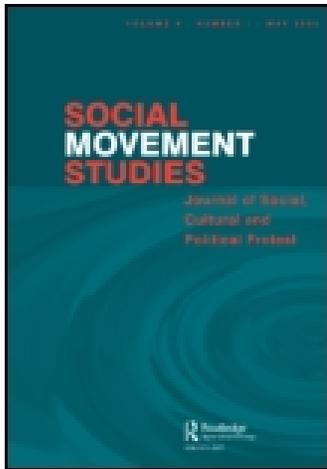


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Book Reviews

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Book Reviews

The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-Wing Movements and National Politics

Rory McVeigh

Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2009, 245 pp., \$22.50, ISBN 978-0-816-65620-2 (paperback)

According to the US-based Southern Poverty Law Center, 2009 saw an explosion of right-wing extremism with ‘Patriot’ groups increasing by 244 per cent and the number of militias tripling. Such startling statistics have led many to ask: what explains this surge in right-wing populism? In *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan: Right-Wing Movements and National Politics* Rory McVeigh offers a firm historical foundation for answering this question, presenting a ‘power devaluation model’ that explains the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s. Theoretically ambitious and methodologically diverse, *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan* is an important work that deserves a wide readership.

McVeigh sets out to examine the Klan as a national movement rather than simply a collection of decentralized chapters. He does this by analyzing the Klan’s national newspaper – the *Imperial Night-Hawk* – which articulated the goals of the movement and catalogued the KKK’s on-the-ground activism across the country. Content analysis of the newspaper allows McVeigh to gauge Klan activism, track the group’s geographical diffusion and evaluate variation in the movement’s influence across the country.

The term KKK usually conjures up robe-wearing racists with a penchant for cross-burning and boisterous bigotry. McVeigh complicates this over-simple portrayal, convincingly demonstrating how at the national level the Klan pursued political goals by framing their grievances as inspired by patriotism and principled criticism over the direction of the nation. National-level Klan leaders created compelling narratives to attract recruits, maintain solidarity, and garner the support of bystander publics. Such narratives helped fashion a wider context in which localized Klan activity could flourish.

Social-movement scholars tend to focus their collective attention on left-of-center, social-change movements that are relatively lacking in terms of material resources. *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan* is a valuable counterbalance to this trend, and one that makes a significant theoretical contribution. ‘A central goal of this book,’ the author notes, ‘is to present and apply a theory of social-movement action – the ‘power-devaluation model’ – that is specifically designed to analyze right-wing mobilization.’ To develop this model, McVeigh focuses on a ‘relatively advantaged’ movement that aims ‘to preserve, restore, and expand their collective privileges’ (p. 8).

McVeigh’s theory ‘proposes that power devaluation, resulting from structural change, produces shifts in interpretive processes, which, in turn, lead to activation of organizational resources and exploitation of political opportunities’ (p. 39). The

explanatory model features three central dimensions: economic, political, and status-based devaluation. The author describes these three areas as ‘distinct markets of exchange based on economic relationships, political relationships, and status relationships’. Bigger-picture structural shake-ups in society ‘can lead to devaluation in the “purchasing power” of various actors within these markets’ and ‘when members of clearly identifiable groups appear to be disproportionately suffering from power devaluation, incentives for right-wing mobilization emerge’ (p. 39).

Of course, power devaluation does not automatically translate to collective action. This is where McVeigh links his model with traditional social-movement theoretical categories like political opportunity structure, resource mobilization, and framing. Power devaluation triggers ‘a shift in interpretive processes, which can lead those who are experiencing power devaluation to activate preexisting organizational resources and exploit preexisting political opportunities in an effort to reverse devaluation’ (pp. 46–47). To be effective, movement organizers need to proffer interpretive frames that resonate with their target audience: people experiencing a deflation of economic, political, or status-based power. This is precisely what the Klan did via its publication the *Imperial Night-Hawk*.

Deftly blending structural and agentic analysis, McVeigh summarizes his model as such: ‘Structural changes that lead to power devaluation, therefore, can generate a pool of individuals who are favorably predisposed toward right-wing mobilization. To capitalize on these conditions, leaders of an emergent movement must develop collective action frames that convince these same individuals that participation in the movement will not be wasted effort. Movement leaders and recruiters must demonstrate that they not only understand the problems of those they wish to recruit, but that they also have a solution’ (p. 44). At the same time, by narrowly tailoring their framing to maximize recruitment, movements may hem themselves in rhetorically and strategically, thereby reducing their ability to build alliances that pave a path for political success at the national level. McVeigh vigorously examines this double-edged sword, exploring how the very conditions that helped build the Klan as a social movement also hampered its ability to shape national politics in its image and eventually played a role in the group’s swift decline in the late 1920s.

