's work or employ a class analysis. Connell sees 'continuing . . . bases for class anger against the contemporary ruling class' (p. 22). In contrast to this identification of change being driven from below, Davis regards 'strong advocates in the mainstream political parties, and in the mainstream media' as crucial for a 'process of renewal' that constitutes 'a practical basis for business' and embraces 'some ideas

derived from free market economics' (pp. 198, 200). There is nothing wrong with thin books. *Ruling Australia* would have been more coherent without this chapter and the transcribed text of a radio discussion, amongst several contributors and others, about class.

Brief assertions about a shift 'in hegemony from industrial capital to finance capital' (p. 2) and the need to increase profits (p. 51) is all that *Ruling Australia* has to offer by way of a materialist explanation for the rise of neo-liberalism. Discussion of the problems faced by the ruling class to which neo-liberalism was an answer, together with an index, would have been a better way to make the book plumper.

RICK KUHN
Australian National University

Tony Kevin, *A Certain Maritime Incident: The Sinking of SIEV X* (Melbourne: Scribe, 2004), 320 pp., $32.95, ISBN 1920769218

> On 19 October 2001 there was a mass drowning in the seas between Indonesia and Australia. Three hundred and fifty-three people—146 children, 142 women, and 65 men—perished when their vessel, a boat that later became known as SIEV X, sank in the Indian Ocean 50–60 nautical miles south of Sunda Strait.

So begins Tony Kevin's analysis of this tragedy. A winner at the 2005 NSW Premier's Literacy Awards, Kevin's book is a fascinating and often disturbing exploration of all facets surrounding the case. The book adds to the body of literature about border protection following the *Tampa* case and the children overboard affair. For example, Patrick Weller's book, *Don't Tell the Prime Minister*, explores this latter case and highlights many similar issues and problems, particularly communication 'breakdowns' between agencies and upwards to ministers.

Confronted with limited evidence, Kevin tries to piece together how the sinking occurred, what the authorities knew and, ultimately, whether it could have been prevented. The book does not pretend to offer definitive answers, instead highlighting available facts and extrapolating theories based on these facts. Many answers are still unaccounted for, and throughout the book Kevin calls for a full judicial inquiry into the sinking to ensure that values of accountability and justice are upheld. A consistent theme throughout the work is his disillusionment with the national security apparatus: a system that covers up mistakes, treats public institutions with contempt, and lacks the moral values of a democratic polity.

Part one of the book explores the events leading up to the sinking and rescue. This part is quite personal, drawing the reader into the human side of the story—especially survivor accounts of the sinking (pp. 63–7), which do the most to crystallise the human tragedy. The second part deals with the investigation and politics involved, focusing on proceedings of the Senate inquiry into a *Certain Maritime Incident* (which deals with both the children overboard affair and the SIEV X case). Overarching themes that Kevin touches on include issues of accountability, the role of Senate committees, official information management, the growing concentration of power in the hands of the Prime Minister and the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and judgments on the humanity and morality of the border-protection regime.

Of the many issues surrounding the SIEV X, three dominate the narrative: the location of the sinking, the role of Abu Quassey, and the extent of the people-smuggling disruption program (PSDP) in Indonesia. On the sinking, the official position is that 'no one knows where the boat sank'. However, Kevin highlights evidence (including an official embassy cable reprinted at the beginning of the book) that indicates the boat most likely sank in international waters that were 'intensively patrolled' by Operation Relex (the border-patrol operation set up in the wake of the *Tampa* case). This is a crucial issue, for if the boat sank in the Relex patrol zone, it raises questions as to why the boat was not discovered by the Australian authorities.

On the role of Abu Quassey (the organiser of the doomed voyage), Kevin believes it was highly likely that Abu Quassey was a police disruption agent working to control the people-smuggling trade and then dismantle it once he captured the market. Kevin points to the relatively benign treatment Quassey received from authorities: a light prison sentence in Indonesia (where people smuggling is

not illegal) for visa-related issues; the failure to bring him to justice in Australia despite 'attempts' by the Justice Minister (which Kevin labels 'smoke and mirrors'); and the heavy Australian Federal Police (AFP) involvement in his trial in Egypt, which resulted in Quassey receiving a comparatively light jail sentence.

Finally, on the extent of the PSDP, Kevin examines the murky world of the program, including the possibility that the SIEV X was sabotaged as part of this program. Kevin cites AFP commissioner Mick Keelty's testimony to the Senate inquiry that Indonesian disrupters may have undertaken activities that the AFP was not aware of. While on the surface this exonerates Australian agencies from having direct responsibility for the sinking, Kevin argues that this scenario may have been intentionally set up in order to evoke 'plausible deniability'. Even if this were not true, the AFP was still responsible for creating the situation in the first place.

Kevin's rational approach of using the 'highest probability hypothesis', coming to the best explanation based on facts, is open to criticism—a point he acknowledges. Throughout the text, he constantly wonders why particular events took place, who knew what information, and hypothesises on reasons behind actions, often suspiciously. Working with incomplete information, he is usually careful to avoid making definitive claims, although sometimes he is not as cautious (for example, on the sinking location). His hypothesising often leads down dark paths of possible cover-ups and worse. While in many instances it is difficult to believe that the 'worst' happened, the book does make one think about all possibilities. I would not go to the extent of calling these dark scenarios 'conspiracy theories', although I think Kevin sometimes assumes the worst before considering more innocent explanations. For example, with regard to the ineffective response to 'uncertain' intelligence reports about the voyage, he postulates: 'Might an indifference to the lives of boat people have by that time become so ingrained in the system that nobody would really much care about a boat that failed to arrive' (p. 124).

Kevin is at his best when attempting to rationally marshal the available evidence and work out his 'highest-probability hypothesis', but on a few occasions, especially his attack on Howard government 'abuses' of power (pp. 16–17), his methodical and analytical approach temporarily takes a back seat to more personal criticisms of the government. For example, it is a stretch to assert that SAS operations in Iraq prior to the invasion were an abuse of executive power, especially without any supporting analysis. Another minor criticism is his treatment of media reports as hard-and-fast evidence, although in some cases reporting turned out to be very well informed. Yet these are minor quibbles, and this well-written book is an insightful publication for anyone interested in the issue of the SIEV X or border protection. More generally, it is a fascinating case that highlights broader issues about the ongoing tension between Australia's national security apparatus and notions of public and political accountability. Kevin's writing is infused with passion and a desire to make a difference, and the numerous awards and recognition that his work has received are well deserved.

STEWART ASHE
Australian National University

Raymond Miller, *Party Politics in New Zealand* (South Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2005), x + 286 pp., A$42.95, NZ$49.95, ISBN 0195584139 (pbk)

This book is a must for anyone seeking to understand the transformation of the New Zealand parties and party system in the past two decades. Students of Australian parties will also be interested in the comparative themes that emerge. While there is a strong comparative theme in this book, it is surprising that the author did not look more often across the Tasman. For example, in his discussion of party finance in NZ, he makes proposals for public funding to be introduced. He could well have considered the problems of disclosure and transparency that are endemic in Australia.

The author focuses on two central issues: 'whether New Zealand's new multiparty system is a product of proportional representation or of other more complex developments', and on a theme that will come as no surprise to Australian students of parties—public disengagement with, and within, the parties. Neither of these trends is unique to New Zealand, nor to Australia. Both have been reported and analysed in a number of nations.

The value of this study is that it takes a thematic, party *system* approach, rather than examining individual parties *seriatim*. There is plenty of material on each of the parties, but the emphasis on system provides a further and very valuable level. Miller's research base is very impressive—drawn from party theory, comparative party material, and a broad coverage of the literature on the individual parties.

The book is in three major sections. The first examines the evolution and decline of the two-party system, and then analyses whether New Zealand society is diverse enough to sustain a multi-party system. The second section applies the standard models—cadre, mass, catch-all, cartel—to New Zealand, and unpacks the issues that have interested party analysts in Australia and elsewhere: membership decline, the transformation of party finances, pre-selection, leadership and party–public relationships.

The third section analyses the changing nature of party competition—in the electorate and in the government. Issues such as ideology, the 'professionalisation' of campaigns, the changing membership of the parliament, and the new feature for New Zealand—coalition government—are fully examined.

While similar changes are apparent in Australia, and elsewhere, Miller emphasises the unique component in New Zealand—the parallel impact of the 'reform' of the electoral system to the multi-member proportional variant of proportional representation. This had a 'multiplicative tendency' that led not only to the formation of new parties but also caused the two major parties to 'fracture and fragment'.

Miller leaves it to the reader to decide whether modern developments in the New Zealand party system constitute a 'transformation . . . or something more modest'. But he is more certain that, in New Zealand as in Australia, one of the major tasks is to reverse the trend for the public to become 'increasingly disengaged from political parties and election campaigns'.

Critics of the modern tendencies in the Australian party system will realise that 'we are not alone'. In one sense, this book is an audit of the New Zealand party system, and it identifies very similar problems. It is essential reading: detailed and scholarly, with masses of tables, charts, data, and case studies that clarify party history, theory, sociology and comparisons.

DEAN JAENSCH
Flinders University

Peter Saunders and James Walter (eds), *Ideas and Influence: Social Science and Public Policy in Australia* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2005), xii + 268 pp., $39.95, ISBN 0868409146

This is an important book. It is not often that you find several colleagues reading the same book at the same time, but this was the case with *Ideas and Influence*. The book was sponsored by the Institute for the Study of Global Movements at Monash University and developed under the auspices of the Academy of Social Sciences in order to explore the importance of the social sciences to Australian public policy formulation. As the editors explain, the book is intended to investigate the 'relations between social science research, the facilitation of informed public opinion and the policy community, and it's intended to show that expert knowledge can shape better futures' (pp. 1–2).

This optimistic premise is quickly qualified in the introductory chapter where the relationship between researcher and the policy community is described as 'uneasy', complicated by conflicting tensions. On the one hand, technology has made research, especially statistical data collection, more feasible. This coincides with raised requirements of accountability in the public sector for effective and efficient use of resources. There is some complementarity in this and it might be expected to encourage closer links between social scientists and policy makers. However, there are other dynamics that result in less positive relationships. Important among these is the growing diversification of the 'knowledge production' industry (p. 7); that is, growing competition between the traditional producers of 'expert knowledge' in the universities and a range of other expert bodies such as think tanks, consultants, private companies and policy advisers within government. Here the editors show some venom, portraying thank tank 'activists' as more influenced by public opinion and less likely to consider an objective range of policy options. They are described as 'policy entrepreneurs rather than researchers, eschewing scholarly objectivity by prioritising a particular political philosophy and seeking only initiatives that will serve that position' (p. 7). Is this fair comment? Does academic

impartiality require the absence of commitment to a particular political philosophy? If that is the case, it would not only be researchers in think tanks who would deserve the label 'policy entrepreneur' but also many university-based researchers who consistently push a particular perspective. It is simplistic to imply that all social scientists working independently are free of ideological bias—rather, it could be argued that the 'think tank' affiliation is an honest declaration of the values and priorities of the researchers involved.

The book presents a series of policy studies by many respected social scientists: John Quiggin on economic liberalism, Brian Head on governance, Simon Marginson on education, Peter Travers on welfare, Ruth Fincher on spatial difference, Barbara Pocock on work and family, Chilla Bulbeck on gender policies, Jon Altman and Tim Rowse on Indigenous affairs, Jenny Hocking on security, Richard Eckersley on the quality of life and Ian Marsh on opinion formation. The treatment of the theme varies considerably, with some authors leaning towards the more traditional approach of policy analysis and critique rather than on the role of social science research in developing policy itself. However, there are many gems and a good number of the chapters will be essential reading for students in Australian public policy classes, especially on social policy issues.

