A Twenty-First Century U.S. Water Policy. By Juliet Christian-Smith and Peter H. Fleick, with Heather Cooley, Lucy Allen, Amy Vanderwarker, and Kate A. Berry. New York: Oxford University Press, 2012. 360p. $27.95.

Empire of Water: An Environmental and Political History of the New York City Water Supply. By David Soll. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013. 296p. $29.95.
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— Mark Lubell, *University of California Davis*

Given the necessity of water for human civilization, water policy and governance is one of the most important substantive topics in environmental policy. Water governance also provides a laboratory for studying core issues in political science, such as collective action, institutions, federalism, political power, and resource distribution. It is fair to say that water embodies Harold Laswell's famous definition of politics as "who gets what, when, how"—although in the case of water, "where" is equally significant. Both books reviewed here, David Soll's *Empire of Water* and *A Twenty-First Century U.S. Water Policy* by Juliet Christian-Smith and Peter Fleick and their colleagues, provide useful perspectives on these questions.

I review these books along three criteria. First, do they provide a substantive description of water policy that would be useful for teaching or general reading? Second, do the books advance a particular substantive argument with respect to water policy, for example about how to improve water policy or the evolution of water governance? Third, do the books attempt to use water policy to develop any deeper insights about governance or other social science theory and research? Overall, both books perform best on the substantive criterion, second best on the argument criterion, and third best on the overall contribution to social science. The rest of this review provides details about each criterion.

On the substantive front, Christian-Smith and Fleick and colleagues describe the overall status of United States water policy at the national level. Chapters cover many of the traditional topics in water policy, including water use, environmental justice, water quality, freshwater ecosystems, municipal water, and agriculture. They also include several newer topics, or at least topics that usually receive scant attention in overview books, such as tribal water issues, water and energy, and water and climate change. The chapters are high-level overviews, and necessarily skip some of the more intricate details of these complex topics. I particularly enjoyed the discussion of water use in the United States, which consolidates a variety of water-related data. The chapter on water quality provides a good overview of issues related to the 1972 Clean Water Act and 1974 Safe Drinking Water Act, while the chapter on climate change is a useful introduction to future challenges (albeit there needs to be more discussion of climate and hydrological models). Readers receive a basic tour of the major legal and institutional framework for U.S. water policy, and I will definitely consider using this book as a central text in any graduate or undergraduate water policy class.

In terms of forwarding an argument, the authors seek to set the agenda for twenty-first-century water policy with policy recommendations in different chapters, while the end of the book consolidates some overall recommendations for the U.S. system. The book begins with a discussion of the "soft path" of water development as an alternative approach that could move water policy into the future. The soft path is a more decentralized approach to water management, with an emphasis on integration, stakeholder engagement, and ecosystem services. This sets up the reader to expect a consistent argument throughout the book about how to move U.S. water policy toward the soft path.

In several ways, however, the argument is not sufficiently developed. The water policy recommendations, even those in the last chapter, do not systematically reflect on the principles of the soft path from the introduction. Paradoxically, many of the recommendations focus on a stronger role for the federal government and more centralized coordination, which seems at odds with the decentralization theme of the soft path. The authors really do not provide a critical discussion of the mix of local, state, and national-level institutions that make for the most sustainable and resilient policies at the level of local watersheds where the rubber hits the road. They make some passing references to purportedly more progressive and integrative water laws in other countries, without recognizing that most other countries have complex and fragmented water policies at multiple levels. Even in the chapter on freshwater ecosystems, they virtually ignore the emergence of a massive number of collaborative watershed partnerships in the United States, which involves thousands of local watershed partnerships, as well as large-scale ecosystem management programs like the Chesapeake Bay Program and the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Not only do these collaborative programs include many of the features of the soft path, but they are also the subject of a large and lively literature in political and policy science.

The authors do not make any significant contribution to social science theory or research on the topic of environmental governance. To be fair, they do not really set out to do this. Their main concern is to provide a practical analysis of current water policy and develop a set of recommendations that can be understood by policy stakeholders. Books that emphasize social science theory often fail to communicate with stakeholders. However, the principles of the soft path to water management represent a missed opportunity to connect to the broader literature on collaborative policy, network governance, adaptive management, and integrated resource management.