In Chapter 8, ‘Klan Activism Across the Country’, McVeigh demonstrates methodological multiplicity, offering a quantitative analysis that aims to ascertain whether the Klan was more active in places where the machinations of power devaluation were clicking full-throttle. His findings confirm his qualitative analysis: the Klan was more active in places where power devaluation was common. The KKK was also more active where cultural homogeneity ruled, even if that meant the targets of Klan ire – Catholics or immigrants, for example – were not physically in their midst. The Klan also thrived in states where leaders could parlay their goals with agricultural grievances stemming from corn and cotton production, thereby highlighting the key role that the linkage between shifting interpretive processes and resonant collection-action frames played in the group’s organizing. This chapter will pacify those with positivistic predilections.

McVeigh embeds numerous empirical nuggets in the book that many may find counterintuitive: the Klan supported women’s suffrage (p. 74); Klansmen in Kentucky donated \$65 to an African-American pastor to assist with church-building (p. 147); politicians from states outside the South – like Oregon Governor Walter Pierce – publicly endorsed the Klan (p. 148). Such historical data help the author explode stereotypes that preclude more nuanced consideration of the KKK as a complex social movement. Indeed,

McVeigh contends, 'few social movements in the history of the United States have been as successful as the Ku Klux Klan in recruiting members and supporters' (p. 112) and the Klan's ability to reframe socio-political issues to their advantage helps explain this success.

With the recent rise of the Tea Party Movement, the theoretical advances in *The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan* are as timely as ever. This book would work well in upper-level undergraduate courses as well as graduate seminars on social change, social movements, or right-wing political activity.

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1968 in Retrospect: History, Theory, Alterity

Gurminder K. Bhambra & Ipek Demir (Eds)

London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2009, xix + 199 pp., \$52, ISBN 978-0-2302-2932-7 (hardback)

The events of 1968 have cast a long shadow over debates about social movements for the past forty years. In many respects a number of important theoretical debates, especially in the 1970s and 1980s, were concerned with the implications of what people thought had happened in a handful of Western countries during that year. Some, as William Outhwaite points out in his concluding chapter to this book, have compared it to 'the revolutionary years' of the nineteenth century such as 1848 and 1871, also overshadowed by events in Paris. Readers of this journal might expect some kind of explanation or analysis of 1968 from a book such as this, but they would be disappointed. Perhaps it is best described as a set of reflections on the intellectual consequences of the events of that year. Social movement scholars are thus just as likely to find nuggets of insight on particular theoretical and intellectual questions as any other reader.

The strongest chapters in the book are those that examine the struggles of ethnic minorities before, during, and after the events of 1968. What they show is how 1968 has become remembered and theorized as a purely white, middle class, largely male affair limited to one year. Patricia Hill Collins, for example, examines the importance of freedom, education, and integration for young African American activists in the 1960s. This is a very different kind of student political activism from the situationist-inspired Paris adventures of May 1968. For black politics in the USA, the King assassination is the event during that year that matters most of all. Whilst the student protests elsewhere might have revolved around the meaning of their education, their privileged position of having access to it in the first place was something that young African Americans were struggling to achieve at not inconsiderable personal risk.

In an altogether different section of the book, Maud Anne Bracke considers the development of Algerian immigrant politics in France during this period. It is in this chapter where one small story exemplifies the arrogant and ill-thought out adventurism of

some sections of the French student movement. What preoccupied the immigrant communities around Paris at this time was the death of a Tunisian worker on a university building site at Nanterre. The response of student activists to this was to donate a load of free potatoes to the families concerned! Whilst migrant workers were involved in the strikes of 1968, more significantly they went on to form their own organizations outside the established trade union structures, leading to a series of struggles in the 1970s and 1980s. Prior to 1968, Algerian immigrants in France were centrally involved in the anti-colonial struggle with over 300 being killed by the French police in Paris after the street demonstration of 17 October 1961. This event matters more than 1968 to the development of immigrant politics in France in subsequent decades. It is indeed striking that in France, and internationally, the events of 1968 had more effects and are more frequently remembered than the French state's mass killing of over 300 immigrants in its capital city just seven years previously. This speaks volumes about the past and present inequalities of racial and colonial power.

