

identifying and studying them individually. Finally, the label “Internet democracy” is questionable. Arguably, there is no such thing. Particularly since the Internet is such a multifaceted medium and houses so many different communication endeavors, its democratic impulses (as well as its less democratic ones) are also quite varied, ranging from populist to deliberative approaches to democracy, with others in between no doubt (audience democracy? hit-and-run democracy? etc.).

Let’s move on therefore to a range of empirical and normative concerns about the still evolving role of the Internet in politics, aiming eventually to sum them up in conceptualizations that will be more suited to contemporary political communication conditions than classic versions of democracy can be, without accepting the rigidities of elite versions of democracy.

**Measuring Democracy: A Bridge Between Scholarship and Politics.** By Gerardo L. Munck. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. 200p. \$ 28.00. doi:10.1017/S153759271100082X

— Henry E. Hale, *The George Washington University*

Democracy is surely one of the most important concepts in political science, but it is also one of the most elusive. Two and a half millennia after its Athenian incarnation, scholars continue to debate what constitutes its essence in the modern world. Is democracy only about elections? Are civil rights, a market economy, the rule of law, or human development necessary components? Is “democracy” the same thing across different cultural contexts? As one can imagine, the challenges are still greater for those who want to reduce the concept to numbers that can facilitate the systematic study of patterns across time and space.

With this remarkable little book, Gerardo Munck succeeds in adding clarity to a muddled discussion, presenting a distinct conceptualization of democracy and putting the effort to quantify it on much more solid logical ground. Informed by both theory and practice, Munck’s effort is important reading for those in both academia and the policymaking community who wish either to use or to create data on democracy or the lack of it.

After laying out the different uses to which data on democracy are put in today’s world, Munck launches into a critique of existing measures and how they are used. While all are found wanting, Freedom House’s Freedom in the World indices come under particularly strong criticism, primarily for their lack of theoretical grounding (e.g., why should the index be additive instead of multiplicative?), their murky coding rules that complicate replication, and their methodology’s tendency to change from year to year without adjustment of prior scores to ensure consistency.

At the same time, Munck develops some important principles for how indices of democracy should be constructed. Most fundamentally, they should be theory driven.

Analysts must explicitly disaggregate the concept of democracy, paying special attention to different levels of disaggregation. If democracy, for example, consists of the two attributes of contestation and participation, then each of these attributes break down into several components. Freedom of the press and the right to form parties, for example, are components of contestation. Good indices must carefully distinguish between these different levels, avoiding redundancy or the conflating of levels. In addition, theory must guide how different components and attributes are aggregated in the index. For example, Freedom House treats aggregation as an additive task, counting and averaging point scores. But Munck ultimately argues for a multiplicative approach, meaning that if a country scores a zero on an essential component of democracy, it scores a zero on the larger index.

The central contribution of *Measuring Democracy* is to propose an actual measure, the Electoral Democracy Index (EDI), which the author together with Jay Verkuilen developed to evaluate democracy in Latin America for the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The index itself is elegant and commonsensical, breaking “democracy” down to the following four attributes: the “right to vote,” “clean elections,” “free elections,” and the filling of the most important state offices (legislative and executive) by elections (p. 55). Importantly, “each attribute is held to be a necessary condition” (p. 57). Thus where an additive index would rate a country with universal suffrage and clean elections for all important state offices, but with only half-free elections, as still seven eighths democratic (i.e., pretty good), Munck’s index would rate that country only half democratic. Munck also develops an admirably clear scale that expert coders can use to assign the corresponding numeric values, a scale developed according to principles he helpfully lays out. He presents specific data from Latin America that reveal the index to be highly reasonable.

While compelling, the EDI does have some weaknesses, at least as described in the book. For one thing, the multiplicative nature of the index can magnify any problems in the definition of the attributes or the coding rules. Take, for example, the attribute of clean elections. In essence, on a three-point scale, a country scores a zero if there are major irregularities that determine the outcome of an election, and a one if irregularities exist but do not have a major impact on the outcome (p. 58). But where an election is close, a small amount of fraud can determine the outcome. Thus if we assume a small amount of fraud is a constant, it could be the case that a country moves from a one to a zero on the “clean elections” criteria not because fraud increased, but because the election got more competitive, meaning that the fraud became decisive. The consequences would be severe, as the zero would multiply with the other attribute measures to produce a zero for the whole democracy rating, equating such a country with North Korea on the EDI.

