of population ecology (PE) as a theoretical framework for interest groups has "greatly enhanced" (p. 258) our understanding of them, he also concludes that PE has had "at most a modest impact" (p. 249). More specifically, Loomis is critical of the theory's use of metaphor and "population-based issues." In questioning how to enumerate populations, he asks if "the relevant population on a given issue relates to a set of policies (agriculture, gay rights, defense spending), how exactly do we account for its numbers? Is it everyone who is involved, who are all competing within a given constituency?" (p. 253).

Of course, the volume does more than present criticisms of the organization ecology approach. Instead, the general theme in most of the other chapters is to examine the potential, possibilities, and promise of the organization ecology research program. Chapter 7, authored by Christopher Witko, which focuses on what case studies can teach us about the ways that interest groups develop and attempt to survive, is especially strong. Witko's writing style is engaging, as he sprinkles in some clever headings (e.g., "Life's a niche and then you die?"), and the content in the chapter is substantive, with a comprehensive overview of the literature covering groups such as Common Cause, the AFL-CIO, and the Tea Party to explain how "aggregate factors translate into change at the group-level" (p. 131).

In Chapter 9, Kay Lehman Schlozman and her coauthors present data on the human and financial resources of various groups over a three-decade period from 1981 to 2011. They provide several important findings, notably that there are more organizations utilizing more human and financial resources than ever before. Yet, as their analysis also reveals, these changes have not created a level playing field for all interests. Business groups, for example, dominate lobbying, at least when measured by total expenditures. The authors find that "corporations and trade and other business associations account for 74 percent of all dollars spent lobbying" in 2011, an increase from 54% in 1981 (pp. 173–74). They also note the rise in group representation by institutions, such as state and local governments, hospitals, and universities. Taken together, their results force any reader to think long and hard about the implications that these developments have for larger debates about pluralism, representation, and inequalities of political voice.

Near the very end of the volume, Lowery, Halpin, and Gray do an admirable job of defending the organization ecology approach in a short and respectful rebuttal against the arguments that Loomis raises in his chapter. Taken together, the diversity of viewpoints offered, along with the multifaceted presentation of the material from scholars across the globe, is ultimately one of the real triumphs of this volume.

Yet, while the editors succeed in providing a needed update on the state of the organization ecology research program, the one substantive criticism is its failure to resolve a few old concerns about the utility of the organization ecology framework. Of note, some critics of the approach have argued that organization ecology scholarship places too much emphasis on external factors to explain organizational failure, while ignoring important internal group factors (see Kamel Mellahi and Adrian Wilkinson, "Organizational Failure: A Critique of Recent Research and a Proposed Integrative Framework," *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 5/6(1), 2004). This important concern is largely missing.

In addition, academic debates about the organization ecology approach are now several decades old, and there are instances throughout the volume that simply rehash those previous scholarly discussions, albeit with new and updated research. Certainly, reviewing earlier work is unavoidable in a work of this type, in which the purpose is to "reconsider the contributions and further prospects of the [organization ecology] research program" (p. 1). Nonetheless, the volume as a whole, with only some chapters as exceptions, does a better job of summarizing the current state of the organization ecology research program than it does of offering any truly groundbreaking observations.

Still, the strengths of *The Operation Ecology of Interest Communities* far outweigh its weaknesses. A volume of this type was needed in the academic literature, and Lowery, Halpin, and Gray have succeeded in bringing together a collection of contributions that one could rightfully call the definitive reference on the organization ecology research program. Much like *The Population Ecology of Interest Representation* from two decades ago, this volume belongs on the bookshelf of any serious scholar who studies interest groups.

Votes from Seats: Logical Models of Electoral Systems. By Matthew S. Shugart and Rein Taagepera. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 343p. $99.99 cloth, $31.99 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592718001226

— Michael D. McDonald, *Binghamton University*

Political parties shape the character of democratic governance, E. E. Schattschneider rightly told us long ago. Similarly, *Votes from Seats* presents an outstanding scholarly contribution telling us how two fundamental features of electoral systems shape the character of party systems. From the product of just two numbers, assembly size and average district magnitude, Matthew Shugart and Rein Taagepera deduce four power laws that predict, with remarkable accuracy, central tendencies of (1) the assembly seat share of the largest party, (2) the effective number of assembly parties, (3) the largest party's vote share, and (4) the effective number of parties receiving votes. That the laws are deduced is the predicate for the second theme of

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the book. Shugart and Taagepera seek to arrive at an understanding of the basic contours of party systems in an iterative process of thinking, predicting (with quantitative specificity), observing, testing, rethinking, retesting, and so on, promoting boldly and convincingly a "social physics" approach that Taagepeara has been employing and honing since his articles in *Social Science Research* on seats—votes and assembly sizes in the early 1970s.