One of the most direct commentaries on the relationship between social scientist and policy maker can be found in Pocock's chapter on work and family. She suggests that her colleagues are overly 'shy' in approaching practitioners and raises three concerns: first, how little research is done on key social issues in Australia; second, that social scientists too rarely approach politicians; and, third, researchers need to become better at summarising their work and emphasising policy implications (pp. 138–9). She advocates greater efforts by social scientists to communicate their work in formats that will reach policy communities, such as interaction with the media, Senate submissions, opinion pieces, personal discussion with politicians, briefings, witness appearances, etc.

Many of the authors comment on the prevalence of the market paradigm from the 1980s, resulting in a narrowing of the policy options that are accepted as relevant by politicians and policy makers. This illustrates one of the tensions remarked on in the introductory chapter: '[t]he essence of scientific inquiry is an open approach that explores the relevance of all possibilities, whereas the policy agenda is often closed to particular ideas or concepts by political determination' (pp. 3–4). Presumably this is a natural characteristic of the relationship between academic researchers and the political sphere and one that suggests the other important role of the social scientist—that of critic and advocate of alternative visions.

JANE ROBBINS
Flinders University

Rodney Tiffen and Ross Gittins, *How Australia Compares* (Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 282 pp., $49.95, ISBN 052183578X

This book compares Australia with 17 liberal democracies on a wide range of political, economic and social dimensions. The pattern is for a page of tables (usually four) to be accompanied (on the opposite page) by some commentary about those tables. Most of the tables contain statistical information, although there are some that summarise governmental arrangements concerning, for example, heads of state or parliaments. The left-hand page is always interesting and the right-hand page makes comments about the information on the facing page and about any problems pertaining to that information.

The high-minded uses of the book are obvious. It will be a valuable reference book for lecture preparation. It can be used to stimulate tutorial discussions. It will help international students get a fix on Australian society. The list of sources at the back of the book will help in the early stages of research into a wide range of phenomena. But there are guilty pleasures to be had, too. It is difficult to resist dipping into it at random. There are plums everywhere. Who are the world's great coffee drinkers? The Norwegians, Finns and Danes. Who tops the list for the consumption of flavoured alcoholic drinks? Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom, with Ireland a whisker behind. The Norwegians, Finns and Danes barely touch the stuff. Who are active members of the organisations they belong to? In sporting, educational, charitable, professional, union and environmental organisations, it is

Australians. Americans are more active in their churches and in their political parties. Australians are more likely to have signed a petition than anyone else, but the Canadians are not far behind. Italians are more likely to have been on a demonstration. Italy loves the mobile phone; Denmark has embraced the Internet; Scandinavians watch the least television. In no country do men do half the housework. Japanese men do the least. Americans are the most likely to believe in the Devil. The Norwegians have most trust in social institutions.

A great many of the matters surveyed in the book will be of interest to political scientists. There is information on parliaments, federalism, electoral systems, privatisation, military spending, inequality of income, the media, women in public life, political activity and corruption. Readers will be pleased to know that 'Australian exporters topped the list, as being the least likely to pay bribes'. This is shown by the Transparency International Bribe Payers' Index for 2002. And this raises the only disappointment with the book. None of the data is any more recent than 2002. In several cases, the information comes from the 1990s. This is inevitable, but it means that by now some of the tables are more than a little out of date.

The book has a crisply written introduction that sets out the aims of the enterprise and briefly admonishes those who are guilty of a 'myopic preoccupations with the present' and those who produce edited books 'calling themselves comparative' that are really 'juxtapositions, as different authors tackle different countries in different ways, and the genuinely comparative element is minimal'. Tiffen and Gittins have produced a genuinely comparative compendium that can be read for profit and pleasure. Those pleasures extend to the physical aspects of the book. It is pleasing to the eye and the hand. It is beautifully printed, the layout is clean and clear, the paper is of a good quality and the binding is secure. It is a pleasure to hold this book in your hands. Everyone connected with its production should feel proud.

DAVID ADAMS
Australian National University

Comparative and International Politics

Barry Buzan, *The United States and the Great Powers: World Politics in the Twenty-first Century* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 222 pp., $28.95, ISBN 0745633757

Barry Buzan's *The United States and the Great Powers: World Politics in the Twenty-first Century* is divided into three parts, with each part taking in two to four substantive chapters. The first part sets out the concepts of identity and polarity that Buzan uses to understand the shaping of world politics as we know it. Three of the four chapters in part one address the concept of polarity, including the concept of 'great power'. Only the final chapter of part one explores identity. Buzan justifies this on the grounds that his approach to identity is largely non-controversial and straightforward, whereas he argues for some significant changes to the concept of polarity. He considers Hansen's 'single stratification' of states into great powers and others as flawed. Such detailed attention is necessary given the content of later chapters, particularly in what is a relatively short book trying to tackle highly contested ideas.

Part two takes in three chapters focusing on the cross-dynamics of material and social structure in the contemporary world. These chapters take on a mix of expected and hypothetical analysis. The first chapter explores what Buzan terms the most likely scenario for global politics: that of one superpower standing alongside several great powers. Of course it is the United States under this conceptualisation that remains the sole superpower, while 'great powers' may come and go, never rising to challenge US domination. The argument is that the United States significantly conforms to a neorealist script, while the great powers do so only in a limited setting. The second chapter challenges orthodox (perhaps?) thinking, suggesting an increase in the number of superpowers rather than some form of relative decline. Buzan argues that it is possible that both China and the European Union could rise to challenge the United States; although it is unlikely that either will be positioned to do so in the coming decades, certainly not both. The last chapter of part two examines something Buzan in his introduction describes as 'so far [being] largely hidden by the rigidities of neorealist definitions of polarity, but which comes into clear view when the distinction between superpowers and great powers is introduced'. In light of the problems attached to the Iraq war in recent times, this chapter has only grown in its worth in recent years.

The final part of the book, made up of two concluding chapters, explores some normative ideas centring on US foreign policy and how it can be changed (and whether it should). The first chapter looks at approaches to US foreign policy, especially in the post-11 September environment. Buzan highlights the all-important interplay of domestic politics on the foreign policy environment. The final chapter of the book is aptly titled 'Where to from Here?' It takes in the responsibilities of the great powers in relation to the United States and the structure of the international society.

Buzan adopts a Wendtian scheme of enemies, rivals and friends when looking at the structure of interstate society put forward by the major powers. He successfully links this approach to liberal, neorealist and English School models in a readable yet scholarly way.

PETER VAN ONSELEN
Edith Cowan University

Richard Davis, *Politics Online: Blogs, Chatrooms, and Discussion Groups in American Democracy* (New York: Routledge, 2005), 184 pp., £70.00, ISBN 0415951925

This book provides a comprehensive insight into a topic of growing scholarly and popular interest—online political discussion groups. Taking an in-depth look at a series of groups of varying ideological outlooks in the United States, the author provides a detailed picture of the participants and topics discussed in the online political chat world circa the late 1990s. As well as providing an 'up-close' and sometimes personal look at the world of online chat, the book attempts to address bigger picture questions about what this new type of political engagement means for the system as a whole. Does it signal the rise of a brave new wired world of citizen politics? Or does it augur the rise of a new and even more elitist chattering class? Overall, the book opts for the latter more pessimistic outlook. Davis finds the online discussion world to be populated by an already vocal conservative male minority, a development that he thinks will do little to strengthen US democracy and may even weaken it. Although I find myself taking issue with his rather gloomy reading of his results (see below), Davis is certainly to be commended for shedding light on an oft talked about, but largely under-researched, area of Internet politics. The book offers a clear demarcation and definition of the applications used in online discussion. The narrative proceeds skilfully, weaving real-world examples of life in the online chat world with 'eye-popping' media stories and the relevant academic literature to provide an authoritative overview of the topic.

These merits notwithstanding, the text presents a series of interpretative challenges to its readers, the most obvious of these being that of establishing its contemporary relevance. Although meticulously and extensively researched—the analysis covers the postings of four discussion groups across an entire week as well the results of a Pew Center survey—the data are all drawn from the period 1997–99. The time lag to publication in 2005 means that one is left wondering how far the author's conclusions about the deeply unreliable nature of chatroom discussion as a guide to public opinion would hold today. Given the growth in Internet use in general since the 1990s and the rising consumption of political news in the United States in particular (as shown by Pew Center polls), it would seem probable that the online discussant pool would have widened since the data were gathered. As such, online discussion may prove to be a more reliable indicator of citizen opinion currently than Davis' book would suggest.

Leaving issues of timeliness to one side, the book contains a wealth of useful information regarding online chatters that will be of interest to both a generalist and specialist audience. Indeed, a second 'complaint' that one can raise about the text is that the author does not pursue far enough some of the most interesting aspects of his findings. In chapter 2, for example, Davis makes the important point that online political discussion is largely a minority sport and that most chatrooms focus on other topics. Just how much 'room' politics takes up, however, is not made clear. Having made the point, it would be interesting to understand more of the context surrounding online discussion. While we can certainly take a guess at what other topics might prove more popular than politics, it would be interesting to see the evidence on this. Survey results showing the numbers discussing politics online versus other topics could have been referenced here, for example, or the proportion of 'politics'-related discussion lists run through *Yahoo*. The risk in doing so, of course, would be that

readers' attention is drawn to the very limited space taken up by online political discussion—and thus the overall relevance of the research. However, the disproportionate influence attributed to other minority media such as talk-back radio would have formed a useful point for discussion here and indeed might have formed an interesting basis for contrast and comparison with online chat.

Another potentially rich seam of analysis that goes under-explored in the text is the intriguing set of findings regarding the profile of the participants in online discussion. As the bivariate tables reported in chapter 3 show, while online discussants are more likely to be male, they also tend to be less educated, of lower income and go online more frequently than other Internet users. In addition, an interesting curve in age range is identified, with both the older and younger ends of the spectrum being more active in online discussion than those in the middle years. Online discussants also appear to be more politically neutral; they have high levels of social trust, but low levels of trust in government. The possibilities for mobilisation or even re-mobilisation of non-traditional participants via online discussion that these results signal are not explored, however. Instead, Davis moves swiftly on to separate the activist 'posters' from the more passive 'lurkers', pointing out how the former better approximate the already engaged citizen model and thereby support the conclusion that online discussion offers little by way of democratisation and participatory expansion. In rushing to such a conclusion, however, the book misses an important opportunity to explore how the Internet might be reaching a pool of unusual as well as usual suspects.

Finally, despite the prominence given to blogs in the title, this very new and exciting development in online politics is touched on only briefly. In addition, the very effective use of online fora by Howard Dean also receives only very limited attention. A strong element of Dean's success appeared to revolve around his ability to link online and offline discussion groups using the *Meetup* Website. More attention to how he managed to achieve this connection would have provided some very interesting and useful theoretical food for thought.

These admonishments are, of course, made from the understanding that an author has only so many angles and arguments that he or she can coherently explore in one book. Overall, Davis' book constitutes a key text for those seeking to benchmark and explore the role of Internet chat and online discussion in the twenty-first century.