Another strand of chapters concerns theoretical reflections on the 1968 movements. The contribution by Mihnea Panu directly addresses these themes of the exclusion of other voices from intellectual accounts of 1968. This entails a rather dense but useful post-structuralist critique of liberal political thought. The chapter then makes a more provocative move by challenging those forms of political imagination that seek inspiration from 1968. Here it is suggested that those who see 1968 as some kind of revolutionary moment setting off a series of challenges to consumerism, hierarchy, and so on reproduce, in a similar way to liberalism, the established technologies of Othering. In particular the politics of autonomy and liberation celebrated and proposed by this 1968 political imaginary entails both a liberal conception of the self and Eurocentric vision of global politics. In this way the 1968 perspective equates three weeks in Paris with many long years of often violent anti-colonial struggle.

Another theoretical piece that readers of this journal may find interesting is a critical discussion of Habermas' intellectual development by John Holmwood, showing how the principal influences on his work have shifted from Marxism to Parsons' structural functionalism. Although this is very much a sociological theorist's reading of Habermas and tends to marginalize the other influences and trends in Habermas' recent writings, it does highlight the rather narrow range of sociological problems that are discussed in Habermas' work.

Whilst each of the chapters in this book stand on their own as valuable contributions, they do not perhaps address sufficiently common themes. This highlights the problem with 1968 in that its political and intellectual meanings have become so abstract and generalized that it is difficult to thoroughly explore them within the confines of the edited collection format.

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Identity Work in Social Movements

Jo Reger, Daniel J. Meyers and Rachel L. Einwohner (Eds)

Social Movements, Protest, and Contention Volume 30, Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2008, ix + 317 pp., £46.50/\$75.00, ISBN 978-0-8166-5139-9 (hardback); £15.50/\$25.00, ISBN 978-0-8166-5140-5 (paperback)

Collective identity has been so thoroughly analyzed and theorized over the past thirty years or so that it is hard to believe that there is much left to examine. Reger *et al.*'s *Identity Work in Social Movements*, however, demonstrates that there is more to learn. The volume consists of eleven research-based chapters and a theoretical Afterward by Mary Bernstein. Each chapter is united by a common focus on the symbolic boundaries demarcating movement cultures from the cultures in which they are nested. As we learn in a good array of (largely American) case studies, the creation and maintenance of symbolic boundaries are far from obvious. Indeed, many of the better chapters problematize the notion that movement boundaries are solid cultural walls; in many instances movement boundary work is fluid.

Tied to this cultural focus, each author explores movement identity work, or how activists come to identify with a movement or movement organization, how they negotiate activist identities, or how these identities inform interactions with non-movement actors and state officials. Part One contains six chapters on the strategic uses of cultural identities. Each study explores the negotiations of 'sameness' and 'difference', or the processes whereby activists may accentuate their unique cultural identities or downplay those identities depending on the context of action and historical exigencies. For instance, Todd Schroer's chapter examines white racialists' attempts to promote their identity-based movement in part by claiming that their worldview simply reflects what most white Americans believe and feel and by linking these beliefs to American history. In what I believe to be the strongest chapter in the volume, Jo Reger compares two student-based feminist organizations. As Reger shows, the context under which these activists strategize plays a large part in what form of feminism (and feminist identity) is likely to be engaged. In a context that is fairly open to feminist discourse, a more intersectional form of identity-based feminist politics may proliferate, while in a more hostile context, a less elaborate feminism may be proffered in order to attract supporters who can identify with issues of sexism and chauvinism, but who may not be welcoming of other civil rights claims or more radical notions.

The chapters in Part Two focus on the complexities of identity construction and negotiation within diverse movements. The authors of these five chapters all examine how activists combine and rearrange their identities by race, ethnicity, gender, class, nationality, and sexuality. Daniel J. Myers, for example, offers a fine chapter on 'ally identity', explaining how heterosexual activists within the queer and LGBTQ movements manage a 'straight' identity within an LGBTQ context. Similarly, Susan Munkers explains how middle class, affluent Americans work together with Salvadoran peasants and, in the process, negotiate activist identities that seem a little out-of-step with the lived reality of Salvadoran activists and their immediate political context.

