

BOOK REVIEWS

Peter K. Enns and Christopher Wlezien, eds. *Who Gets Represented?*
New York: Russell Sage Foundation. 2011. 386 pp. \$45.00 (paper).

CHRISTOPHER FARICY
Washington State University

Who Gets Represented? analyzes preference differences across socioeconomic and racial groups in American society and how these differences affect public policy. This book presents an excellent collection of scholarship on public opinion and equal representation that I would recommend for upper-level undergraduate and graduate courses in public opinion, public policy, or sociology. In the following section, I evaluate the first part of the book, which in some cases challenges and in others adds nuance to the accepted wisdom on group public opinion.

Marisa Abrajano and Keith Poole use a novel matching technique to create a large-*N* study of ethnic and racial policy preferences. Surprisingly, Abrajano and Poole find that blacks and Asians are closely aligned in their preferences for the role of government in society, whereas Latinos share more in common with whites. They go on to argue that their results challenge the idea that there is a natural alliance between blacks and Latinos. I found this statement to be slightly overstated, given that Asians and Latinos reported similar means on a seven-point scale, and in subsequent questions on welfare spending and education assistance there were clear similarities between blacks and Latinos that were not shared with Asians.

Two chapters in this first section necessarily complicate our previous understanding of the relationship between income and policy preferences. Christopher Ellis and Joseph Daniel Ura add fresh insight to relationship among income, education level, and partisanship. They argue that although education level and income are highly correlated they remain distinct and interact in ways that at times reinforce and at other times counteract individual effects on policy preferences. Ellis and Ura theorize and find evidence for distinct categories of citizen responsiveness, based on income and education, to elite-level polarization on economic and cultural issues. Specifically, they show that citizens with low levels of education and high income value cultural issues more than economic ones, whereas citizens with high levels of education and relatively low levels of income sort themselves out on scope of government issues. Although other studies have demonstrated that the culture

wars are fought among the wealthy, this study shows that it is really the interaction of wealth and education that determines which policy area citizens use to organize their preferences.

Katherine Cramer Walsh uses listening investigations, which were composed of an analysis of thirty-two groups in twenty-three cities, as a means to study the variation in citizen attitudes toward government and healthcare policy. She found that although all groups displayed an anti-government attitude the underlying structure of these attitudes was different depending on a participant's socioeconomic status. In particular, lower-income-group participants exhibited a general distrust of authority, whether it was government, big business, or private health insurance companies. Conversely, wealthier individuals focused their ire on government officials and showed a greater sense of political efficacy, often offering suggestions for how they might have constructed a different and better healthcare policy.

David Hopkins and Laura Stoker examine the strength of partisanship across American states and time. They find that the influence of partisanship on vote choice has become stronger across states, thereby crowding out other predictors of the vote. According to their analysis, the relationship between partisanship and vote choice was diversified throughout the 1970s and 1980s, with some states showing strong associations and others weak. Interestingly, they demonstrate that conservative Democrats were spread throughout the country and not just confined to the South. Since the 1980s there has been a national convergence or sorting-out process that has resulted in higher levels of uniformity across all states in the strength of partisanship as a predictor of vote choice, at both the individual and aggregate levels.

The second part of the book examines which groups in society have their preferences represented by government officials through policy changes. A debate develops in this section over whether there is equal representation of groups in the United States, and if not, whether some groups, specifically the rich, have disproportionate influence on public policy. The results here are not good news for the principle of equal representation in American democracy. There is evidence that policy preferences differ across income cohorts and that the American political system favors the policy preferences of the rich over the poor. In the next section, I briefly review how each study either confirms or challenges the notion of growing representational inequality between the rich and the poor in the United States.

James Druckman and Lawrence Jacobs—using President Reagan's private polling data—demonstrate that distinct policies are constructed to serve different party constituencies. In particular, during Reagan's presidency, independents and the wealthy had the most influence on the president's domestic agenda. On defense issues, the Republican Party targeted their positions toward the party's most loyal voters, mainly conservatives. Finally, on value issues, it was Baptists who had the most influence on Reagan's positions.

