

For the authors, this is the subset of voters who may drive the fears of electoral retribution expressed by lawmakers. However, the larger takeaway is arguably that lawmakers who oppose compromise fundamentally misperceive the demands of their constituents. Given that an estimated 20% of Americans participated in congressional primaries in 2018, and experimental results show that an overwhelming majority of primary voters favored a compromise outcome, it seems unwise for legislators to cast votes against compromises out of fears of incurring the wrath of what amounts to single-digit shares of the electorate.

The authors close by exploring what could be done to encourage lawmakers to broker compromises. In contrast to others who simply speculate about the practical implications of their scholarship, the authors do something far more interesting: they use experiments to test possible interventions to encourage lawmakers to consider compromises. They focus on two possibilities: emphasis on shared goals and conducting policy negotiations in private sessions. They find little evidence that decision makers are more supportive of compromise when primed to focus on shared goals. However, lawmakers express greater optimism about the possibility of reaching successful compromises in private meetings than in public deliberations.

Across their experiments, the authors focus on a single-dimension policy space, where a compromise represents any policy proposal that improves on the status quo while falling short of the legislators' ideal outcome. This definition of compromise represents a useful simplification within an experimental setting and allows the authors to consider the sensitivity of support for compromise to the size of the policy gains that are made. A limitation of this approach is that it may oversimplify how lawmakers evaluate compromises in practice. Compromises are defined as agreements where both sides have to make concessions to achieve policy gains. It is arguably the cost of those concessions that makes compromises more challenging to support, rather than the failure to achieve all of the party's goals. But within a single-dimension policy space, it is not necessarily clear that anything has been ceded to the other side: compromises are presented as outcomes that simply fall short of an ideal outcome. In practice, lawmakers struggle with compromises because they must weigh the value of what is gained in a compromise against the concessions needed to meet the demands of the opposing side, where costs and benefits are rarely on the same metric. Investigating how lawmakers grapple with these trade-offs will be important to explore in future work.

Through their innovative research approach, the authors provide valuable insights into how lawmakers perceive the demands of their constituents. Although they focus on primary voters as a force that might dissuade legislators from compromises, many of the other findings

from the book are equally intriguing. The average lawmaker is happy to sign on to compromises, regardless of whether that proposal comes from their own party or the opposing side. When members oppose compromises, it is not because they are stalling in the hopes of securing some better future outcome for their party; it is because they believe that it would alienate some portion of constituents they represent. This is a fascinating book that should be of interest both to those who want to better understand legislative behavior and to those who want to find ways to improve legislative productivity in a time of gridlock and polarization.

Clinton's Elections: 1992, 1996, and the Birth of a New Era of Governance. By Michael Nelson. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2020. 342p. \$34.95 cloth.
doi:10.1017/S1537592720002935

— Andrew Rudalevige , *Bowdoin College*
arudalev@bowdoin.edu

During the 2016 presidential election, Bill Clinton's checkered extramarital history rather than his policy pedigree took center stage, often pushing nominee Hillary Rodham Clinton's own talents into the wings. He did not help her campaign in 2008 much either. Recent flights of novelistic wishful thinking erase him from the Rodham electoral trajectory altogether.

But the threat of political oblivion was hardly new to Bill Clinton. He was pronounced "done" after losing his first reelection campaign for governor in 1980 and after accusations of womanizing and draft dodging engulfed the 1992 primaries. After the 1994 midterm elections, ABC reporter Sam Donaldson proclaimed, "It's over, I think, for President Clinton, no matter how hard he tries" (p. 173). Four years later, he would become only the second US president to be formally impeached.

Michael Nelson's new book reminds us of how many times Bill Clinton has been counted out, only to rebound like the "big rubber clown doll you had as a kid" (as Clinton himself told Newt Gingrich); "the harder you hit me, the faster I come back up" (p. 182). The self-proclaimed "comeback kid" of 1992 would win reelection in 1996—the first Democrat to do so in 60 years. He would survive impeachment and leave office with approval ratings upward of 65%. He likely would have won a third term in 2000, had the Constitution allowed him to run. Indeed, Al Gore's refusal to tout the administration's policy record during his own campaign that year may have cost him the presidency. As late as 2012, Clinton made a more fluent case for Barack Obama's reelection than the incumbent did; Obama gratefully called his predecessor his "Secretary of Explaining Stuff" (p. 212).