Though the case studies range from a historical study of the Jewish ghetto uprising in Warsaw during the Second World War (Rachel L. Einwohner) to a study of poor Brazilian women activists (Kevin Neuhouser), from the music of Drag performances

(Elizabeth Kaminski and Verta Taylor) to Labor Union Women's activism (Silke Roth), from the battles between the American Christian Right and LGBQ activists (Kimberly B. Dugan) to the development of 'white women's liberation' (Benita Roth) and intersectional identity formation within Lesbian and Gay organizations (Jane Ward), the volume is hardly eclectic. The editors and authors do a fine job of maintaining a common set of themes. Moreover, the editors have done well to include a number of case studies that are not immediately and obviously identity-based while also including those movements that present identity processes in sharp relief.

Identity Work in Social Movements breaks new empirical ground in the well-established literature on activist identity by highlighting the conflicts and controversies over identity construction and use. It will appeal to social movement researchers interested in expanding their understandings of the socio-psychological and culture causes and consequences of activism. As it includes a rich selection of well written case studies – all free from overly elaborate theoretical jargon and unnecessary neologisms – the volume is also likely to find a home in social movement and political sociology courses of all levels.

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Culture, Social Movements, and Protest

Hank Johnston (Ed.)

Farnham, Ashgate, 2009, x + 276 pp., £60, ISBN 978-0-7546-7446-7 (hardback)

The relationship between culture and social movements is a well-established area containing a diverse range of approaches with no obvious prospect of an emergent consensus. Hank Johnston has occupied a prominent place within this area throughout his career and the current volume openly acknowledges the shifting ground that constitutes cultural approaches. The aim is to extend established uses of cultural approaches beyond the dominant focus on how movements, or movement organizations, frame issues as part of the mobilization process by presenting 'cutting-edge empirical research'. Key cultural processes identified include narratives, cultural performances, the place of music, art, theatre, and cultures of resistance (p. 4).

By adopting this agenda Johnson seeks to analytically reduce the 'buzzing world of complexity and interrelatedness' typifying the movement milieu through a focus on 'performances, artefacts and ideations' (p. 8). Despite the emphasis upon the performative and narrative aspects of movement cultures there remains a discernible focus on political opportunity structures, movement success and causal analysis (e.g. pp. 5–6). The cultural analysis undertaken in many of the chapters is orientated towards the relationship between movements and established political opportunity structures and issues like success.

Essays by Francesca Polleta, David Meyer, and Gary Alan Fine emphasize the importance of story telling and narratives in social movements. Polleta's thought-provoking essay analyses the use of story telling in and about movements as a cultural

activity with strategic implications. The cultural stakes addressed include the practices associated with the choice of story to be told and the perceived risk of breaching wider cultural norms through the telling. Meyer juxtaposes tightly-controlled polities where ‘political authorities control mass media to present coherent, consistent, and self- and state-serving narratives’ with ‘actual democracies’ where claims to success are contested (p. 55). Within democracies, story telling is shown to play a key role in establishing collective accounts of causality within movements whilst also shaping, blunting, or distorting the future potential for mobilization. These arguments are carried through a consideration of the US civil rights movement. Fine’s essay continues the American focus, addressing the isolationist America First Committee, opposing US involvement in World War II. Fine asks how ‘movements respond when the identity of supporters is used to discredit their moral character?’ (p. 77). This underlines the importance of deviance frames, issues of boundary maintenance, and the significance of personalizing ideological issues for a movement’s reputation.

The section on new directions in cultural analysis develop work on speech act theory and protest discourse in an analysis of three Russian movements (Sveta Klimova); the role of emotions and deeper motivational factors shaping personal biographies in constituting the Women’s Peace movement in the former East Germany (Ingrid Miethe); and the importance of metaphoric analysis in a union dispute in Upper Clyde Shipyards in Scotland (Gabriel Ignatow). These contributions underline tensions between focusing upon forms of textual analysis and coding to derive cultural frames and focusing upon the cultural practices of movement activists. Miethe argues that Goffman’s emphasis upon the process of keying and re-keying of initial frames makes framing an iterative process through which activists continually reconstitute frames in the face of changing material circumstances. This is a tension which will continue to feature prominently as forms of frame analysis engage with the global flows of cultures which have impacted on the movement milieu since the 1990s.