RACHEL GIBSON
University of Leicester

Walter Laqueur, *Voices of Terror: Manifestos, Writings, and Manuals of Al Qaeda, Hamas, and Other Terrorists from Around the World and Throughout the Ages* (New York: Reed Press, 2004), 400 pp., US$19.95, ISBN 1594290350

What is terrorism? One might think that a 520-page collection of writings on the subject would have to start with some kind of definition, or that the choice of writings would clearly reflect a common meaning. In this case, sadly, neither of these applies. Laqueur's cursory discussion of this question in the three-page preface does nothing to provide any insight into the principles that guided his choice of extracts. Explaining that terrorism is 'a strategy used by the extreme right and the far left', that it is 'not a static phenomenon', and that 'recent groups have given a bad name to terrorism' does nothing to add to our understanding of the concept, and this lack of definition goes on to render the entire volume confounding in the extreme. The fact that Laqueur then introduces the three parts of this book in the incorrect order gives a good indication of the chaotic assembly of writings on tyrannicide, revolution, guerrilla warfare, and Islamic terrorism that are to follow.

In reading this work, one question keeps returning: what, if anything, is it that all of these pieces have in common? Throughout part one, which is basically a rehash of Laqueur's 1977 (or possibly 1987: Laqueur's recollection is contrary to the information on the copyright page) *Terrorism* reader, it seemed that terrorism was perhaps being defined as violence carried out by non-state actors and directed against the state. Yet this definition unravelled in part two—a reprint of Laqueur's *Guerrilla Reader*, also published in 1977—when the 'small war' doctrines of numerous European military leaders are introduced to the mix. Part three, which returns us to the twentieth century and particularly to

Islamic doctrines of political violence, is perhaps the most useful part of this book, but there is little here that could not be found through cursory Internet searches. Indeed, this section appears to have been largely compiled by this means, and the book finishes with a bizarre and incomprehensible cut-and-paste from a 'terrorist web site' under the heading 'Terrorism 2004: Towards Weapons of Mass Destruction'. Never mind that the extract was posted in 2003 by someone who is clearly mentally ill and says nothing—at least nothing comprehensible—about weapons of mass destruction.

The lack of an organising concept of terrorism underpinning this book is further reflected in the fact that the title is extraordinarily misleading. While there are indeed a number of excerpts from groups and individuals that advocate terrorism contained within this volume, there are also many passages that have been written by philosophers, historians, and journalists that are by no means classifiable as 'voices of terror' and certainly do not fit under the terms suggested by the subtitle. To imply that figures such as Aristotle, Marx, Engels, or the International Crisis Group (to name but a few) are 'voices of terror' is laughable. The misnomer is made even more ludicrous given the fact that some excerpts, such as that of Emil Julius Gumbel, are *against* the use of violence for political ends. With all these inconsistencies in mind, one can only assume that the title was chosen not to represent the content but to cash in on current public interest in the subject.

Aside from the lack of any clear academic direction behind this work, there are also a number of technical problems. As already noted, the preface introduces the parts in the incorrect order, and Laqueur's introductions to each section are poorly written, with numerous grammatical errors. Furthermore, many of the selected extracts lack attribution or even the most basic bibliographic detail. A number of Internet sources, for example, list only a home page as a source, setting a standard that would not even be accepted at undergraduate level.

Overall, *Voices of Terror* is poorly organised, and comes across as an extremely lazy and almost incomprehensible collection of readings that offers little to the study of contemporary terrorism. To return to the preface, I was intrigued by Laqueur's comment that the study of the history of terrorism 'is not an academic exercise'. In this case, he is spot on: there simply is no good reason for putting all of these extracts together in a single volume, and it leaves the reader more confused than ever as to what terrorism actually is.

JEREMY MOSES
University of Canterbury

Peter Larmour, *Foreign Flowers: Institutional Transfer and Good Governance in the Pacific Islands* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005), 220 pp., $22.00, ISBN 0824829336

Foreign Flowers is a fascinating analysis of the role of institutional transfer in the island states of the south and west Pacific. Larmour's focus is on identifying and assessing the procedures by which transfer took place and the results of that transfer based on five case studies: customary land registration, constitutions, representative democracy, public-sector reform, and anti-corruption. Its conclusion is that, for the most part, the attempted transfers have failed or, at best, have been partially successful. Its fascination comes from a growing realisation of the importance—if not the success—of external influences on small states in the region, notably aid donors such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Kingdom, the United States, New Zealand and associated networks of consultants and advisers.

The book is notable for its attempt to understand the role and importance of international policy and institutional transfer in a region to which the concept of transfer has not been applied in any systematic fashion. In this, it extends the previous work of North American scholars who have demonstrated at considerable length the significant role of policy transfer and diffusion in explaining policy development within sub-national jurisdictions and the more recent but growing body of work from European political scientists with their focus on cross-national transfer, especially in the European Union. In doing so, it highlights the lack of work in Australia and New Zealand as to the role of policy transfer in explaining their systems of public policy and their historical development.

A part of the book's interest emerges from the author's personal experiences and involvement with several of the transfer cases examined, particularly regarding customary land registration and the vitality that this brings to his descriptions. However, he does not allow this to prejudice his views but, rather, to highlight incidents and their impact in a way that only a participant in those incidents can provide.

The notion of 'waves' of transfer from the pre-colonial, early days of Western discovery of the islands, followed by the colonial, post-colonial, new public management and anti-corruption 'waves', is a useful one that runs through several chapters, reminding the reader of the importance of historical and comparative perspective in understanding political systems. Its further characterisation of specific examples of transfer as 'foreign flowers', floating upon those waves as lilies upon a pond, with roots barely touching the soil, works well in highlighting a common reason for the failure of transfer, the lack of local ownership, commitment and, on occasion, knowledge of the transfers in question.

In its discussion of the importance of a range of factors that determine transfer and its success, the influence of foreign consultants is stressed at some length and in several chapters (for example, pp. 181–3). While consultants clearly were of importance, it might be that this is a characteristic more pronounced in small island states lacking, relatively speaking, the range of specialised human resources necessary for indigenous policy development in the increasingly wide range of policy areas with which contemporary governments have to deal. It might also be that the author's familiarity with several of the consultants described has, in this case, led to an overestimate of their importance, in contrast to local decision makers.

While a fascinating text, *Foreign Flowers* is also frustrating for what it does not contain, in two respects. First, its necessarily broad-brush description and analysis of transfer processes and results, often having to neglect the more detailed presentation of argument and, in particular, evidence that would have made its analysis more satisfying. This is not surprising in a work that encompasses several widely different countries, institutions, policies and processes, though it did leave this reader wishing for a work of twice its length with space for elaboration. Second, its relative lack of assessment and application of the now substantial, earlier conceptual and theoretical work on policy transfer. Only the work of Dolowitz and Marsh receives any significant attention, using central research questions derived from the work of the authors to guide the structure of the case study chapters in *Foreign Flowers*. A greater use of that conceptual and theoretical literature would have assisted in the achievement of a greater depth of analysis.

In summary, an enjoyable, well-written book on a neglected topic.

PETER CARROLL
University of Tasmania

Surendra Munshi and Biju Paul Abraham (eds), *Good Governance, Democratic Societies and Globalisation* (New Delhi: Sage, 2004), 424 pp., US$69.95, ISBN 8178293153

Deriving from a conference held at the Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta, in April 2002, *Good Governance, Democratic Societies and Globalisation* provides a multi-disciplinary overview of governance, democracy and globalisation. Balancing the need for broad-ranging theoretical discussions with in-depth country analysis, the collection brings together economists, sociologists, political scientists and management theorists with public servants and non-government organisation leaders from the United States, Europe and India. Despite its generalised title, the collection primarily compares Europe and India—a framing significant enough, for this reader, to warrant some mention in the title.

The collection is divided into three sections. The first details the societal context of governance, drawing into the debate concern for good governance (Munshi) in comparative perspective; the social, cultural and linguistics affairs in the European Union (De Swaan); reflections on the European debate about governance and democracy (Liberatore); national differences and the rethinking of social democracy (Martell); market-friendly globalisation and the changing space of state intervention in India (Sinha); and India as predator state (Jha). The second section shifts focus to administrative reforms, beginning with a comparison of reform in India and Europe (Abraham) and moving, via discussions of policy change in public-sector reforms (Wollamann) and administrative reform in Germany (Roeber) to discussions of administrative reform in India (Mathur, and Agnihotri and Dar) and ending

on Rajan's entertainingly named 'NGOs as Partners in the Process of "Reform": Are they the Yogis or the Bhogis of Development?' The third and final section refocuses discussion on the effects of these macro debates in the context of corporate governance: Reed discusses good corporate governance in the global economy; Seth provides an integrative model of corporate governance and discusses its implications for India. Most satisfyingly, Paola De Vincentiis draws together the themes of the second and third sections to discuss the role of government in the financial services industry in the European Union. The last section addresses, in order: the changing legal frameworks, free-market ideology and corporate reorganisation in German enterprises (Schmidt); and the emergence and viability of participatory firms (Abell and Reyniers). The collection ends, somewhat abruptly, with Bhattacharyya's discussion of corporate governance in India. As the collection's editors remind the reader in the front matter, the three core themes are important because: 'administrative reforms provide a mechanism for good governance at the macro level which is in turn related to good governance at the corporate level'.

The chapters alternate between analyses of the governance arrangements in Europe and India and a critique, albeit often muted, of the indifference of the existing global economic regime and the interests of multilateral agencies and bilateral donors to local distinctiveness. This latter strand is most prominent in the contributions of the sociologists, who mount a cogent defence of local difference—the *heterogeneity thesis*. For many disciplines, notably anthropology, these insights are not groundbreaking, but they are refreshing and undervalued in governance debates. Often, globalisation is represented as an unquestionable good, ending economic stagnation, while ignoring culture and local conditions or considering them part of the problem. As Munshi points out, World Bank prescriptions have oftentimes been identical, irrespective of levels of economic and social development or type of governmental system (p. 17). Recognising differences in local culture and practice helps to explain the successes and failures of the various reform agendas documented here. As De Swaan articulates: 'What is passionately debated in one country is not even an issue in the neighbouring' one (p. 55).

A conspicuous, yet secondary theme in the collection—particularly in the contributions of the collection's editors—is the need to recognise the power configurations behind reform agendas, particularly those favoured by the United States, but also those driven by the multilateral organisations. The invisible hand of US foreign policy represents an important sub-text throughout the collection, particularly the first section on the societal context of governance.

Given the at-times highly technical nature of these discussions, many of the contributions would have benefited from more focused arguments. Several contributions seem to oscillate around key themes in the social sciences—agency, structure, culture, power, institutions—without ever finally nailing the point. In its favour, this dense collection pauses regularly to remind the reader where it is headed (pp. 9, 151, 273), although this reader would have preferred a conclusion to draw the themes together and advocate future directions. Nonetheless, the collection remains a valuable and detailed contribution to international debates about governance.

MICHAEL MORGAN
Centre for Democratic Institutions

Pippa Norris and Christopher Wlezien (eds), *Britain Votes 2005* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 241 pp., £16.99, ISBN 0198569408

This book, the third in the British election series published by Oxford University Press, uses the skills of an impressive team to explore the dashed hopes experienced by all of Britain's major parties in the 2005 general election. Chapters by a host of Britain's most eminent electoral analysts discuss the campaign and election results, carefully framing election dynamics with larger analytic approaches and studies—including leader effects, constituency-level competition and issue-voting. The result is a persuasive account of how Labour, the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats all missed opportunities to achieve their strategic goals in an election that reflected the increasing electoral uncertainties of weakening partisan loyalties and rising multi-party competition. All told, Norris and Wlezien succeed in showing us not only the lessons of this election but also how these lessons fit into the larger fabric of electoral analysis. As a consequence, their book is valuable beyond its review of the 2005 outcome—fascinating as it was.