Thus, a central contribution of Nelson's account of the politics of the 1990s, as centered on the 1992 and 1996

elections, is to explore the political skill set that allowed such resilience—but that also, in part, bequeathed our current era of divided government. The campaign bookshelf stretches from journalistic inside-the-war-room books like John Heilemann and Mark Halperin's *Game Change* (2010) that descend from Theodore White's "Making of the President" series, to invaluable standards of statistical analysis such as the long-running "change and continuity" volumes anchored by Paul Abramson, John Aldrich, and David Rohde. (Readers traversing this range should make a long pitstop at Richard Ben Cramer's *What It Takes* [1992], in a category and class of its own.) Nelson steers a middle course, frequently and aptly referring to political science research while emphasizing narrative coherence and readability. Despite its title, the book gives close to equal time to the 1988 election as well, given its importance both to introducing the next decade's cast of characters and to the George H. W. Bush presidency and thus his prospects for reelection. That is a lot to cover. Yet Nelson masterfully synthesizes three campaigns and two presidencies—plus numerous would-be presidents—in 225 pages (the rest of the book contains the appendices and references, including a useful bibliographic essay).

Nelson does not rewrite the conventional wisdom about this period so much as write it with eloquence and coherence. This is not meant as faint praise: those (increasingly many) who do not remember these events in person will find a faithful and even graceful guide, whereas those who do remember can rely entirely on his curation. The high points are here, of course, from Bush's decision to break his 1988 promise not to raise taxes in pursuit of bipartisan deficit reduction—an example of good governance, if bad politics—to Clinton's 1996 "bridge to the 21st century" that countermanded his midterm shock two years earlier or at least bested Senate majority leader Bob Dole's "themelessness" (p. 198), and to the culture wars fueling the rise of the Gingrich GOP. Meanwhile, Pat Buchanan took advantage of the post-1968 entrepreneurial nominating system to mount a symbolic but damaging challenge emphasizing Bush's tax-hiking perfidy, while H. Ross Perot, "jug-eared, and twangy, clothed in what appeared to be a fifty-dollar suit and trimmed up with a fifty-cent haircut" (p. 94), won the largest share of the popular vote outside the two-party system since Teddy Roosevelt in 1912. From Bush's dire warnings that a Vice President Gore would bring Americans "up to our neck in owls" (p. 151) to Clinton's assessment of Dole as the only Republican candidate to "have any tall" (p. 188), Nelson shows his keen eye for both the big picture and the telling detail, for melding personalities with policy proposals. That Bill Clinton claimed Kenny G as his favorite musician in 1992 (see p. 129) would be libelous if not accurate, but it actually sums up quite a lot about his political style.

In some ways that "New Democrat" triangulation adeptly evaded polarization—certainly within the general

public and sometimes, especially in 1996 and 1997, even on Capitol Hill. Yet as Nelson makes clear, key shifts in American politics we now deplore (it is worth recalling academics' long support for "responsible party government") gestated in the evolving partisan, campaign finance, and media environments starting to bear sour fruit even by the early 1990s. Indeed, this book levels a new charge at Donald Trump: plagiarism. OK, not literally, as that would involve him writing something. But consider Nelson's depictions of Pat Buchanan's 1992 and 1996 campaigns, declaring a "cultural war" for the "soul of America" (p. 115), pushing protectionism (with NAFTA as "sellout of the American worker" [p. 186]) and isolationism, complete with "a 200 mile long 'Buchanan Fence' along the Mexican border to keep out immigrants" (p. 102). Indeed, as polls closed in the New Hampshire primary in 1992, Buchanan said, "We are going to make America great again, because there is nothing wrong with putting America first" (p. 104).

All that proved a losing and even frightening message even in 1996; 20 years later, of course, it won the day, if only 46% of the popular vote. How much of the difference is tied up in Bill Clinton's ability to navigate (and shape) the political landscape and how much in primary electorates' later rejection of his "neoliberal" brand of centrism is hard to answer. Clinton felt it was more important to win than to be "pure," policy-wise; activists in both parties are frequently not so sure. Indeed, Nelson's titular "new era of governance" is one of "de facto divided government" where the parties behave as if government is divided even when it is not. This "divided government in fact even when united in form" is riven by a refusal to cross party lines or to work cooperatively to improve policy, for fear it may help the other party stay in power at a time of partisan volatility (p. 216). As Morris Fiorina argues in *Unstable Majorities* (2017), one result is overreach, which in turn leads straight back to electoral turnover. Joe Biden's nomination in 2020 aimed to show that the middle ground can still be fertile and can still formulate popular policy change. If so, Nelson's exhumation of the 1990s may provide at least some lessons in how to do just that.

Making Young Voters: Converting Civic Attitudes into Civic Action. By John B. Holbein and D. Sunshine Hillygus. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020. 266p. \$99.99 cloth, \$34.99 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592720002649

— Stella M. Rouse , University of Maryland-College Park
srouse@umd.edu

It is a well-established axiom in politics that young people consistently vote at lower rates than older adults. This gap has consumed much of the work in political behavior, with no obvious solution for the disparity. The majority of research has focused on examining the causes of this voting