That literature has identified some of the key factors that make a soft-path approach more effective, and the soft-path concept would benefit by engaging with the academic literature to develop a more explicit grounding in theories of governance and cooperation. This criticism applies to other writings by the same authors that also use the soft-path concept.

Instead of providing a 10,000-foot overview of national water policy, Soll uses his skills as an environmental historian to construct a very local and detailed account of the evolution of New York City's water supply system from the 1890s through the twenty-first century. With its focus on the watersheds from which the city acquires water, the narrative reveals the detailed interplay of social, economic, political, and ecological factors that underlie the high-level patterns revealed at the national level. The story includes all of the classic ingredients of environmental policy—political and administrative leadership, the interface between science and policy, the balance of power between urban and rural water interests, environmentalists, farmers, courts, Congress, and bureaucracy. While a reader might have to be a real water-policy junkie to stick with every detail of the book, overall it is a well-written historical account that could provide a good case study for students.

The central argument of the Soll book is to trace how the New York City system evolved from a very top-down approach whereby the city used its considerable political power and technical expertise to capture upstate watershed resources with an engineered system of storage and conveyance. As the system developed throughout the twentieth century, Gotham had to grapple with the realities of modern environmental laws and eventually embraced the idea of watershed management. In many ways, New York City has gone through the same process of water development as other major cities in the country that are more often discussed in academic policy circles, such as Los Angeles and Owens Valley and San Francisco and Hetch Hetchy. So it is good to have a book that provides a comparative case study for the way in which the water-development process unfolded in this city on the relatively water-rich East Coast compared to the water-scarce West Coast. Although the argument is sometimes bogged down with nitty-gritty historical details, Soll does carry it through the entire book.

The discussion of the evolution of watershed management in the Catskill region is a particular highlight. New York City has become a globally famous case for its use of watershed management to avoid the costs of upgrading downstream water infrastructure, and setting up funding to pay for ecosystem services in upstream areas of the watershed. The basic idea is that it was cheaper for the city to protect upstream water quality by cooperating with Catskill communities, rather than spending billions to construct new downstream water filtration systems. However, the case is usually discussed in stereotypical terms—"Ah, what a nice instance of cooperation." Soll reveals that the cooperation around New York's watershed management emerged from a conflictual political process, one that featured a continuous ebb and flow of trust between the city and Catskill communities, the specter of federal environmental law as a primary catalyst, and the importance of higher-level political actors and institutions at brokering agreement among stakeholders. The ideas of cooperation and watershed management are not free from politics; instead, politics is a crucial ingredient.

Soll's analysis, with its focus on the evolution from top-down water development to collaborative watershed management, does provide more raw material for a significant contribution to social science theory and research. The most intriguing points come in the epilogue to the book, where Soll links to the emerging literature on social-ecological systems, adaptive management, and payment for ecosystem services. For example, he points out the importance of local knowledge and adaptive management for the development of the Whole Farm Program to address agricultural non-point-source pollution. After discovering that a command-and-control approach to watershed management would be resisted by Catskill farmers and probably fail if the same rules were applied to every farm, the Whole Farm Program was reconfigured to a voluntary program that allowed farmers to develop customized water-quality management strategies that worked well for the unique agro-ecological context of a particular farm. In response to the design of the program and financial incentives, over 90% of Catskill farmers have participated and substantially changed agricultural production in the region.

These references to important ideas in environmental governance are not systematically woven into the book from the beginning, however, and then reflected on throughout the body of the text or in the conclusion. Soll emphasizes the accuracy and flow of the historical narrative, rather than using the New York City watershed as a case study to develop or test any general hypotheses about environmental governance. For example, does this case illustrate a more general developmental process of water policy that is experienced by all modern cities? Does the evolution of cooperation at the watershed level illustrate any core hypotheses about environmental cooperation in general, such as the role of trust and political leadership? What does the New York City case tell us about the capacity of governance institutions to adapt to the constraints of a real social-ecological system? Future research on this and similar case studies would benefit from a more general theoretical framework by which to organize the facts of the historical narrative.

In summary, both of these books provide excellent substantive descriptions, with the interesting contrast of a high-level overview of U.S. water versus a detailed local narrative of the New York City water supply system.