The implications of the global domain and multiple networks feature in work on strategy, innovation, and cultural performance. Donatella della Porta’s chapter on the Social Forum movement and attention to the strategizing of New York Activists by John Krinsky, writing with Colin Barker, move in this direction. Drawing on research within the European Social Forum, della Porta addresses the complexity of multiple networks of movements uniting in open spaces to pursue innovative forms of deliberative democratic practice. The tensions arising from maintaining open boundaries of participation and a commitment to horizontal organizational forms are interpreted around three main axes: weakening traditional identities resulting from ‘post-Fordist society’ (p. 206); the postmodern emphasis upon the individual (p. 207); and neo-liberalism’s corrosive impact on public trust in formal politics (p. 207). A preoccupation with the disappearance of the study of local social forums concludes the essay which does not engage with the continued vibrancy of the forum movement.

Krinsky and Barker’s essay introduces cultural-historical activity theory (CHAT) to social movement studies as a methodology to engage with strategy. CHAT permits engagement with cultural and emotional resources that rational actor and game theory approaches exclude. The emphasis on complex, dialogic, multiple-actor interactions is derived from Mikhail Bakhtin’s emphasis that cultural dynamics are shaped by utterance, genre, multivocality, and dialogue (p. 214). The case study of Community Voices Heard in New York underlines the importance of shifts in the surrounding environment of a

movement, leading to an emphasis on the importance of ‘immanence’ (p. 221). Attention to immanence includes the need to accommodate changes in the environment, where once monolithic obstacles can become points of dialogical intervention. This short and immensely stimulating essay concludes by emphasizing that movement strategizing and attempts to theorize the activity ‘implicates multiple levels of social reality, from the most immediate and local to the global’ (p. 225). This means that strategy can neither be read off from a general theory nor attributed to local agency. The multiple co-causative factors addressed by CHAT offer a promising way forward.

The final section on resistant cultures includes Hank Johnston’s analysis of the relationship between strategic Islam and Chechen nationalism based on the study of transformational grammar within a range of texts, including newspapers. The analysis of grammatical structures is presented as a ‘way to analyze newspaper data to capture the basic structures of action’ (p. 235). Johnston claims that this approach brings together and integrates the linguistic turn in cultural studies and the performative approach to culture (p. 253). Darcy Leach and Sebastian Haunss’ essay concludes the volume with a timely study on the relationship between ‘scenes’ and social movements. Given the prominence given to counter culture in the formative era of the so-called New Social Movements, this is a timely essay that seeks to re-situate the cultural significance of ‘scenes’ in the context of the increasingly complex networked interactions that typify the contemporary movement milieu. This valuable conceptual work is developed empirically by contrasting the Berlin and Hamburg German Autonomous Movement ‘scenes’.

This collection of essays will be useful within advanced level undergraduate and taught postgraduate courses on social movement studies. It will also act as a resource for postgraduates, researchers, and academics engaging with the cultural dynamics of increasingly networked social movements.

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Globalization and Third World Women: Exploitation, Coping and Resistance

Ligaya Lindio-McGovern and Isidor Wallimann (Eds)

Ashgate Global Connections Series, Farnham, Ashgate, 2009, xiii + 214 pp., £55,

ISBN 978-0-7546-7463-4 (hardback)

This inter-disciplinary and international collection of essays defies attempts to pigeon-hole it. The diverse chapters speak to an array of specialisms including studies of globalization, migration, social movements, women, gender, and development. They also cover a variety of topics – ranging from sex-trafficking to information communication technologies – across several continents. The common thread of the tome is a focus on the adverse, gendered effects of neo-liberal globalization. Indeed, the phrase ‘Third World Women’ is used conceptually to refer to working (waged and unwaged) women in both the North and South and to highlight the inequalities produced or exacerbated by neo-liberalism. Each

chapter reflects on this theme in different ways and considers how social equality might be advanced.

The editors' introduction outlines the key themes and arguments and attempts to think through responses and alternatives to neo-liberalism. An outline of analytical shifts from Women in Development (WID) to Gender and Development seemingly locates the volume theoretically, but this focus is absent from most papers. Care is also taken to specify which aspects of (corporate) globalization are under scrutiny, but subsequent chapters refer sweepingly to globalization *per se*. The ten chapters are a mix too – some offering case studies, others theoretical insights, and yet more seeking to analyse contemporary conditions and possible alternatives.