Next, Elizabeth Rigby and Gerald Wright examine how state officials respond to wealthy versus low-income constituencies. The study finds that state policymakers respond disproportionately to the rich (and to some extent the middle class) as opposed to working-class voters. Similar to [Gelman et al. \(2007\)](#), Rigby and Wright extend their analysis to examine differences across state-level context by examining responsiveness in rich versus poor states. In poor states, there was a socioeconomic divide on economic issues, whereas in wealthier states, the division between voters fell along the lines of social issues. Altogether, the clearest failure of representation occurred in poor states on economic issues where working-class preferences were systematically ignored by policymakers.

Yosef Bhatti and Robert Erikson reexamine the relationship among income class, public opinion, and senatorial responsiveness from Larry Bartels's *Unequal Democracy*. Their work strengthens Bartels's findings by applying new data and methods. First, the authors conducted an analysis that rescaled the income class of the respondents using state-level measures of income distribution (as opposed to using national income categories) and applied voting weights to the income categories. Their results reconfirmed the unequal responsiveness of senators to voters based upon income. Next, the authors reestimated Bartels's models using two new and larger data sets. These new tests showed no statistically significant difference among income cohorts, although these results may be a function of multicollinearity in the data.

Martin Gilens examines how divergent preferences across policy areas contribute to inequality in representation. The study uses a vast array of data that links the policy preferences of voters across income groups to actual policy outcomes. Gilens's study concludes that the policy preferences of the rich are widely represented in the United States, whereas those of the middle and working classes are not. And, in line with the idea of conflict extension, the income divide of public opinion does not only affect economic issues but also is evident in moral and defense issues. Interestingly, the heavily weighted political responsiveness to the rich resulted in more conservative economic policies than would be evident with equal representation and moved value issues in a more liberal direction.

Christopher Wlezien and Stuart Soroka examine macro-level public opinion across income groups on multiple issue domains and find little evidence of differences in policy preferences between the rich and the poor (except on welfare). Additionally, they find that parallel publics all respond to changes in government spending levels thermostatically, with higher levels of spending causing more public conservatism and vice versa. These results call into question a large representation gap between the rich and the poor, at least at the aggregate level. However, the authors note that working-class preferences are the least responsive to actual spending changes and that the only gap between rich and poor preferences is over arguably the most important issue to poorer voters, which is welfare spending.

Wesley Hussey and John Zaller study the relationship between political parties and representation to determine whether parties are more responsive to their own agendas or to the policy preferences of their constituents. Their results are mixed in that political parties seem to take into account both public opinion and party goals. Before 1940, political parties were more responsive to the party agenda than to their constituents' policy demands. In the modern era, legislators have better balanced voter concerns with party goals, though the authors argue that, in total, political parties tend to pursue their own agenda. In conclusion, this volume makes an important contribution to understanding who gets what from government and the politics of income inequality in America.

Reference

Gelman, Andrew, David Park, Boris Shor, Joseph Bafumi, and Jeronimo Cortina. 2007. *Red State, Blue State, Rich State, Poor State: Why Americans Vote the Way They Do*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

doi:10.1093/poq/nfs068

Advance Access publication 7 February 2013

Donald R. Kinder and Allison Dale-Riddle. *The End of Race? Obama, 2008, and Racial Politics in America*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 2012. 320 pp. \$30.00 (paper).

MICHAEL TESLER

Brown University

Many commentators were quick to anoint Barack Obama's presidency as the onset of post-racial America. But does the election of the country's first black president really mean the *End of Race*? The answer, according to Donald Kinder and Allison Dale-Riddle's outstanding account of contemporary racial politics in America, is a resounding NO. Instead, the authors show that Obama's race simultaneously activated both white opposition rooted in racial resentment and black support rooted in racial solidarity.

This book is not just an account of the 2008 election or even of racial politics in modern American society, though. Kinder and Dale-Riddle, in fact, begin *The End of Race* by putting forth a general framework for understanding group-based politics—one that extends to social cleavages other than race and to times and places other than the contemporary United States. Their self-described "Theory of Voting with Social Group in Mind" puts forth two key propositions: "First, social groups enter the voter's decision either through identification with the in-group or through attitude toward out-groups. Second, the aspects of group identity and group attitude that become important in