Buoyed by Britain's strong economic performance and a number of policy successes across its second term, Labour under Tony Blair had every reason to anticipate what promised to be an 'historic victory'—an unprecedented third successive term of government and a broad mandate to 'stay the course'. But, wounded by Blair's declining popularity in the fallout from Britain's support of the United States in the Iraq war, Labour instead experienced a pervasive backlash, suffering its lowest share of the vote in modern times, and a dramatic reduction in its parliamentary majority. Reversing his previous dominance, Blair had become a significant liability—negative evaluations costing Labour nearly 4% of votes the party would have won had he been perceived more positively by voters. In the end, leader evaluations played a more important role in vote choice than social class or issues—voters' assessments of Blair costing Labour more votes and seats than any other factor.

Given Blair's eroding support, and with it his aura of invincibility, Michael Howard's Conservatives sensed an opportunity for electoral upheaval, and built a largely negative campaign, using the 'bandwagon populism' issues of asylum seekers and immigration to fuel their attack on Labour's stewardship. But, with Howard never capturing voters' imagination as an alternative leader, and the Conservatives' attacks on the government's support for Iraq undermined by their own early support for the war, the Tories' campaign succeeded only in reinforcing their own electoral base, not making serious inroads into Labour's. At the same time, the Liberal Democrats, under Charles Kennedy, who consistently led polls in leader popularity, felt they might have the chance to make an historic 'breakthrough' in partisan support. However, despite his elevated position in the polls, Kennedy's evaluations by voters did not appreciably draw support from across the ranks of Labour—Blair's much more sharply polarised assessments reflecting not only strong disapproval but also resilient support by loyalists. Instead, the Liberal Democrats' vote gains seemed to derive from the fact that they, unlike the Conservatives, had consistently opposed the Iraq war. Though making significant inroads amongst disaffected Labour voters on this issue, these vote gains were undermined by Britain's first-past-the-post electoral system—the Liberal Democrats winning 62 seats when proportional representation might have secured them 140 or more.

All told, then, while Norris and Wlezien argue that each of the main parties had reason to celebrate—Labour for winning a third term; the Conservatives for paring back the Labour majority; and the Liberal Democrats for securing 22% of the popular vote—none realised their hopes in the 2005 election. In the end, they contend, despite an appreciable backlash, Labour won its third term primarily because the substantial numbers of those dissatisfied with the government were not drawn to a single contender.

Of special interest to students of Australian elections is Anthony Seldon and Peter Snowdon's chapter on 'The Conservative Campaign', which explores the impact of Australian Liberal Party campaign strategist Lynton Crosby on the Conservatives' electoral fortunes. Arguing that a positive campaign wouldn't sufficiently dent Labour's majority, Crosby orchestrated Michael Howard's declaration of a 'Battle for Britain', premised, especially, on a call for 'controlled immigration'. However, polls showed that the salience of the immigration issue declined across the campaign, while evaluations of Howard as a leader went into freefall. At the same time, with voters perceiving the Conservatives as tainted by their own support of the Iraq war at its outset, Howard's attacks on Blair's trustworthiness failed to convince voters the Conservatives represented a compelling alternative to an unpopular government. All told, Seldon and Snowdon argue, Lynton Crosby and his negative strategy were responsible for what they contend was the utter failure of the Conservatives' campaign to provide voters with a positive, unified party, coherent leadership, and the support base necessary for victory in the next election.

DAVID DENEMARK
University of Western Australia

Haig Patapan, John Wanna and Patrick Weller (eds), *Westminster Legacies: Democracy and Responsible Government in Asia and the Pacific* (Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2005), 288 pp., $49.95, ISBN 086840848

This volume comprises a collection of essays on how Westminster-style political systems have fared in Asia and the Pacific, including Australasia. It consists of 11 case studies with introductory and

concluding analytical essays. The case studies discuss Australia, New Zealand, Nepal, India, Pakistan, Malaysia, Singapore, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and 10 other Pacific island nations. In their introductory essay, Rhodes and Weller distinguish the first two from the others as instances in which a Westminster-style system was voluntarily 'transplanted'. In a third case, the early advocates of democracy in Nepal envisioned a Westminster-style system because 'it was the only model they knew'. In all the other cases, the Westminster model was 'implanted', not transplanted, as part of a constitutional settlement when each nation became independent.

Rhodes and Weller also identify several questions that the case studies should illuminate, especially how and why original Westminster designs have changed during the decades since independence, whether these changes have reflected traditional cultures and patterns of governance, and what these experiences imply for more recent and future attempts to transplant the Westminster model.

To their credit, Rhodes and Weller identify five core elements of this model, including a collective and responsible Cabinet that is accountable to parliament, a recognised Opposition and a non-partisan bureaucracy, and parliamentary sovereignty (though imperfectly defined). Correspondingly, they exclude from this core various characteristics of the British system, including a unitary state, 'flexible constitutional conventions', bicameralism, separate heads of state and heads of government, and single-member constituencies with their tendency to produce a small number of parliamentary parties and majority party governments. Their interest, therefore, is not in mimicry of the full complement of British institutions as in comportment with key principles and relationships underlying those institutions.

Not surprisingly, Australia and New Zealand emerge as the two nations that have succeeded in preserving the spirit as well as the essential forms of the Westminster model, notwithstanding their preference for something other than single-member-constituency elections, and their differences with Britain regarding bicameralism. More generally, Rhodes and Weller speak of the resilience and survivability of Westminster-like systems. However, the eight other case studies also can be read as histories of pathologies and even failures, including communal violence in Fiji, the dissolution of parliament in Nepal, an authoritarian interlude in India, military intervention in Pakistan, chronic governmental instability in Papua New Guinea, executive authoritarianism in Singapore, and uninterrupted one-party rule in Malaysia.

Notwithstanding these periodic or systemic failures, perhaps the most striking and valuable 'Westminster legacy' is the persistent legitimacy of the model itself. The form has often been retained, even though it may be largely devoid of content. For example, Westminster parliamentary democracy 'provides a suitably vague and fluid template and ideal, while also serving to accord legitimacy to the Malaysian government and leaders'. Even in Musharraf's Pakistan, 'there is still an underlying consensus among Pakistan's political elite that the Westminster model of parliamentary democracy, adapted to local conditions, best serves the country's governmental needs'. The survival of Westminster forms suggests that their widespread and continuing legitimacy may have had a salutary restraining effect on the authoritarian inclinations of individual rulers in the region.

If the book has a flaw it lies in its inability to explore fully the rich agenda of ideas and questions that are laid out in the introduction and the equally rich case studies that follow. The concluding essay by Patapan and Wanna is interesting in its own right, but it does not—and indeed, could not—do justice to the agenda that Rhodes and Weller offer readers at the beginning.

Although *Westminster Legacies* is satisfying, descriptively and analytically, it also illuminates how much we do not yet understand. The experiences of the nations it examines could easily justify a second volume that mines the case studies for more thorough and systematic comparisons. Beyond that, the British influence was not limited to this region, of course. The analysis begun here could be extended profitably to the experiences of former British colonies in sub-Saharan Africa. There, it might be argued, the Westminster model may have inspired and legitimated a pattern of parliaments that have been reactive and subordinate, and neither inclined nor able to assert themselves against the dominating leaders who emerged from national independence movements.

The other obvious question to pursue is the record of non-Westminster models when implanted or transplanted in new settings. The mixed and often sad record of presidentialism in Latin America is well known. Of special contemporary interest is the current appeal of hybrid systems, especially the

French, in many recent constitutions that combine presidents and prime ministers in varying balances (or imbalances) of power.

No matter how informative *Westminster Legacies* may be, its own most valuable legacy may be the stimulus it provides for more of the comparative analysis that it has begun.

STANLEY BACH
Washington, DC

David C. Schak and Wayne Hudson (eds), *Civil Society in Asia* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2003), 242 pp., £52.50, ISBN 0745622754 (hbk)

This book is a welcome addition to the literature on civil society in Asia, canvassing the nature and role of civil society in Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, China, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan. The agenda for future research that concludes the volume refers to the assembled essays, and indeed the book is better described as a mosaic of individual chapters than a comparative or tightly connected volume. Significantly, only case studies from Southeast and East Asia appear in the volume. Studies from elsewhere, particularly South Asia, would have been a welcome addition.

Wayne Hudson's chapter 'Problematizing European Theories of Civil Society' reminds us of the diverse conceptualisations of civil society in the European context. Hudson provides an insightful overview of the various—and often conflicting—ways in which civil society is understood in European thought. Hudson argues that:

> deficiencies of current usages of the term civil society suggest that scholars of Asian affairs need to proceed with great caution before attributing one or more of the various European theories of civil society to political, economic and social conditions in a particular Asian country. (p. 15)

Scholars of civil society in Asia would be wise to heed this cautionary note.

One may well add the need for caution in seeking to develop theories of civil society in Asia, a geographic construction encompassing enormous diversity—social, religious, cultural, historical, economic and political. While Hudson effectively problematises European theories of civil society, nowhere does the book adequately problematise the concept of Asia or draw out the remarkable diversity of the region as a whole. Nor is there consideration of the similarities between particular regions or individual countries.

The chapters of the book focus on Southeast and East Asia, with a tendency to search for the unique characteristics of civil society in each country. Juree Vichit-Vadakan's chapter on Thailand exemplifies this search for uniqueness. Vichit-Vadakan concludes that leaders of Thai civil society organisations see their caring, compassionate, qualitative approach as demarcating them from Western civil society organisations. These qualities, together with a substantial investment of time and energy on the part of their leaders, make Thai civil society organisations unique. According to Vichit-Vadakan, this leads to a rejection of 'western-style' organisations (p. 101). While the importance of local characteristics and peculiarities is unarguable, in emphasising the 'Thai-ness of Thai NGOs', this chapter glosses over revealing differences among Thai civil society. Moreover, the argument of Thai uniqueness tends to impose a false homogeneity upon Western (and other) civil society organisations, assuming a universally accepted profit-motivated approach. Such an interpretation of Western civil society is not supported by the evidence and leads to polarised categorisations rather than more nuanced conceptualisations of civil society. An exploration of common themes and similarities throughout the chapters, alongside a recognition of uniqueness, may have provided greater insights into civil society in Asia and beyond.

One theme that does emerge in several chapters is the relationship between civil society on the one hand and either democracy or authoritarianism on the other. In examining civil society in Singapore, Chua Beng-Huat uses three cases to examine concepts that are linked intrinsically to civil society: freedom of expression, equality before the law and the right to organise and assemble. Beng-Huat concludes that while the limitations on civil society are being challenged, particularly by the younger

generation, the Singaporean state remains determined to define its citizens' social reality. Azyumardi Azra tracks the changes in civil society activity that haves occurred since Indonesia's transition to democracy in 1999. Azra argues that the end of authoritarianism 'recast the environment in which civil society existed', not least because of greater press freedom (p. 77). Azra suggests that civil society does not yet inhere in Indonesia's still-new democracy. Interestingly, Azra does not consider the civil society organisations that did manage to carve out a space in authoritarian pre-1998 Indonesia. There are, however, important questions around the ways in which these organisations have continued or transformed themselves in a context of dramatic political change, and what this tells us about the relationship between civil society and the state.