Several chapters explore the varied impact of neo-liberal restructuring on labour and labour relations. Ally's work on migrant domestic workers in South Africa notes how progressive labour legislation protecting citizens has been subverted by the exploitation of regional inequalities to provide cheap labour. The global flow of domestic and caring work is theorized by Gimenez as de-gendering reproductive work since migrant women – the traditional carers – seek employment elsewhere. Magalit-Rodriguez offers a more bottom-up account of these processes, focusing on an international social movement organization of Filipina migrant workers. Ferguson then provides a counter-point to Gimenez in focusing on the coping strategies of Mexican women marginalized by neo-liberal economic trends. Ferguson sees the rise of co-operatives as creating a 'solidarity political economy' and highlights global interconnections in calling for mutual aid networks (such as Fair Trade initiatives) linking the North and South. These inter-connections are taken up in Lacsamana's paper which analyses developments in Filipina-American feminist theorizing. She notes how 'peminism' has come to reflect the current location of its middle-class practitioners in the United States and urges theorists to reconnect to the more macro historical processes of imperialism, labour migration, and exploitation.

Chapters Nine and Ten offer different takes on attempts to empower African women. Asiedu analyses UNIFEM's emphasis on information communication technology to reveal the underlying WID/modernization theory assumptions that privilege expert knowledge and equate development to economic progress. Dibia's call for gender justice in Africa then notes how the twin ideologies of the state (women do not need to work) and development agencies (vulnerable women need welfare projects) perpetuate the marginalization of women. In concluding, though, he echoes the WID perspective critiqued by Asiedu in asserting that women's capacities are currently wasted.

The remaining three papers speak to the general theme of neo-liberal globalization but have very different foci. Brownhill and Turner offer a case study of land-rights struggles in Kenya and the coalitions of interest between local elites and global powers that launched a counter-insurgency and ultimately fuelled the post-election violence in 2008. Turner and Brownhill then outline three movements to prevent oil extraction in Nigeria, Costa Rica, and Ecuador charting the emergence of alternatives to capitalist-driven ecocide. They note how international practices of energy production inevitably give local struggles a global character. Purkayastha and Majumdar, finally, revisit the complex dynamics of corporate globalization in their chapter on sex trafficking in South Asia. They note how the World Wide Web facilitates the flow ideas, but also contributes to the spread of racialized and gendered imageries that are marketed through porn. They note how the focus on women means that the male consumers are largely ignored – but such gender analysis is rare in this book.

The volume suffers from some internal contradictions and abstraction from the micro-dynamics of people's struggles. The critique of neo-liberal globalization, thus, leads to a focus on the state as a site for transformative action: Chavez is portrayed as a state leader who has 'responded to the demands of the poor for control of resources' (p. 10). This celebration of the Venezuelan case slightly jars with Turner and Brownhill's account of efforts to keep fossil fuels in the ground. The marginalization of indigenous communities and environmentalists in the exploitation of natural resources, furthermore, cautions against top-down imposed solutions rather than the collective reclamation of the commons seen in the accounts of local and transnational grass-roots movements.

The volume's interdisciplinary and international scope means it spans literatures that often exist in ignorance of each other. This is, however, also a weakness in that it is unclear where its main contribution or intended audience lies. The prescriptions for change suggest a desire to engage with people's struggles, but many of the chapters are written in inaccessible academic language. Within academia, however, the failure to systematically engage with existing literature, the poor editing, and the variations in style (some chapters have minimal references, others three pages) mean that this volume could fall between the gaps. That would be a shame as the book offers a review of where we are, a demand for change, and a call for further research.

For all the naïve optimism of some of the prescriptions for change, the chapters in the volume offer many insights into the complex and often pernicious impacts of neo-liberal globalization. They detail the global economic, social, and political contexts within which resistance occurs and chart some inspiring efforts to create a more equitable and sustainable world.

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Routine Politics and Violence in Argentina: The Grey Zone of State Power

Javier Auyero

Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007, xviii + 190 pp., £40, ISBN 978-0-5218-7236-2 (hardback); £55, ISBN978 – 0 – 5216 – 9411 – 7(paperback)

Routine Politics and Violence in Argentina: The Grey Zone of State Power is an original book, and one that charts a territory that is seldom studied by Argentine sociology and political science: the intersection of day-to-day politics with exceptional political violence.

