

While Duthu begins with legal principle and then explores its relationship to institutions, Wilkins analyzes the institutionalization, process, and politics of indigenous claim making that concerns, most often, the loss of territory via the “treaties, congressional acts, and policy directives” of the U.S. settler government (p. 5). As with Duthu, Wilkins puts his subject matter into impressive and thorough historical context, tracing the development of the claim-making and adjudicating process back to the nineteenth century and then up to the creation of the Indian Claims Court (ICC) in 1946 until its demise in 1978. Wilkins also has chapters attending to specific indigenous claims and the attendant legislative and court battles regarding what became the Maine Indian Claims Settlement Act of 1980 (Chapter 6) and the long-running *Cobell Trust* case—named after lead plaintiff Elouise Cobell (Chapter 7).

In *Cobell*, the plaintiffs sought a full accounting and distribution of moneys owed to indigenous people from funds held in trust by the U.S. government. The case began in 1996 as “the largest class action suit ever certified against the U.S.,” and was finally settled in 2012 (p. 143). Plaintiff Cobell died of cancer a year earlier. Her death symbolizes the toll extracted by settler colonial governance, whereby a high price is often paid even in cases in which indigenous people achieved some degree of success. For example, the Maine Settlement Act left the Passamaquoddy, Penobscot, and Houlton Band of Maliseet nations to be treated as “state” Indians without a distinct, direct relationship with the U.S. federal government, which “constrained their efforts to become more economically self-sufficient and to be recognized and respected as bona fide sovereign nations” (p. 139). In the *Cobell* case, after 16 years of fighting in court and legislatures, the average benefit awarded to an individual claimant amounted to between “one and two thousand dollars” (p. 182). And these are the “successful” claims! This raises a central, if implied, question raised by *Hollow Justice* as well as by *Shadow Nations*: How can indigenous political actors gain just redress for settler colonial dispossession by working through the institutions of a settler state that is built and maintained upon these very dispossessions? There is no easy answer, but this question points to a tension and a persistent political frustration that both books reveal.

Wilkins demonstrates these tensions and frustrations in his extension discussion of the ICC, covering three chapters. The ICC was initially set out to be more like a commission, charged with gathering the facts and determining reasonable compensation. However, its process quickly shifted into something akin to an adversarial court. This worked to the advantage of the settler state, which has greater financial, institutional, and legal-political resources to fight these battles. One stark example of this advantage came in the U.S. government’s demand for

offsets to be deducted from claim awards. These offsets were meant to pay back the U.S. settler state for, say, the education that indigenous people may have received in U.S. funded schools, or for assistance with legal fees, or travel, or anything state officials could come up with (Chapter 5). As such, even on those rare occasions when an Indigenous nation won its claim against the U.S. government, the “win” was quickly turned into a loss, or at best a draw. At a more fundamental level, we see here how settler state institutions compel indigenous nations to pay a good part of the costs accrued in the effort to gain redress for the very unjust dispossession that provoked the claim in the first place.

Those who may question whether it is appropriate to refer to the U.S. state as a settler colonial state, or wonder what it means to talk about settler governance, will see in the seemingly dry example of “offsets” how the term fits quite well. I only wish that Wilkins himself had drawn this out more directly. Given all that his book demonstrates to us about the unjustness of the claims process, it is hard to imagine how his closing hope for a “genuine reconciliation between indigenous nations and the federal government” (p. 192) could occur without the concept, history, and structures of U.S. settler colonialism being placed into the starkest light possible, and from that basis building a political vision of resistance to it.

In their own ways, both Duthu and Wilkins deftly reveal, if at times maybe too implicitly, the settler colonial practices and institutions that shape the U.S. relationship to indigenous nations, while they each also seek to unearth and consider the potential for the development of principles, practices, and institutions that might help to decolonize this relationship. Neither work leaves one optimistic regarding the latter aim absent a more radical anticolonial approach to this relationship, but regardless, both books deserve high praise for their careful, substantiated, and important accounts.

Liberal Terror. By Brad Evans. Cambridge: Polity, 2013. 224p. \$24.95.
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— Rosemary E. Shinko, *American University*

Where is the *joie de vivre*? Brad Evans’s book offers one of the most sweeping condemnations of liberalism that drives biopolitical arguments to their all-encompassing logical conclusions. One cannot help but feel a bit terrorized in the wake of Evans’s bleak assessments of liberalism’s assaults on our political imaginations that have stripped away any sense of the joy of life. He argues that in response to the events of 9/11, liberalism has constructed an “all-hazard spectrum of threat” (p. 174), which requires all-encompassing interventions to preempt life’s own

self-destructive tendencies (p. ix). The liberal terror is the fear of the contingent, catastrophic event that can emerge at any point in time from within the very “life-world” that we all inhabit. All aspects of life are now regarded as potentially life-threatening. The author’s aim is twofold: to reveal the “liberal will to rule planetary life” (p. 11) and to open up lines of critical engagement that will enable us to repose the questions of power and politics contra their present biopolitical framing (p. 69).