The book is also not clear on exactly how what many (e.g., Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way, “Why Democracy Needs a Level Playing Field,” *Journal of Democracy* 21, no.1 (2010): 57–68) call “the level playing field” factors in to the EDI. This would seem to fit most naturally under “free elections,” but Munck explicitly notes that the “free elections” attribute “does not include factors that affect the ability of parties and candidates to compete in equality of conditions, such as public financing, access to the mass media, and the use of public resources” (p. 58). It is also not included in the other categories as far as I could tell. This is puzzling, because later in the book, Munck develops a very promising method and associated index (the Index of Democratic Elections) for evaluating whether elections are democratic that explicitly includes a level playing field for candidates as an indicator of whether elections are competitive (p. 90). The apparent omission of the level playing field from the EDI renders it unable to make crucial distinctions among degrees of democracy in highly clientelistic social contexts, where regimes can be very sophisticated in manipulating mass media and economic levers to disadvantage opposition.

These particular problems are, of course, eminently correctable within the framework of the index, and indeed part of the value of the EDI is that it lends itself to relatively easy adjustment. And I do not rule out that these issues may simply be the result of a lack of clarity in the book that would easily be sorted out in practice. But because the multiplicative nature of the index can magnify certain minor problems, great care must be taken when employing it. And the need for such care, including the need to avoid relying solely on an index for one’s evaluations, is also a point the author himself makes.

Munck concludes the book with a discussion of the meaning of “democracy” more generally and how to develop measures that go beyond the EDI, which captures only “electoral democracy.” The author rules the rule of law out of the definition of full democracy while arguing that “the attainment of social integration” (p. 127) is a necessary component. Not everyone will agree, of course, but the book breaks important new ground and is an excellent example of social science fruitfully applied to significant real-world problems.

**A Moral Theory of Political Reconciliation.** By Colleen Murphy. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 222p. \$85.00. doi:10.1017/S1537592711000831

— Stephen L. Esquith, *Michigan State University*

This is a well-argued analysis of some of the damage that civil conflicts and repressive governments do to political relationships, especially in postauthoritarian transitional societies. Based on this analysis, Colleen Murphy then goes on to suggest how these damaged political relationships among government officials and citizens can be rebuilt

and possibly even transformed in a more democratic direction. Her arguments, objections, and counterarguments are philosophical in style. That is, the levels of abstraction are many, the conceptual connections complex, and the claims carefully qualified. Murphy helpfully pauses from time to time to summarize her progress, and she ties the threads of the argument together in a conclusion that highlights her most important claims and their implications.

At the most general level, Murphy argues that civil conflict and government repression are morally harmful to political relationships because of the damage they do to reciprocity and moral agency, or, as Murphy sometimes says, “reciprocal agency.” She makes this point repeatedly at different levels of abstraction, and the cumulative effect is very powerful.

Murphy begins by distinguishing her view of reconciliation from several others that she borrows from and improves on. Perhaps the most familiar view is that reconciliation depends on the forgiveness of perpetrators by victims. Given her use of the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to illustrate several features of her own argument, it would be natural for her to adopt this view. Wisely, however, she reminds us that while forgiveness focuses on the elimination of resentment between victims and perpetrators, this is not the primary task of political reconciliation. Emphasis on “internal change in attitude overlooks . . . the conditions that facilitate and support injustice and oppression” (p. 11). A similar problem arises when reconciliation is defined as the creation or restoration of the conditions of trust. Here, too, the emphasis is too narrowly placed on “psychological attitudes and normative expectations” (p. 16) while ignoring the role that institutions must play in a theory of *political* reconciliation. Trust does play a crucial part in Murphy’s theory, but it is not modeled on the trust of, say, husband and wife (p. 15). The dynamics of fear and (dis-)trust between public officials and citizens, and among citizens themselves in transitional societies, are heavily mediated by political and legal institutions in ways that familial trust and distrust are not.

An “adequate theory” of political reconciliation, according to Murphy, is one that can explain why certain interactions damage political relationships and, more importantly, “why such damage is of moral concern” (p. 23). By analyzing how violence and repression have affected three normative frameworks (the rule of law, political trust, and the capabilities of citizens to achieve free and equal citizenship), Murphy prepares the ground for her own assessment of two strategies to repair this damage: truth commissions and international criminal tribunals.

First, Murphy positions her work alongside the classic theories of Lon Fuller and Joseph Raz. This section of the book is clear and methodical but contains few surprises. The formal requirements of the rule of law are enough to rule out the possibility of a systematically unjust legal order.