In his chapter on the Philippines, a country often lauded for its thriving civil society, Isagani Serrano takes a less sanguine view of political democracy and an active civil society. Serrano asks whether the existence of civil society necessarily results in a better society, particularly in a context of widespread poverty. Serrano concludes that civil society in the Philippines is yet to capitalise on the greater political freedom existing in that country in order to overcome poverty, advance social cohesion or protect the environment.

The exploration of the relationship between civil society and political freedoms is interesting and worthwhile. Yet a degree of comparative analysis or a greater connection between the individual chapters could have strengthened the book's contribution to understanding of civil society in Asia (or in various Asian contexts).

Readers looking for a conceptual framework (or frameworks) to advance our understanding of civil society in Asia may find that this volume does not quite meet their expectations. Nevertheless, *Civil Society in Asia* is useful and stimulating reading for those interested in various aspects of civil society in several individual countries in Southeast and East Asia.

SHARON BESSELL
Australian National University

Becky Shelley, *Democratic Development in East Asia* (Houndmills: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005), i + 205 pp., £60.00, ISBN 0415342503

The number of democratic East Asian regimes has snowballed over the past 20 years. While at the end of the Cold War Japan was the only East Asian democracy of any real duration, the years since then have ushered in a new era of liberalisation and democratisation across the region. Major transitions from authoritarian rule towards democracy began with the popular uprising against the Marcos regime in the Philippines in 1986 and the negotiated transitions from military-controlled governments in Korea and Taiwan in 1987, before moving on to the resumption of civilian rule in Thailand in 1992, the United Nations intervention in Cambodia in 1993, the fall of Indonesia's Suharto regime in 1998, and the international rehabilitation of East Timor that culminated in 2001. As a result of these transitions, more East Asian governments are today chosen through competitive and freely contested elections than ever before.

Despite this, academic studies of East Asian democratisation remain surprisingly sparse. *Democratic Development in East Asia* aims to fill part of this gap by examining the international dimensions of democratisation in the region. But, despite its title, rather than examining East Asia as a whole, the book is in fact an examination of how various international forces have influenced just two East Asian democracies, namely South Korea and Taiwan, as well as a third (and assuredly non-democratic) country, China. As a consequence, what the reader may presume is a comparative study of democratisation in the region is in reality more a series of case studies of a much more circumscribed issue: the impact in these Northeast Asian countries of what Laurence Whitehead has called 'the international dimensions of democratisation'.

The book divides this topic thematically, examining the role of international organisations such as the United Nations, major state actors such as the United States, the international news media and US non-government organisations. This enables the impact of each of these influences on political openings in the three countries to be discussed in some detail. Thus, we learn how the Korean War led to the

installation of military regimes in both North and South Korea; how the United Nation's de-recognition of Taiwan in 1971 spurred the process of domestic reform and stimulated political openings that eventually led to full-scale democratisation; and how the international news coverage of incidents such as South Korea's Kwangju protest in 1980 compared to Tiananmen Square nine years later, both of which were brutally repressed with the deaths of hundreds of students and other young people, differed vastly due to the changing power of the broadcast media.

While all of this is done competently, ultimately the book is overwhelmed by the limitations of its own inadequate research design. By limiting the study to East Asia's two most internationalised cases of democratisation—Taiwan and South Korea—as well as the world's largest country, China, the study essentially selects its cases on the dependent variable. The conclusion that 'regime change in South Korea, Taiwan and China has been dialectically related to the international dimension of democratization' is therefore hardly surprising, given the sustained international focus on these three countries over the entire post-war period. A broader study that incorporated other examples of East Asian democratisation, such as Thailand or Indonesia, may well have been able to shed more light on precisely how international factors matter in comparison to domestic ones.

The book relies on a large number of secondary sources to marshal its key arguments. As a result, few scholars would be surprised to hear that in relation to political change in Korea, Taiwan and China, 'interactions between the international and domestic dimensions are complex and multi-directional'. But in arguing (accurately, no doubt) that everything is interconnected in the complex world of democratisation, the kind of substantive analytic traction necessary for generating genuinely new scholarly insights is lost. What remains is a well-researched, episodic account of the trials and tribulations of democratic openings and closings in three Northeast Asian states. While a useful beginning, the definitive account of democratisation in East Asia clearly remains to be written.

BENJAMIN REILLY
Australian National University

Political Theory and Methodology

Judith Bessant, Rob Watts, Tony Dalton and Paul Smyth, *Talking Policy: How Social Policy is Made* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2006), xvii + 414 pp., $45.00, ISBN 174114518

Dissatisfied with the highly theoretical and abstract way in which many academics talk and write about social policy, Bessant, Watts, Dalton and Smyth offer an alternative view, one that emphasises the political, and hence contested, nature of social policy making. In writing an account of how people think about social policy, the authors also hope to rebuild political support for progressive politics and a humane policy framework so that Australia can move towards a more just and reflective society. *Talking Policy* therefore challenges readers (whether students, social policy makers or academics) to 'think outside the square'. For example, in discussing the relationship between poverty and ethics, the authors question the focus from both sides of the poverty debate on defining and measuring poverty, pointing instead to a different question—'what basic human capacities and actions do we want our state interventions to support?' (p. 181).

For Bessant, Watts, Dalton and Smyth, ideas are of critical importance in determining how social problems are constructed as well as government responses to those problems. The first part of *Talking Policy*, therefore, focuses on the ways in which people have thought about social policy and the nature of the welfare state (chapter 1). Chapter 2 compares the Australian welfare state with other welfare state regimes, while chapter 3 places current policy ideas in their historical context through an examination of how successive Australian governments 'assembled a distinctively Australian answer to the perennial question of justice; what do we owe to each other?' (p. 85). Chapter 4 provides an equally interesting and useful discussion of the ideas (negative and positive freedom, Keynesian and neo-classical economics, welfare dependency) that have shaped and continue to shape social policy debates in Australia. Chapters 5 and 6 complete the discussion of how people think about social policy by exploring the issue of inequality and how the concept has been understood, researched and explained (chapter 5), while chapter 6 examines the ethical assumptions underlying

current debates about poverty. The second part of the book, 'Making Social Policy', focuses on the ways in which institutions and organisations shape policy outcomes (chapter 7), the groups of people (the policy community) who make policy decisions (chapter 8) and the way in which language shapes policy problems and solutions (chapter 9), with each chapter consisting of an initial discussion followed by a case study.

Talking Policy has many obvious strengths as a text for introductory social policy courses. The authors explain influential theories and ideas in a way that is easily understood by the non-specialist reader, with the authors' critical approach encouraging students to question what is often presented as 'fact'. Concepts (such as negative freedom) introduced in earlier chapters are used to illuminate contemporary debates. There is a useful glossary of terms used in the book and each chapter begins with a bullet-point summary of the chapter's main points. The timeline of events from 1890 to 2004 in the Appendix is less useful. While no doubt significant to the authors, for this reader at least the collection of events appears to be an eclectic mix, with the relevance of some highlighted events not at all clear.

However, this is a minor quibble. In writing *Talking Policy*, Bessant, Watts, Dalton and Smyth have constructed a bridge between the complex, messy reality of policy making and the more orderly world of academic theories and analytical constructs. This bridge (that is, their exploration of the ideas that have shaped social policy debates and hence outcomes) helps those involved in social policy making and those interested in social policy to better understand current policy settings. But *Talking Policy* also challenges readers to contemplate other ways of thinking about and making social policy:

> The challenge for social policy-makers is to recognise that struggles to reduce material inequalities need to be better and more deeply connected to struggles to create respect. (p. 198)

If the book is used widely as a text (as it deserves to be) the authors may yet achieve their goal of moving Australia towards a more just and reflective society.

ANN NEVILE
Australian National University

Hartley Dean, *Social Policy* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), xiv + 154 pp., $32.50, ISBN 0745634354

Social Policy was written as a short introduction to the academic subject Social Policy (which the author distinguishes from actual government policies (social policies) by use of capital 'S' and capital 'P') and as such succeeds admirably. Reading the book felt like a walk through a course outline for an introductory undergraduate unit. The first four chapters set the scene, discussing what constitutes Social Policy (chapter 1) and the types of policies (health, education, housing, etc.) with which Social Policy is concerned (chapter 4). Chapter 2 offers a brief introduction to some of the ideas that have shaped the development of social policies, while chapter 3 introduces the concept of welfare regimes and answers the question of why Social Policy matters through a discussion of globalisation, ecology and human welfare. In the next set of three chapters the author introduces important concepts from economics (chapter 5), political science (chapter 6) and sociology (chapter 7), while chapter 8 discusses the different ways in which Social Policy attempts to solve social problems. The final two chapters bring the discussion of Social Policy up to date, focusing on current and emerging issues in the provision of human services.

Writing a brief introduction to a subject that the author describes as one 'with few, if any, boundaries . . . [One which is] outward looking, encompassing both the global and the local, the universal and the personal' (p. xiii) is no easy task, and one of the strengths of the book is Dean's ability to summarise complex ideas and debates in simple, easy-to-understand language. For example, in discussing Sen's concept of capability deprivation Dean notes that:

> Sen uses the term 'capabilities' to refer not simply to what people are able to do, but to their freedom to choose and lead the kinds of lives they value . . . [This] is important for Social Policy because it cuts through the debate about whether our human needs are absolute or culturally relative. (p. 9)

However, as the author himself notes, writing a brief introduction means that many concepts and issues have to be covered and none can be discussed in any great depth. This limits the usefulness of the book as a teaching resource. While undergraduates may appreciate the fact the chapters are presented in bite-sized chunks (10 pages) and conclude with a one page, bullet-point summary, postgraduate students—particularly those who are working, or have worked, in the public service—may find the author's assumption of ignorance on the part of the reader to basic facts such as the ways in which incomes are taxed (p. 62) or the general level of government spending on social programs (pp. 2–3) to be annoying.

Not surprisingly, being a British academic writing for a primarily British audience, the author draws on UK and EU examples, which makes the book less useful as a text for Australian undergraduate courses. In addition, the focus on the academic subject Social Policy rather than actual government policies and programs means that the book is unlikely to be used in policy-oriented schools or departments where the focus of interest is social policy, not Social Policy. Hartley Dean developed his passion for Social Policy as an academic discipline through active involvement in social programs in the Brixton area of inner south London. Perhaps if there was more discussion of actual government programs and how such programs impact on individuals and local communities, Dean might have been more successful in his aim of communicating and passing on his passion for Social Policy as a vital and relevant subject for tertiary study.

ANN NEVILE
Australian National University

Damian Grace and Stephen Cohen, *Business Ethics: Problems and Cases*, 3rd ed. (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 2005), 300 pp., A$55.00, NZ$65.00, ISBN 019551727X

While Australia has its fair share of corporate scandals, dubious business practices, shoddy auditing and regulatory reforms addressed to these problems, business ethics and corporate social responsibility get nothing like the attention and priority that they receive in most other developed economies, such as Europe, the United Kingdom and the United States. This relative lack of interest in business ethics is reflected in the paucity of Australian-based texts concerning business ethics, which gives heightened importance to the principal available business ethics text, by Damian Grace and Stephen Cohen, originally published in 1995, with a second edition in 1998. Fortunately, we are well served by this valuable book, which provides a very accessible survey of most of the principal areas of business ethics with sufficient philosophical material to provoke serious reflection. More Australian material could be included and the topics could be explored in greater depth (the book remains quite thin compared to many of its overseas counterparts), but it is, on the whole, well suited for use in the sort of elementary business ethics subjects that are taught at least in some Australian educational institutions.