It seeks to explain the lootings (*saqueos*) that took place in Argentina in December 2001. Argentina was then living through profound economic crisis, which finally resulted in the government defaulting on its sovereign debt in January 2002. Unemployment climbed to 30 per cent and poverty rose to 50 per cent. The measures taken by then-president Fernando De La Rúa – who froze all bank assets and declared martial law – triggered food riots in the populous and impoverished areas surrounding the cities of

Buenos Aires, Rosario, and Neuquén, among others. The riots were the biggest ever in the country's history, and they had a profound impact in the communities and the media.

The main hypothesis of the book is that the lootings were not spontaneous but that they were a complex occurrence in which members of the police and political brokers (*punteros*) belonging to the Peronist party were involved.

Ever since the publication of his widely-read book, *Poor People's Politics*, Auyero has been among the leading Argentine scholars in the study of the power-brokering structures of Peronism. According to Auyero, Peronism relies for its electoral success among the poor on a network of local bosses (*punteros*) who are subordinated to (but not necessarily controlled by) governors and mayors, and who perform two functions: they distribute resources – from unemployment subsidies to food – among their neighbors, and they 'collect' political support in return. *Punteros* are self-appointed leaders who reside in the neighborhoods, and they are often women.

In his previous books, Auyero focused on Peronist routine electoral politics; in this one, he wants to explore its involvement in exceptional political violence. Auyero identifies a *grey zone* in which political violence, petty crime, and clientelism coexist (p. 49).

Auyero's thesis at the beginning of the book is that Peronist leaders and *punteros* helped organize the *saqueos* to destabilize De La Rúa. This was the prevalent view at the time, and also the opinion of De la Rúa himself. The thesis can be summarized thus: the riots were not 'anarchic outbursts', but 'relational' events in which small groups of people who were connected in some way (through friendship, family, and/or community ties) assembled, remained, and dispersed together; and the lootings were 'selective' (for instance, only small stores were looted) (p. 15). More importantly, the book claims that *punteros* tended to be present at the lootings (p. 22).

The book contains a wealth of information and rich attention to detail. In it the interviewed subjects are allowed to speak in their own voice. Compelling evidence is accumulated to explain the micro-dynamics of the lootings in several neighborhoods in the areas adjacent to Buenos Aires. And the final chapter, in which a predictive model for the lootings is presented, is an attempt to connect the realms of ethnographic micro-description and predictive macro-theorizing; that is, the first chapters present evidence gathered using qualitative techniques (such as in-depth interviews and press content analysis) while the final chapter develops a probabilistic model that attempts to generate a predictive framework. The book presents valuable answers to questions that, though crucial, are seldom made. It also, however, fails to follow up some of the very issues it sheds light on; as a consequence, some of its conclusions feel somewhat incomplete.

First of all, the book itself does not make such an impenetrable case for the involvement of Peronist *punteros* as it promises. It presents three factors that explain the occurrence of lootings: the presence of police, the size of the stores, and the presence of *punteros*. The first two factors are strong predictors: no lootings happened where police were patrolling, and the looters only raided small stores. The third factor, however, seems more doubtful: strikingly, the presence of *punteros* was reported in only 52 per cent of the events.

In fact, the book itself concludes that, even when present, *the involvement of punteros in the lootings cannot be proven beyond doubt*. It appears that, while they might have instigated lootings in some cases, they had no impact in others, and they might even have tried to prevent some lootings (p. 120). This finding, which contradicts the original thesis of the book, is remarkable in itself; however, it is only presented in passing, and the

reader is left wanting to know more about what the author makes of this apparent discrepancy.

The second unanswered question is to what extent these findings can be generalized beyond the context of Peronist politics in the province of Buenos Aires. At the beginning of the book the author implies that the relational patterns described in the book are unique to Peronist political brokers (p. 62). But in subsequent chapters the author discusses lootings that took place elsewhere and interviews subjects from Rosario, Santiago del Estero, Neuquén, and Tucumán. Yet some of these places were not governed by the Peronist party at the time. Neuquén was governed by an independent provincial party and Rosario was governed by the Socialists. Thus, it is not clear if the lootings were *only* a Peronist-related phenomenon or if their significance is irrespective of party structures.