Liberal Terror lays out a philosophically rich analysis of the onto-theological aspects of liberal thought, which, as Evans argues, have always been its key defining feature (p. 55). “Liberalism has always sought to secure life for its own productive betterment” (p. 55). The text guides us through the how and why of liberalism’s arrival at its current understandings of threat. It explains how the concept of human security expanded to encompass the drive to secure humanity at both the local and global levels. It explores the social construction of the late liberal subject for whom emergence is both an individual attribute and a continuous potential security challenge. The text discusses how the events of 9/11 brought back the problem of evil (p. 101) and the ways in which the Kantian concept of “radical evil” informs the current liberal preoccupations with securing the moral regeneration and development of humanity (p. 132). The critique culminates in an analysis of the new liberal leviathan and its imperialistic regime of biopower that is driven to ameliorate all global problems by drawing them within its “remit of global security discourses and practices” (p. 157). Thus, the circle is complete and the liberal terror is clearly revealed in its all-encompassing sense of its own divinely ordained *raison d’être*.

One of the most significant contributions of Evan’s analysis is its expansive theorizing of the biopolitical basis of liberalism. His trenchant critique expands upon Michel Foucault’s biopolitical triangulation of the connections among territory, population, and security to encompass the broader political question of freedom and its relationship to human development and progress. Evans offers us a critical pathway for examining the ways in which liberal conceptualizations of freedom carry within them the potential for liberalism’s own self-destruction (p. 57) and the totalitarian impulses that are unleashed when this fear of freedom is transposed to the level of the planetary. He shifts our focus to the ways in which liberalism has always tried to circumscribe and produce the optimal conditions for freedom, and yet herein lies the existential source of liberalism’s own self-created terror. He builds upon Foucault’s conceptualization of security as an apparatus and pushes us to consider why liberal regimes have become so terrified by the prospect of the threats posed by life at the micro level, as well as those that could conceivably engulf our entire life-world (p. 67). In so doing, he creates a conceptual framework that enables us to understand what strikes such terror in the heart of liberal rule.

The events of 9/11 feed into a liberal form of humanism that, having jettisoned its faith in a divine entity, cannot resist assuming its providential rule. Evans’s reading of Kant reveals a nuanced understanding of the powerful ways in which Kantian thought haunts late liberalism. He exposes the onto-theological underpinnings of liberalism and traces their provenance to the Kantian concept of radical evil (p. 111). This is a most significant and engaging argument because it locates the moral imperative to improve life within the broader framework of the Kantian enlightenment project of immanent critique. Thus, the biological imperative to protect life reveals its Janus-faced tendencies. On the one hand, as Evans reveals in the “divine economy of life,” the moral imperative to “save life” is ultimately tied to its moral regeneration (p. 114), but it is the capacity for critical, immanent thought, coupled with the potential for material emergence within the life-world we all inhabit, that terrorizes liberalism. Thus, his reading of Kant explains why liberalism requires “an innate concept of dangerous imperfection to condition the possibility for a universal mission [of salvation]” (p. 118).

My reservations about this text include Evan’s all-encompassing case against late liberalism that would seem to erode the ground for the author’s own prescriptions. He makes strong assertions that we are “in a state of terror normality” (p. 34), that we “fear fear itself” (p. 32), and that the biopolitical imperative constitutes “the real historically consistent singularity to liberal rule” (p. 55). Furthermore, the author identifies how the liberal subject has been produced to “endure the permanent emergency of its own emergence” (p. 83), with the result that “our desire to securitize everything has rendered all things potentially terrifying” (p. 88). And he laments the creation of this new liberal leviathan for which “global security therefore inevitably becomes a liberal regime of bio-power as the catastrophic imaginary becomes ‘all-inclusive’” (p. 141). He regards liberalism as a universalizing juggernaut exploiting and producing fear and terror, and yet it is this very presumption of singularity (p. 98) that troubles this reader. Liberalism has never been singular, and historically it has been rent with competing and contradictory principles and political commitments. I propose that it is this recognition of internal contradictions that could serve as the basis for contestation and resistance of this new liberal leviathan, but Evans erodes that ground in order to convince the reader of liberalism’s all-consuming will to planetary rule.