While the format has been revamped in a user-friendly direction for the third edition, the topics and structure of the book remain basically the same. The first chapter is a substantial introduction to ethics in general and ethical reasoning in business in particular. This is quite heavy going for those coming to the subject for the first time but delightfully clear in the presentation of key concepts (such as consequentialism and deontology) and helpful in its focus on ethical reasoning as a process that involves a combination of argument from principles and reflection on particular cases.

The second chapter deals with 'dirty hands', concentrating on the analysis of the contested thesis that 'good ethics is good business', and the distinction between public and private morality. There follow chapters on the (now dominant) stakeholder theory, ethics in the marketplace, marketing and advertising ethics, equality of opportunity, discrimination and affirmative action, the ethics of accounting, the environment, whistle blowing, codes and ethics and institutional ethics, and international business ethics, followed by a brief conclusion and some appendices, including a useful one on ethical decision-making models. Topic summaries at the beginning and discussion questions at the end of each chapter have been introduced and the case material is now highlighted for ease of reference. About 25 pages of new material have been introduced, mainly to include recent events, such as the HIH scandal and the collapse of Arthur Andersen, and more emphasis on environmental issues. Footnotes and the bibliography have been extended and updated.

Clearly, there is plenty of room for reasonable disagreement about what should be included in such texts and how the material should be handled. Thus, a stronger ethical case could be made for confining the responsibilities of business to shareholder interests within a legal regime that does not enforce wider social duties on companies. This would help to bring into greater focus the distinctive market-related moral duties of companies within capitalist systems to respect the norms of a free market under conditions of open competition. Recognising the significance of these market-related duties does not in itself diminish the force of the wider ethical considerations that tend to feature as characteristic of business ethics. Perhaps also more attention could be paid to the moral choices that confront employees generally rather than the policy and organisational duties of senior management. On the other hand, others might want more emphasis on the regulatory regimes that best support ethical conduct.

However, the topics chosen are all important and interesting, and the authors are to be commended for the lucidity and accessibility of their presentation. The third edition of this excellent business ethics textbook is fuller and better presented, making it more user-friendly but retaining its distinctiveness as an argumentative and stimulating text that does not shirk from discussion of complex issues and does an excellent job of defending ethical commitments in business.

TOM CAMPBELL
Charles Sturt University

Anthony D. Lott, *Creating Insecurity: Realism, Constructivism, and US Security Policy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 178 pp., £47.50, ISBN 0754638081 (hbk)

With *Creating Insecurity*, Anthony D. Lott has made a useful contribution to the literature on constructivist security studies. Stemming primarily from a theoretical and methodological critique of rationalism in general, and political realism in particular, constructivist research increasingly focuses more on theory building and empirical application. Lott's book is a welcome addition to this development.

The overarching aim is clear and consistently followed throughout the book: to provide a critique of how US security policy tends to be not only ineffectual but also counter-productive. Lott argues that the US government does not fully understand its security environment, and through its rhetoric and actions aggravates dangers rather than alleviates them. The author tries to show this by, on the one hand, making use of both realist and constructivist arguments, and, on the other, by investigating four issues in US security policy: the debate on ballistic missile defence, the war on drugs in Latin America, the democratic peace policy, and the US decision to invade Iraq.

After having read the introduction I was not at all convinced that Lott would be successful in making use of both realist and constructivist accounts of security, and to show that they are complementary rather than contending. The author's argumentation becomes more convincing along the way, however, especially from chapter 4 onwards. The way Lott goes about combining realist and constructivist thoughts on politics is to treat them both as rhetorical tools for policy debate, rather than as theories of how the world hangs together. This delimitation—to consider the approaches merely as rhetorical devices—is innovative and also makes a good defence against the standard critique that realism and constructivism are incompatible on epistemological grounds. By stripping realism from its positivist epistemology, Lott shows how realist ideas on material interests and capabilities can go hand in hand with constructivist notions of how identity and culture shape threat conceptions.

More importantly, combining realist and constructivist ideas on policy implies a devastating critique of those orthodox monks who still dominate both the realist and the constructivist camps. Realists and constructivists tend to see little, if anything, useful in each other's approaches, the most orthodox monks constructing each other as 'the Other'. Orthodox realists insist that identity is unimportant and that threats 'out there' can be identified objectively; orthodox constructivists resist acknowledging any value in realist 'cautious paranoia' and pessimism on human progress, simply because most constructivists nurture liberal ideals of emancipation and enlightenment. For the orthodox monks the home is where the heart is, but not for a pragmatic theorist like Lott, who is willing and capable of using realism and constructivism simply as rhetorical tools.

The secondary aim is to help make constructivist security studies policy relevant. This is a commendable objective, but unfortunately something that the author falls short of achieving. Lott fails to address the abundant literature on bridging the gap between academic research and policy practice. Lott's emphasis on policy critique as a means of being policy relevant may therefore appear more original than it is. Indeed, policy critique is the core ethos of Critical Security Studies (CSS) which Lott, surprisingly, does not acknowledge explicitly, although Lott's own book is published in a CSS series and some CSS works are cited in the book.

It is also curious that the book does not explicitly address and apply (neo-)liberalism, particularly as many of the ideas and interpretations presented in the empirical chapters are more explicitly liberal than they are either realist or constructivist. This is most apparent in the chapter on the influential democratic peace theory, which must be considered one of the most successful liberal achievements in the theory as well as the practice of international relations.

These weaknesses, however, do not impair the overall value of *Creating Insecurity* as an important contribution to constructivist security studies, especially by showing a pragmatic and logically consistent way of going beyond the stalemated debate between orthodox realism and orthodox constructivism.

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Eric Louw, *The Media and Political Process* (London: Sage, 2005), 311 pp., $56.95, ISBN 0761940847

Louw's contribution to the study of the impact of 'the media' on politics, updated to take into account such important phenomena as Internet technology, the pervasiveness of public relations at the expense of traditional or 'fourth estate' journalism, and the emergence of 'spin doctors', ostensibly takes the form of a textbook intended for the undergraduate market. But in among the bullet points, the crucial questions for tutorial discussion, the summary at the end of each chapter, the glossary of media politics terms and all the other accoutrements of a textbook intended for teaching purposes there is, in fact, an important argument. Louw is suggesting that the media are indeed extremely influential in the political processes of liberal democratic states and that this influence is being exerted in new ways that reflect the evolution of modern media. Politics, Louw often asserts, is being 'public relations-ized'—a cumbersome but important concept that acknowledges the increasing impact of new technologies and new public relations skills being brought to the political debate and the way these are encouraging a more superficial, image-oriented response by aspiring political leaders and their parties. As the book seeks to demonstrate, this approach affects all aspects of media discussion of politics, ranging from election coverage through to the coverage of wars and terrorist activities.

Louw is also keen to attack the traditional notion that the media and politics grapple with each other under the general rubric of 'fourth estate' values and outlooks. Louw's approach is influenced more by various schools of critical theory that identify the coalescence of economic and political power around private media (which is really corporate media), and that a particular ideological transmission is occurring in which the values and outlooks of capitalist-based liberalism are constantly being reinforced—a situation that has particular resonance where the media and Western geo-strategic interests come together in the coverage of war and foreign policy in a destabilised world. Louw is not the first to see these connections as, indeed, his own review of the Vietnam War and the media's role in it reminds us. Louw's book is interesting because of its timeliness. Louw's book is one of the current output, for instance, that seeks to assess these themes against the backdrop of 11 September and the subsequent 'war on terror'. Louw also examines the media's performance in recent military engagements in Iraq where his 'PR-ization' hypothesis is applied and the idea of 'Nintendo warfare' is floated to describe the media's obsession with the use of 'smart war' technology by the US army. His chapter entitled 'Media and Terrorism' is particularly lively, as it seeks to include terrorist activity as an integral part of the struggle occurring between various political actors to influence the broad perspective held on these battles by seeking to exert 'spin'.

Much of the book is like this. Louw presents a deft overview of some of the key conceptual approaches to understanding the role of media in society and its politics (the chapter on the evolution of the fourth-estate notion of the role of the press in the liberal democratic setting handles the subject matter particularly well), and then fleshes these out with references to the many practical examples of the way in which media coverage of events shapes the community's consciousness of these great issues. That these examples focus on media controversies that are so contemporary gives the book an up-to-date feel, notwithstanding the fact that many of these matters had been thoroughly canvassed by the Frankfurt School, the Birmingham School and others in previous decades when international communism was the source of Western paranoia.

The lively character of its discussion of the media is one of the book's strengths, yet it is also a source of some of its problems. The sheer volume of worrying effects on the political process for which the media appear to be responsible tends to overwhelm the reader who, in addition, is constantly bombarded with variations of the author's major arguments that politics generally is being subjected to the consequences of 'media-ization'. In many of the chapters, 'media-ization' takes a number of forms, including the 'presidentialization' of politics, the 'Americanization' of leadership contests, the 'professionalization' of campaign management, the 'televisualization' of the political contest and so on. Apart from the sometimes jarring way in which Louw tries to use this method of labelling to make his point about the many ways the media affect politics, this approach does give the work a sense of tending too much towards—dare one suggest it—the jargonisation of media studies.

Notwithstanding this, *The Media and Political Process* will appeal both to students and scholars in the field. For students, Louw presents a lively account of a range of possibilities for the way politics is affected by the media generally, and by the more recently emerged major players such as 'spin doctors' and public relations consultants in particular. There is much in the book that would or should be of interest to students of media politics. For scholars, meanwhile, Louw makes the case for this concept of 'media-ization' as the emerging phenomenon whereby the rise of the new media and its practitioners is posing yet another challenge to more traditional notions of how the press and politics interact. Louw seems particularly comfortable in dealing with the public relations element in the 'PR-ization' of contemporary politics, and it is this above all else that gives the book a strong, up-to-date feel that will be greatly appreciated by its readers.

NICK ECONOMOU
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Sarah Maddison and Sean Scalmer, *Activist Wisdom: Practical Knowledge and Creative Tension in Social Movements* (Sydney: UNSW Press, 2006), 284 pp., $39.95, ISBN 0868406864

The field of social movements provides a compelling example of the ideological and historically variable content of supposedly objective political and social sciences. The recent flourishing of this field represents not so much the discovery of a previously ignored range of phenomena as the more sympathetic examination of what was previously *mis*represented as the 'collective behaviour' of irrational mobs and anomic masses. But if the transformative political achievements of lesbians and gays, women, ethnic minorities, and peace, environmental and anti-corporate activists are now recognised by social scientists, recognition has been limited and perhaps distorted by certain characteristic features of the academic approach. As Sarah Maddison and Sean Scalmer point out in their informative yet highly readable chapter on the 'Theory and History' of social movements, the innovative political practice of movement activists has been obscured as much as illuminated by the growing mountain of description, quantification and analysis. Within 'Continental' and post-Marxist accounts, the aims and objectives of 'new' social movements are explained as predictable responses to the advent of 'modern', 'post-modern', 'post-industrial' or 'programmed' societies. American sociologists have observed and classified the characteristic 'resources', 'opportunity structures', 'life-cycles' and 'networks' of social movements. Although these various studies rightly emphasise the extra-institutional and unorganised regions of politics as well as the role of identity, culture and expressive action in politics more generally, they

have paid little attention to the actual political practice and correspondingly 'practical knowledge' of movement participants.

