areas that still need work. It is appropriate for advanced undergraduates and graduate students, and hopefully, as the editors clearly intend, will encourage more specialized research in the field. A sweeping overview of the topic and an excellent introduction to sources and methodologies, *Cultures of Care* is a welcome, and long overdue, addition to the study of health, medicine, and illness in modern Ireland.

Cara Delay, College of Charleston

Tom Crook and Glen O'Hara, eds. *Statistics and the Public Sphere: Numbers and the People in Modern Britain, c. 1800–2000*. Routledge Studies in Modern British History. London: Routledge, 2011. Pp. 276. $125.00 (cloth).
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This book places statistics, often associated with state growth and authority, firmly in a public context. While the editors say that they are not aiming to pit the views of Habermas against those of Foucault, many of the chapters—by twelve different authors— do address the difference, and the connections, between these two theories of modern society. Were statistics used by the state to control and discipline the population, or did statistics contribute to a public sphere of rational debate and communication? As this book makes clear, statistics were never about one thing or another; instead, they were used in multifaceted ways and by a wide array of social actors. The book is divided into four sections: "Governing Numbers," "Picturing the Public," "Numbers and Public Trust," and "The Politics of Statistics," but its strength is in the many threads connecting the different chapters. From political history to business history, from complex economic statistics to census taking, from opinion polls to financial fraud, we gain a sense of the many kinds of statistics there are and the ways in which they can engage with and be appropriated by the public.

As the editors make clear in their detailed introduction, statistics sparked excitement when they began to circulate in the Victorian public sphere. Enthusiasts promoted statistics as rational, neutral, and easy to understand and therefore capable of settling political and economic disputes. The idea that numbers ought to be public, rather than kept as state secrets as most *ancien regime* governments had assumed, was in keeping with the Victorian urge to educate, edify, and improve. Nineteenth-century statistical societies and state agencies (including, as Edward Higgs details in his chapter, the General Register Office in charge of censuses and vital statistics) saw themselves as distributors of public statistics. But several chapters in the volume also address the limits of numerical methods, which were clearly recognized in the Victorian period. As Maeve Adams explains, statistics allowed people to imagine large aggregates —nations and anonymous cities, for example—but fiction tried to make its readers sympathize with an individual who was representative of the larger aggregate. Stefan Schwarzkopf's chapter about interwar era market research, meanwhile, points out the tension between the use of statistics to gain access to the market and the need to know the individual consumer. This chapter also alerts us to the variation among the kinds of people and organizations that collected statistics. Advertising agencies combined government statistics about income with statistics that they had collected themselves, and they did not necessarily want to share data with their competitors. Statistics again, in this context, became private rather than public.

Other chapters in the book address the connection between statistics and politics. Many statisticians were explicitly engaged with politics, and many politicians were actively engaged with statistics. S. J. Thompson looks at the kinds of data politicians used when they drafted the 1832 Reform Bill and its provisions on the redistribution of seats, on the assumption that their use of population data and assessed taxes can tell us much about the ongoing debate between numbers and "interests" as a basis for representation. Laura Beers's chapter on the great

uncertainty of interwar elections also addresses the complicated use of statistics by politicians. As the Liberal Party disintegrated and the Labour Party grew, a dramatically expanded electorate seemed completely unknowable in comparison to that of the Victorian period. Modern opinion polling techniques eventually developed to cope with a "quantifiable but individually unknowable electorate" (259).

One important issue that the book raises is about what happened to statistics and the public sphere around the turn of the twentieth century. Was there a transition from engagement to detachment with the public as statistics became more professionalized and mathematically complex? Did mass society threaten the public sphere of rational debate, as Habermas suggests it did? And how do statistics, often seen as particularly rational, fit into this story? Interestingly, the chapters that address the twentieth century seem to have a different notion of the public sphere or, in some cases, do not engage as directly with the public sphere as the chapters about the nineteenth century do. Glen O'Hara's chapter about the French influence on postwar economic statistics, for example, is less about the public sphere per se than about the deficiencies of statistics in the period. The book as a whole could perhaps be more specific about whether the public sphere must engage with the statistics to be recognizable as a statistical public sphere, or whether the fact that statistics are about the public in itself creates a public sphere. The title of the book's concluding chapter—"Towards New Histories of an Enumerated People"—captures this uncertainty. Are the people simply enumerated, or are they also enumerating?

Several chapters do address the popular reception of statistics. James Thompson shows how in the late nineteenth century numbers were combined with graphs, tables, maps, and pictures to make economic and political statistics more accessible to the masses, and, as Edmund Rogers's chapter on the tariff debate also demonstrates, numbers were not understood as entirely distinct from either words or images. Finally, there is the question of how numbers gained their reputation for trustworthiness and how deep this trust really went. Both Tom Crook and James Taylor argue that in the early to mid-nineteenth century, gentlemanly status and property continued to play a very important role in winning public trust. Statisticians emphasized their own moral character as much as the integrity of the numbers they produced, and the fraudulent insurance company that Taylor discusses gained trust through its physical projection of gentility, even while its numbers did not quite add up. In other words, trust in numbers came from the character and reputation of those behind the numbers. Taylor's chapter raises questions about trust and access to financial information that remain highly relevant in our own day.

Perhaps the biggest question that the book raises is about power. Certainly states use information to govern the population. But statistics also have democratizing implications, most obviously through political representation but also through their ability to hold governments accountable. Steven King's chapter, about the last years of the Old Poor Law, does a particularly good job of showing how statistics could empower those who had few other resources. He suggests that while quantification of poverty famously led to a breakdown in support for the poor, officials also used statistics to defend their local operation of the law to ratepayers, which often actually reduced pressure for reform. Even more surprising, paupers themselves used statistics to defend their claims for relief. This book, however, could say more about people's use of statistics to represent themselves. S. J. Thompson's chapter on the 1832 Reform Bill, for example, says a great deal about how politicians used numbers to represent the people, but it includes little about how people used numbers to claim rights and privileges for themselves, even if those rights were not explicitly electoral. As the editors do say at the end of the book, statistics create both discipline and democracy, and it is the attempt to bring these two things together that makes the volume such a welcome addition to the historiography of statistics, the social sciences, and state growth.

Kathrin Levitan, College of William and Mary

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