In short, Auyero's book clearly identifies 'grey zones' of political action that call for more research. He also makes a plausible argument about the need to use a relational framework to comprehend political interactions and this is seen as an advance from methodological individualism; moreover, he offers a good example of methodological complementarity by combining ethnographic techniques with formal analysis. If there are some instances in which the reader is left wanting to know more, however, this is nothing but the mark of promising research waiting to be done.

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Deliberation Behind Closed Doors: Transparency and Lobbying in the European Union

Daniel Naurin

Colchester, ECPR Press, 2007, 184 pp., £27, ISBN 978-0-9552-4884-9 (paperback)

This book makes a refreshingly empirical contribution to discussions of the European Union and its democratic deficit, specifically on the possible role of increased transparency in alleviating the latter. Naurin rightly challenges us to think about transparency and its effects – to 'take transparency seriously' rather than merely assume its panacea-like effects for European Union democracy and legitimacy. With this in mind, Naurin's work focuses on investigating what deliberative democracy theorists label the civilizing effect of publicity.

The study begins with a discussion of the merits attributed to transparency, especially among theorists of deliberative democracy, who argue that it will lead to better decision-making by shaming actors into avoiding purely selfish behaviour. Transparency, which may lead to publicity, will force actors out of a market or individually-oriented logic into one where they must defend their positions before those affected. It is this theory that the author seeks to test, in particular in light of two challenges to its veracity from existing research on European Union comitology procedures, where deliberative qualities were

found to take place despite secrecy, and on activists whose rhetoric becomes less civilized and more selfish when speaking in public.

Naurin tests the theory of the civilizing effect of publicity by focusing on business lobbyists in the European Union and Sweden – with Brussels representing a secretive and opaque system and Sweden an extremely open one where all communications made between lobbyists and government departments are publicly available. The challenge of finding out what is said in secret lobby meetings is overcome in an inventive way, through interviews with top lobby professionals in the two locations asked to comment on how they would go about lobbying a fictional case, after being presented with different types of possible arguments. Confidential letters from industry lobbies to the European Commission, later made publicly accessible, and similar documents from the open Swedish context, are also analysed to check the interview results. The author thus devises a method for systematically comparing industry lobbyists' behaviour 'backstage', in private, and 'frontstage', in public, by coding the different arguments as self-, other- or ideal-regarding.

The study concludes that the theory of publicity's civilizing effect does not bear out in either of the cases. Indeed, private lobby letters to the European Commission are found to be more civilized even than Swedish equivalents, which are freely available to the public. When market actors speak in public, conversely, they tend to use even less civil ('other- or ideal-regarding') arguments than they do in private. Naurin points out that the civilizing effect as theorized within deliberative democracy does not therefore lie in rendering politics public, but in a forum effect exerted when market actors enter the political forum. That is, the civilizing effect takes place earlier than imagined, and is a forum effect. Paradoxically, the findings against this reasoning of deliberative theory end up supporting one of its basic assumptions – politics is empirically demonstrated to be different from the market, as supposed by economic views of politics, and indeed much pluralist literature on interest groups.

This empirical contribution to the debate on the possibilities for improving democratic legitimacy in the European Union is especially useful in making us think about concepts we often assume to be beneficial without any real consideration. The research design is thorough and convincing, and the book is very readable and informative, especially on the mechanics of how lobbying takes place on a day-to-day basis in the European Union. The interview data from professional lobbyists provides particularly interesting insights from actors that are not often heard in empirical studies on this subject. The findings are timely and useful at a time when the European Union is seeking to improve its democratic credentials, and the author is careful to point out their practical connotations in his warnings against ignoring input legitimacy at the expense of output quality.

Extending the analysis to comprise other actors involved in European Union policy processes would undoubtedly improve its robustness and generalizability. The author correctly points out that business lobbies are the hardest test for this theory, since they are the most self-interested actors present in the field. Nevertheless, it would be interesting to analyse the discourses of NGOs and SMOs to draw comparisons with the literature the author cites as the basis for his investigation of the theory of publicity's civilizing effect, or even those of member state government actors. The analysis of the discourse could also perhaps have benefitted from the literature on framing. This book will appeal to many: students of the European Union in general and its democratic deficit in particular; students

of deliberative democracy, and especially its practical applications; and interest representation scholars of all persuasions.

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