Based on a series of in-depth interviews with Australian activists, *Activist Wisdom* sets out to rectify this situation with chapters on eight practical dilemmas or 'tensions' that must be, and are, negotiated by movement activists. Where both ideological protagonists and social movement theorists typically emphasise or approve of only *one* approach to politics at the expense of others, political activists are more likely to draw on an eclectic range of strategies, tactics and both degrees and modes of organisation. In their attempt to capture the 'practical knowledge' embodied in the actual conduct and choices of these activists, Maddison and Scalmer set out to explore the potential and limitations of the full range of strategies and tactics employed by social movements, whether 'old', 'new' or 'global'. Socialist or anti-capitalist activists no less than practitioners of 'identity politics' and advocates of social justice or protection of the environment employ 'expressive' as well as 'instrumental' actions. They seek to achieve changes *within*, but also sometimes *outside* and even *in opposition to* formal political organisations and institutions. They work *through* as well as *against* established media and the official public sphere. Tensions between local and global connections, between internal unity and diversity as well as the strategic importance of cultural identity versus economic structure and even ultimate goals of reform versus revolution must be negotiated practically for the sake of the urgent and overriding goal of social transformation.

In pursuit of their refreshingly practical approach, the authors draw with skill, empathy and a minimum of technical jargon on the insights and experience of their Australian subjects. Despite its strongly Australian focus—the discussion is also illustrated by examples from some of the neglected classics of Australian political literature—the emphasis on practical knowledge or 'activist wisdom' is undoubtedly relevant to an international audience. Indeed, as they point out, it is part of a growing trend in the study of social movements. The authors' clear and unpretentious style makes this book highly accessible to students as well, though its approach deliberately challenges the academic priorities of some university courses. If the focus on activist wisdom has (like any other approach) its own drawback, it is the risk that less attention will be paid to the occasional supporter and, above all, the potential and future participants in social movements. Why are some people so resistant to the call of political action? Why do some forms of politics alienate wavering supporters as much as they may engage those who are firmly committed? Despite the admirable resilience and persistence of activists—illuminated by an intriguing final chapter on 'Hope and Despair'—social transformation requires more people to cross the complex and confused borderline between apathy and activism.

DAVID WEST
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Elinor Ostrom, *Understanding Institutional Diversity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005), xv + 355 pp., US$27.95, ISBN 0691122385

Understanding Institutional Diversity is a comprehensive and powerful statement of the theoretical perspective that has been developed over 30 years by Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues at the Workshop in Political Theory and Policy Analysis at Indiana University. It is both a summary of lessons learned about how to analyse, evaluate, and design institutions, and a guide to analysts who might want to follow in these very large footsteps. Ostrom herself has done justifiably famous work on institutions for the management of common pool resources (and is known especially for her demonstrations and empirical illustrations of how users of such resources can create their own management structures without government intervention). This work is well represented in the book, but the framework presented here is more broadly applicable to institutions in general.

The framework goes under the title of 'Institutional Analysis and Design'. Ostrom believes in deductive theory and broadly applicable generalisations, and so seeks 'universal building blocks' that can be applied in many different settings (p. 6). She is careful to avoid the oversimplifications of those who peddle ready analyses and pet prescriptions, be they privatisers or central managers, stressing instead

variety and complexity in human institutions and their settings. Ostrom provides a way of making sense of this variety; to do so, the framework itself becomes very complex.

At the core of the framework are game theory and rational choice assumptions about individual behaviour. However, these are just the beginnings. Rational egoism is relevant mainly to market-type institutions, and soon gives way to various sorts of bounded rationality when extended to other kinds of institutions and contexts. Contexts themselves come in many different kinds, with many dimensions for their classification, so deciding what kind of game is at issue is itself a major challenge: 'First one needs to examine the structure of the situation. Then one asks how boundedly rational, fallible but adaptive individuals would interact in that situation over time' (p. 137). To answer these kinds of questions, the analyst needs to examine the nature of the participants, the roles they play, the potential outcomes they produce, the actions available to them, the degree of control they have, the extent of the information available to them, linkages with other arenas, and the costs and benefits that individuals can incur. All these elements can be the target of institutional rules. And anyone thinking of changing the rules needs to attend to every one of these elements, their associated rules, and how each rule interacts with other rules: 'Even a relatively simple policy reform requires multiple rule changes' (p. 215). The problem for the analyst is that the number of rule combinations in any situation soon becomes overwhelming. So the analyst, too, needs to become boundedly rather than comprehensively rational. Given the impossibility of attending to all rule combinations, Ostrom suggests an experimental approach to reform.

If there is a chink in the edifice it arises here: how are our experimental interventions to be chosen? If comprehensive analysis cannot tell us what to try first, it is often ideology that fills the gap. The problem is that ideology generally comes with all kinds of filters for the evaluation of the results of reforms. Ostrom herself is determinedly anti-ideological; for her, context is everything in deciding whether (say) privatisation, or central administration, or community self-control is the most appropriate means for the management of a common pool resource. But in the end she does not perhaps provide a strong enough defence against the ideologists. Life for the Ostromian policy analyst is hard and demanding. Analysts with more limited capabilities and resources may still be tempted to take refuge in cruder approaches.

Ostrom's program for institutional analysis and design stands as a major intellectual achievement with few parallels. One comparison might be Harold D. Lasswell's program for the policy sciences of half a century ago. Ostrom compares well with Lasswell because she can provide precise illustrations of theoretically informed and empirically rich case analyses. But both Lasswell and Ostrom demand a degree of heroism on the part of the analyst that can be difficult for more ordinary mortals to live up to.

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Tony Porter, *Globalization and Finance* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), xi + 230 pp., £21.99, ISBN 0745631193 (pbk)

Students in international political economy courses usually have most difficulty with the section that examines finance. Especially for students with little background in economics, the intricacies of exchange rates, global liquidity, structural adjustment—not to mention hedge funds and derivatives—frequently cause anxiety. A book that provides an accessible non-technical introduction to the world of global finance would be particularly useful in the classroom. For the most part, Tony Porter's new book fulfils this role.

Porter argues that we live in a world where global finance is so significant that we cannot afford to leave a detailed knowledge of it just to experts or wealthy investors. Understanding finance is useful not only in its own right but also for what it tells us about other aspects of international political economy and global governance; for example, how international institutions are formed, and the role of knowledge in global governance.

Porter begins by presenting a conventional trichotomy of approaches to international political economy—liberal, statist, and Marxist. He argues, however, that while elements of each can be

helpful in understanding contemporary global finance, an explanation that has at its centre the role of institutions is more helpful. The central role of institutions, he argues, is often overlooked in a subject matter where attention is usually directed primarily at the roles of markets and of private-sector actors. The most significant institutions in global finance take three forms—international regimes that have been constructed to regulate international interactions; business associations that, *inter alia*, create and manage rules for their members' transactions; and social practices. The first part of the book concludes with a chapter examining how these various institutions have contributed to the contemporary regulatory regime for finance.

The second part of the book, arguably its most useful in introducing empirical material that will be unfamiliar to many students, examines the evolution of the regulatory regimes in international banking, global securities and derivatives markets, and foreign direct investment. Part Three reviews 'new actors and new frontiers', examining business institutions and private-sector norms, developing and transitional countries, and non-government organisations and global civil society. The final part of the book looks at issues relating to democracy in the governance of finance, including gender issues, the politics of risk and financial crises, and questions of legitimacy.

Much of this material will be useful to instructors and students alike. The book, however, has a number of weaknesses that limit its usefulness as a text. It lacks a glossary of key terms, some of which are introduced without explanation; for example, page 5 makes reference to futures contracts, margins, and short sales—without first introducing these technical concepts. It has very little to say about exchange rate regimes, how these have evolved over time, their governance (or lack thereof), and the evolving role of the International Monetary Fund. Its treatment of some other subjects seems disproportionate to their importance in this subject area—foreign direct investment receives one chapter that barely scratches the surface of this topic; other sources of finance for developing economies and their role in financial crises garner even less attention; in contrast, Porter devotes two chapters to global civil society and to gender issues.

In an era when the cost of texts makes it difficult to assign more than one per course, instructors may well find it more practical to use chapters of the book rather than to adopt it as a required text.

JOHN RAVENHILL
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Jennifer Jackson Preece, *Minority Rights* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), ix + 213 pp., £14.99, ISBN 0745623964 (pbk)

A contribution to Polity's Key Concepts in the Social Sciences, *Minority Rights* offers a particular take on what the author calls 'the problem of minorities'. As Jackson Preece lays out in the preface, the starting point for the analysis is that 'the key concepts and assumptions behind minority rights can only be fully understood as one response to a much deeper "problem of minorities"' (p. vi). This 'deeper problem' is that 'minorities' by definition pose a threat to 'the prevailing principle of legitimacy'. 'Minorities' in this view are 'political outsiders' who 'do not fit the criteria defining legitimacy and membership in the political community in whose territory they reside' (p. 10).

The organising premise for the book is that the 'problem of minorities' is not confined to nation-states but may emerge in any historical period. In addition, the identity of those individuals who constitute a 'minority' changes in different historical periods. In separate chapters, Jackson Preece lays out the historical evolution of the status of four minority identities (religion, race, language and ethnicity) in relation to shifting norms of political legitimacy—the medieval universitas, dynastic states, civic and ethnic nation-states, European overseas empires, multicultural states, and the international community, and the current legal order. A crucial development, she argues, was the shift from rule based on 'authority from above' (the ruler, the divine) to rule based on the people, because this meant that who the people are became a crucial question.

Minorities in this narrative are not necessarily numerically fewer in number; rather, they are defined in terms of their lack of authority or control in a particular regime. Nor are minorities 'natural givens'; rather, they emerge as 'the constructions of particular historical moments' (p. 17).

'Minority rights' enters the analysis as one possible response to the 'problem of minorities'. Since by definition minorities are described as challenging 'the prevailing principle of legitimacy', the options for resolution are either enforcing conformity, through discrimination, assimilation, persecution or separation (p. 184), or by 'recognising diversity'. The latter strategy is equated with the 'minority rights response'. This is the argument advanced by theorists, including Will Kymlicka, Charles Taylor, Joseph Raz and Judith Shklar, that there is another way to think about the relationship between diversity and stability. In this view, minorities do not necessarily pose a threat to stability. Indeed, it is argued that if 'minorities' are accorded a degree of recognition and respect, then they are less likely to challenge the authority of the current regime. While Jackson Preece clearly prefers the minority rights response, she is cautious about its probable success as, in her view, it provides only a moral and legal framework for adjudicating 'hard choices' (p. 188).

There is a tension in the book between recognising principles of legitimacy as contested and constructed, and firm statements that there is an inevitable 'clash of values' due to an 'inherent contradiction between freedom manifested as diversity and belonging manifested as community' (p. 187–8). While, on the one hand, Jackson Preece acknowledges that 'social complexity is assumed to require a correspondingly increased degree of conforming' (p. 7)—that is, that political manipulation shapes images of desired community—on the other hand she concludes that 'at the end of the day we are nevertheless doomed to choose between the interests of the minority and the political community in whose territory it resides'. If indeed principles of political legitimacy are open to contention, it is difficult to see why this gloomy vision prevails.