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They both would provide valuable contributions to classes in environmental or water policy. They carry forward some interesting arguments about how to improve water policy in the United States, and the evolution of environmental governance from top-down, technocratic approaches to more decentralized, integrated, and soft-path institutions. However, they both miss opportunities to make a strong contribution to social science theory, given that water is a great laboratory for politics. Even though the task is hard, the general literature on environmental and water policy should strive to make a stronger connection between theory and practice. After all, theory is supposed help us understand the operation of real-world phenomena like water policy. And if we have a better understanding of how water policy works, in principle we can make better recommendations about how to change policies to make water management more resilient and sustainable in the future.

This Is Not Civil Rights: Discovering Rights Talk in 1939 America. By George I. Lovell. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012. 269p. $76.50 cloth, $27.50 paper.

That Broader Definition of Liberty: The Theory and Practice of the New Deal. By Brian Stipelman. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2012. 336p. $100.00
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— Eldon J. Eisenach, *University of Tulsa*

Brian Stipelman's book concerns the relationship between New Deal theory and practice and thus is a study of neither President Franklin Delano Roosevelt nor his administration. It is premised on the assumption that "no theoretical framework will ever negate the need for politics. There can be no political change without struggle and no struggle without organization, all of which happen in contexts that constrain the choices actors can make" (p. 263). Stipelman draws on the writings of four actors: FDR; his wife, Eleanor Roosevelt; Henry Wallace, Roosevelt's secretary of agriculture, secretary of commerce, and vice president; and Thurman Arnold, an early advisor to the president who came to head the antitrust division of the Justice Department. Wallace and Eleanor Roosevelt wrote extensively for a popular audience; Arnold, one of the original "legal realists," wrote on the power of symbols and myths (folklore) in shaping political thought and action.

Behind this study is the author's mentor, Wilson Carey McWilliams, and hovering over it is the founder of political realism, Niccolo Machiavelli. Given this mix, the study is a most ambivalent apologia for the New Deal, with chastening lessons for today's progressives who seek to emulate its transformative intentions. Because the New Deal was practicing "political theory in the trenches" (p. 19), it was necessarily "a dizzying mixture of hope and disappointment" (p. 7), walking "a fine line between education and manipulation in its relationship with the voting public" (p. 16). This judgment is affirmed in the conclusion: "The New Deal privileged administration over participation. . . . Its commitment was to justice over democracy (as participation) even if democracy was a component of justice" (p. 281). Its emphasis on an economy powered by the encouragement of mass consumption and full employment meant a policy that only compensated for the shortcomings of capitalism, rather than placing the economy under public control. Thus, the New Deal was "ultimately a liberal movement more than a democratic one, tempering its tyrannical possibilities with a healthy dose of modest liberal skepticism" (p. 248).

Where is the theory? Here, the study, like most studies of the New Deal, gets a bit hazy. Stiplemen begins, appropriately, by looking at earlier populists and progressives (Chapter 2) and the ways in which their visions were both appropriated and altered by FDR's stress on overcoming the immediate problem of overproduction/underconsumption through emergency policies that laid the framework for the creation of the institutional ligaments of a welfare state. In the process, the earlier progressive evolutionary and teleological ideals of a fully realized national democracy yielded to more instrumentalist and service-oriented ends; particular interests and needs had to be met rather than subordinated to some overarching public good (Chapter 3).

While some strains of these earlier social gospel/progressive/populist ideals of universal "brotherhood" can be detected, especially in the writings of Eleanor Roosevelt and Henry Wallace, the New Deal's main theory was spoken in the language of rights, the subject of the book's title and its longest and richest chapter, Chapter 4. FDR's "second bill of rights" recalls traditional American and constitutional values while also proposing a new "social contract," premised on the institutionalization of national programs underwriting economic security, health, and education. While this new contract (or deal) excluded blacks and slighted women, its ends of creating the conditions for the ordinary pursuits of quotidian happiness became the centerpiece of New Deal theory and practice. And because it was not terribly demanding of its signatories and lacked the paternalistic elements of many earlier progressive reform initiatives, this form of rights appeal became the leading principle for Democratic Party political mobilization and coalition building. Moreover, because the language of rights was both traditional and reformist, the expansion of rights became the core element in the New Deal's most appealing narrative.

At the start of the book, Stipelman says that he "focuses in particular on the importance of storytelling as one of the most important bridges between theory and practice" (p. 7), connecting self to society and the past to present and future. While this focus is not evident in many of the substantive chapters, it is highlighted in his discussion of Thurman Arnold. Storytelling incorporates