The author says little about the historical adaptability of liberalism, and yet the very characteristics of late liberal subjectivity, a postdialectical figure who creates their own prospects and embraces risk (p. 82), reveal how what once were regarded as celebratory attributes by poststructural thinkers, such as Richard Ashley and R.B.J. Walker, have now been reframed as the liberal subject’s source of

threat and terror. If the liberal subject is so thoroughly terrorized by the emergent character of its own life (p. 90) and there is no longer any clear sense of inside/outside within this biopolitically driven formulation of liberal rationality (p. 81), then one cannot help but wonder about the potential for the emergence of resistance. Perhaps an admission of the less than totalizing effects of liberalism and its penchant for adaptability might indeed serve to sustain his call for a “new political imaginary” (p. 199) that would provide us with the “reasons to start believing in this world” (p. 200). But as things stand, Evans’s desire for “a truly exceptional politics that demands the impossible” would seem ill suited to confronting this new leviathan. His attachments to a privileged space of “the political” (p. 40), where power and politics can realign (p. 98) to disrupt the biopolitical imperative, is hinted at but never fully developed. His attachments to the political constitute the standard reply to such bleak and foreboding critiques of liberalism, but one cannot help seriously doubting our chances for (re)creating a sense of *joie de vivre*.

Defending Politics: Why Democracy Matters in the Twenty-first Century. By Matthew Flinders. New York:

Oxford University Press, 2012. 224p. \$29.95 cloth, \$19.95 paper.
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— Stephen Bird, *Clarkson University*

Matthew Flinders has made an important contribution to the ongoing question of the importance and relevance of democratic politics today. *Defending Politics* functions in part as a fiftieth anniversary revisit of Bernard Crick’s *In Defence of Politics* (1962). While the approach and themes of the books share some similarities, their contexts are very different. In the past fifty years, we have seen democracy peak as a choice among nations in 2005 but recently start to decline. Public trust in government, particularly in the United States and UK, is at all-time lows, and levels of polarization in the United States and other countries are extremely high.

Flinders outlines how these discussions of political concern are tied to well-known paradoxes in the conceptualization of politics by the public. He characterizes these as “gaps.” For instance, the *perception* gap describes how the public adulates *their* representatives and glorifies the right to vote and the inherent concept of democracy, but is unhappy with Congress or Parliament (or the president/prime minister) and believes that many politicians are crooks, lazy, or both. The *demand* gap demonstrates how the public’s political demands are incongruent with the associated costs of their political ambition. Finally, the *social* gap is the idea that the public wishes for politicians who are just like them (someone they can have a beer with), yet who are also

able to solve many enormously complex demands, expectations, and problems.

The author sets out his chapters in different variations of the “defence” theme. The first is to defend politics against itself. By this he means primarily the politics of expectations, including those that politicians set themselves on the campaign trail. He presents a lucid and useful reminder of the limitations that politicians face in governing, and also the successes that democracies have achieved in terms of stability, addressing collective interests, improving economic well-being, and restraining populism. He reminds us that politicians rarely emphasize those successes, and instead set up expectations of other sorts that are much more difficult to address. Other chapters are organized as defenses against the market, against crises, against denial, and against the media.

The chapters on the market and denial are both well developed. Flinders reminds us that the “Logic of the Market” and privatization/deregulation reforms have often weakened the democratic state’s ability to address collective-action problems and to maintain standards of fairness for disadvantaged groups. Like Crick, Flinders views the democratic state as a counterweight to the pure market. The chapter on denial extends this concern to the depoliticizing effects of liberal market ideology. The author points out that an increasing range of powers has been removed from the realm of the political, which has fundamentally weakened the democratic process and the underlying influence of our political leaders.

This book is not a typical political science text. Flinders is explicitly following a tradition with little current adherence within the contemporary academy, seeking to bridge the gap between academic and public writing. The author appropriately critiques the discipline of political science for failing to write on topics of broad importance in a way that is relevant and understandable to a mainstream audience. And he successfully furnishes an example of engaged writing without compromising the power of his ideas.

I have two concerns in the underlying logic of the book. Flinders argues that politics works better than we admit, and that we underestimate its achievements. In this I agree completely. What is not clear is whether recent antidemocratic trends are alleviated by this understanding. He does account for several disturbing tendencies since Crick’s writing, and these in part explain his need to update Crick’s approach. Included are the increased reduction in democracy (albeit from a recent high-water mark in 2005), the retrenchment and reduction of the social compact within capitalist democracies, and increased monetary and extremist chaos in Europe. Polarization, inequality, and distrust have all increased substantially since the 1960s, and social capital has decreased. The nature of political campaigns, the media, digital communication, and social activism have also changed. Wars on “terrorism” have reduced civil liberties.