One suggestion here is that the decision to focus on the 'problem of minorities' makes it difficult to direct adequate attention to the 'problem of community', the contested grounds on which it rests, its fractures and inconsistencies. This latter perspective, associated with authors such as Chantal Mouffe and Iris Marion Young, is not canvassed anywhere in the text. Rather, we are left with a very restricted version of the 'minority rights response' and, even this response, associated with Kymlicka and a few others, is dealt with in a cursory fashion (Charles Taylor is mentioned only in passing and is not even referenced). Those who want to understand contemporary debates about the concept of rights and contested meanings of democracy will need to go elsewhere. This is disappointing in a contribution to 'key concepts'. Going even further, given the significance of debates around these issues at the moment—specifically concerns about freedom of expression for alternative political viewpoints—this position is downright dangerous. It leaves the impression that 'minorities' are the ones who must 'fit in', that norms of political legitimacy cannot be put in question, providing ultimately a rationale for the political status quo.

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Oliver Ramsbotham, Tom Woodhouse and Hugh Miall, *Contemporary Conflict Resolution: The Prevention, Management and Transformation of Deadly Conflicts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005), 2nd ed., 399 pp., £17.99, ISBN 0745632130 (pbk)

This welcome second edition expands considerably on the first by incorporating a completely new Part II, directed to the daunting task of defining and delineating the scope of what is termed 'cosmopolitan conflict resolution'. Part I surveys the landscape of current conflict resolution where a conceptual introduction is followed by the historical origins of contemporary conflict, its quantification and comprehension; this is followed by a bracket of chapters addressing prevention, containment, and termination via peacekeeping, peacemaking, reconstruction, peacebuilding and reconciliation. Part II considers terror and global justice; gender in conflict resolution; ethics of intervention; dialogue and discourse regarding conflict resolution; culture and religion; and possible future directions. By any reckoning this is a demanding agenda; such scope necessarily revisits the familiar dilemma of whether comprehensiveness risks compromising the illumination offered by distinctive exceptions that test the best-crafted generalisations.

A good deal of Part I revisits familiar ground, but in doing so reminds readers of some unduly neglected previously published materials, including the late Ed Azar's insights into the nature of protracted

social conflicts. Repeated from the first edition is an 'hourglass' model of conflict resolution depicting a narrowing of political space accompanying conflict escalation, and its widening under conditions of de-escalation. Conflict transformation involving deeper levels of cultural and structural peacebuilding, it is argued, is most feasible where such space is at its widest to allow difference and reconciliation the opportunity to attain positive outcomes. Deeper levels of peaceful change are distinguished from elite peacemaking involving negotiated settlement. Subsequent propositions derived from this model are sustained convincingly.

In Part II, the chapter entitled 'Dialogue, Discourse and Disagreements' engages critical theory, but it seems that this endeavour and conflict resolution studies remain ships passing in the night since 'neither interactive conflict resolution nor the dialogic and discursive traditions associated with it can be said hitherto to have paid adequate attention to the phenomenon of deep political disagreement' (p. 301). Required and promised (but not evident in this volume) is a comparative study of deep disagreements, testing existing models, and evaluations of the practical implications of taking radical disagreements seriously. Perhaps rather than haring off after Habermas, this chapter would have been better substituted by one fully addressing human rights. The absence of such treatment is puzzling in a study consistently advocating the need for root-cause analysis of conflict and its management and prevention.

Elsewhere, some readers may encounter difficulties in juxtaposing this study's various taxonomies and matrices, often derived from other sources, to what is currently operating, warts and all, through existing state, diplomatic and intergovernmental mechanisms. This is partly addressed in the Part I peacebuilding chapter, which provides a brief case study of developments in Kosovo between 1999 and 2004. There is also a useful, if brief, three-page summary dissecting the failure of the Oslo peace process in the Middle East. Conceivably, the diplomatic fumbling that occurred within major capitals following the collapse of Yugoslavia could be inferred from the chapter discussing intervention dilemmas. But those wanting a comprehensive evaluation of how adequately the models advanced actually tally with current practice will need to look elsewhere.

Territoriality, border issues, and the heightened incidence of conflict between neighbours deserve more attention. So does the role of third parties in underwriting or helping to guarantee settlement in internal wars. The brief box item (4.2) depicting arms exports and conflict warrants fuller textual treatment as an independent dynamic driving conflict. The chapter on the ethics of intervention needs to introduce the basics of international humanitarian law and its growing salience as a component in conflict resolution. That on terror needs to draw out the significant linkages that exist between this phenomenon and insurgency and political mobilisation under conditions of collapsed or brutalising state activity. Insufficient focus is accorded major power interests that, both historically and currently, have not only neglected multilateral modalities of conflict resolution but actively sought to subvert them.

Overall, these criticisms do not detract from the excellence of this wide-ranging treatment, and the accessibility that it offers to an increasingly complex and burgeoning field of study. It provides an indispensable introduction to contemporary conflict and its possible resolution, while providing numerous avenues leading to more detailed case analysis.

RODERIC ALLEY
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Philip Smith and Kristin Natalier, *Understanding Criminal Justice: Sociological Perspectives* (London: Sage, 2004), 225 pp., $62.00, ISBN 0761940324

This book is a welcome addition to the plethora of textbooks that have emerged as a response to the proliferation of criminal justice courses in Australia and elsewhere in the past decade. The book addresses the fundamental relationship between criminology (the study of the causes and effects of crime) and sociology (the scientific study of the nature, structure and workings of human society). Having said that, the authors make it quite clear in the introduction that the book is *not about* crime and deviance, crime rates, theoretical criminology or legal and sociological debate. The book is essentially 'about formal responses to crime and efforts to regulate crime through law, courts, policing and corrections' (p. 5). The dominant theoretical perspectives on law and criminal justice are considered in the

opening chapter. The central argument is that such perspectives have to be considered in the context of an historically specific set of institutions and cultural milieus. The authors reject the notion of a smoothly integrated criminal justice system, although the ensuing chapters are essentially a chronological journey through the bureaucracy that is the criminal justice system in motion. Thus, chapter 2 deals with a discussion about the 'social artefact' nature of law and how it surfaces, not as a pre-existing system of concepts and rules but that which 'emerges through the ebb and flow of social and cultural forces'.

The chapters that follow consider the ideologies and practices that constitute criminal justice institutions such as the police, the courts, the corrections process and the impact these institutions have on various social groups. Throughout the book, as well as introducing the student to the classic debates and theoretical positions in criminology and sociology generally, contemporary themes such as globalisation, cybernet crime and the role of the media are all variously considered. The subject matter is contextualised within the wider social framework by calling into play the historical, political, community and cultural inputs that impact upon concrete policies and practice. The authors (from the United States and Australia, respectively) effectively integrate theory with data with examples from the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia.

It is the contemporary nature of the book's approach that will make this book more accessible to the average student. This is particularly relevant when such an interdisciplinary approach will attract students with potentially very different experiences or understandings of the criminal justice system. The authors use a number of pedagogical devices through which students are encouraged to develop their understanding of key questions and issues and to encourage independent research and reading. Each chapter has a number of 'study questions' designed to stimulate debate and further study. A useful, and in some cases extensive, glossary is provided at the end of each chapter. Further reading lists and suggested Internet sites are also included. If I have a criticism of this format as it is laid out in this book, it is that the further reading lists are very limited. Such limited lists inevitably omit scholars whose work in these areas is important (Mark Finnane from Griffith University and his historical perspectives on policing spring to mind). Personally, I would have liked to have seen more of an emphasis on further reading and less on Website addresses. I should add that the authors clearly agree with such sentiments—pointing out to the reader that 'websites are generally better seen as sources of information and food for thought' (p. 5). Publishing constraints plague us all. The advertising blurb for this book suggests that it is suited primarily to first- and second-year undergraduates. I tend to agree. It is well written, never dry and provides a broad overview without ducking away from some of the complex issues (such as inequality) that beset criminal justice systems everywhere. A valuable and strong resource.

JENNY FLEMING
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David West, *Reason & Sexuality in Western Thought* (Oxford: Polity Press, 2005), x + 232 pp., $46.95, ISBN 0745624227 (pbk)

David West writes that his project in this book is 'to explore the relationship of reason and sexuality within the Western tradition of philosophy'. In order to do this, he marks out three main 'constellations of reason, sexuality and the self', what he calls ascetic idealism, hedonist realism, and Romanticism. The first of these constellations, or ideal types, includes the work of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas and Kant. West's portrait of 'hedonist realism' draws on, *inter alia*, Ovid, Epicurus, Lucretius, Ficino, Hobbes, Hume, Bentham, Mill and Sade. The section on Romanticism cites St Teresa of Avila, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft, Schlegel, Schopenhauer and Freud. In concluding, West uses the work of Montaigne, Spinoza, Hegel, Kierkegaard, Beauvoir, Marcuse and Foucault to sketch an alternative approach to the relation of reason and sexuality.

West's critical aim in exploring these writers is, he says, 'to question, and, it is hoped, to resist, the narrowing of sexual experience in the name of some clear and definitive configuration of reason, sexuality and the self'. West endorses 'a more holistic account' of this configuration, an account that is especially critical of asceticism (although this sits a little uneasily alongside his apparent sympathy with Foucault's understanding of the jouissance of SM as a form of 'ascesis').

West's canon of the Western philosophical tradition is not narrow, and it includes interesting discussions of some writers who would almost certainly disavow a description of themselves as philosophers. However, so many writers are covered that reading the book feels a little like a Cook's Tour, with not enough attention given to the thick context in which the writers make remarks about sex. Although West's discussion is insightful, the accounts given of the various writers, and of the trajectory of the Western tradition more broadly, are fairly conventional. West rounds up the usual suspects: those who would subordinate sexuality to reason (or morality), especially where they are also hostile to homosexual acts.

The major problem with West's project seems to me to concern the very possibility of writing a history of sexuality or of reason or of their relation, as if these terms have a stable trans-historical meaning. West acknowledges this difficulty early on, noting that he will not assume any such fixed meaning of his central terms. However, he often slips back into a way of writing that assumes that there is indeed such a thing as 'the body'—or even more oddly, 'facts of sexuality'—prior to political and ethical coding. For example, West commends (with some reservations) the 'sexual realism' of those writers who are 'inclined to accept the facts of sexuality without seeking to impose more demanding moral standards or ideals'. Or again, 'the body' is often identified with the passions, in contrast to reason, mind and soul, whereas many of the writers discussed think of the passions as part of the soul.

In line with this commitment to the existence of sexual facts or of sexual nature, West ends up commending something like a 'let it all hang out' model of sexual expression. Thus at one point ancient Greek society is approvingly characterised as having 'relatively unconstrained sexual mores', an odd position in the context of recent work by Winkler, Detienne, Vernant and even Foucault. Those writers who favour the expression of what feels good are lauded as 'relaxed'. West writes, for instance, that Diogenes publicly masturbated 'to demonstrate his relaxed attitude to natural human pleasure', although neither Diogenes nor his audience seems to have construed the meaning of this act (or of Diogenes' eating in the agora) in that way.

Finally, I was puzzled that West devotes so little attention to love in a work like this. The stance on erotic matters of writers like Plato and Augustine, as well as very different writers like Epicurus, seems to have stemmed less from a commitment to reason and rather more from an acute understanding of the pains of love, love unrequited or ephemeral or wounded. West sees humour and tolerance as characteristic of those like Ovid who accept the facts of (male) sexuality, but even Ovid found humour hard to maintain in the heartbreaking poems of *Tristia* written at Tomis.

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