The authors start their logical model-building by asking what is possible and impossible; for example, the number of parties winning seats in a district must be at least one but never more than the district magnitude. They speculate that the geometric mean of the minimum and maximum possibilities could be a plausible expected value for the number of parties winning at least one seat in a district. In a nine-seat district, the square root of (1*9), the product of the possible number of minimum and maximum winning parties is 3. They check their expectations against reality; for example, one-seat districts have one winning party, four-seat districts average two winning parties, nine-seat districts average three winning parties, and so on. The expectations hold remarkably well, and so the thinking can turn to another party system feature. As a next step, to take one more example, Shugart and Taagepera reason that the average number of parties nationwide cannot be smaller than the average at the district level nor larger than the average if, or when, elected in a single nationwide district. By once again speculating that the geometric mean of those two bounds is a plausible expectation, their logical model indicates that the number of seat-winning parties of any size (N) equals the fourth root of the product of average district magnitude (M) and the assembly size (S). This expectation holds remarkably well, too.

That is some of the flavor of the core theses of the book, Chapters 7 through 10. Within that section, the reasoning and testing cover expectations for the effective number of vote-earning parties, the specifications and reasoning behind the four laws, and the encouragement or constraint that an assembly size places on the number of parties competing in the various districts. In the lead-up to developing ideas in that core section, the authors review and describe the dizzying possible variations on simple and complex electoral systems, being careful to help the reader by using case applications for a few selected countries to illustrate how various rules operate. They follow up on the core section with analyses of the conditioning effect of a presidential office on the number of parties (adding variability but not much affecting the central tendencies), of their models' applicability to electoral systems that foster intraparty competition and use other complex rules (their models apply), and of whether a society's ethnic diversity adds informational value to an understanding of the party system fragmentation (some, but not much).

Shugart and Taagepera are not looking for causes in a deterministic sense of necessary and sufficient conditions for how electoral rules shape the structure of party systems. Rather, the search is for an understanding of constraints that account for central tendencies. They are also not looking to produce a theory of party system structure. In 300-plus pages, they are almost totally successful in avoiding use of the word "theory." Instead, they seek a set of logical models with connections that flow first from the preceding and then to the next and the next.

In what sense, then, is it proper to characterize *Votes from Seats* as an outstanding scholarly contribution? Are "cause—effect" and "theory" not the watchwords of empirical political science? The short answer is yes, but the longer response from Shugart and Taagepera is that building logical models of the sort they engage in producing is, possibly and likely, a richer way to get to understandings of cause and effect and cumulative theory building.

The authors' models are well constructed and repeatedly shown to have strong empirical support for various central tendencies related to parties' seats and votes. Extending outward from the models, the book offers evidence of linkages to, for example, government duration (in brief passing, pp. 108–9), a reconsideration of Maurice Duverger's theses (pp. 114–20), and an intriguing but yet to be fully developed connection to disproportionality (pp. 141–47). What is equally important for empirical considerations of cause and effect, the models they have built will all but necessarily have to be called upon to serve as a baseline for further attempts to understand party structure. The book's commentary keeps readers well aware that the models are about central tendencies around which there is a good deal of variation that requires explanation. The numerical precision of their logical model predictions make it easy to imagine that the next generation of party system scholarship will have a field day identifying conditions under which the precise predictions do and do not hold, much as previous generations have enjoyed picking apart the originally described cube law of vote-to-seat translations under first-past-the-post, single-member-district electoral systems. Numerically precise expectations serve as a handmaiden of progress in many social scientific inquires.

Votes from Seats provides an unstated and indirect challenge to the way that much of political science thinks empirical theory is built. Some suppose that because politics is a human construction, a well-developed theory needs to be built on the foundation stone of methodological individualism. Preferences molded by incentives give rise to choices, and thus it would be wise to build theories founded on preferences and incentives. Shugart and Taagepera offer a different path. They want to understand a set of macro-level party system outcomes where the important proximate forces operating as constraints on

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what is possible are a set of macro-level institutional features. With often no reference to individual thinking (and, once in a while, reliance on modest leverage from speculations about voters' and party leaders' thinking), a set of logically deduced and connected models of the typical macro-level outcomes is possible. The value provided to theory building is to know, with a good deal of confidence and a great deal of precision, what micro-level foundation stones need to be explored. As the authors remark, there is a good deal of politics to be explained reaching forward to other aspects of party systems and democratic representation at the macro level and reaching down to the micro level.

Scholars have much to ponder in the book's wide-ranging treatment of party system structure and elements related to that structure. A graduate seminar could be organized around the ideas it is trying to teach and the ideas that likely extend from that teaching. Relying on it in undergraduate courses would be a stretch. Because Shugart and Taagepera are so thoroughly familiar with their subject matter, it appears to escape them at times that readers would be helped by words that would remind them of points that no doubt have become self-evident to the authors. They are also so thoroughly self-conscious of slight variations on electoral rules that they too often anticipate possible objections and too often announce a defensive posture that a potential objection is to be dealt with in a later section or chapter. For readers with more than the transient interest of one course in an undergraduate career, however, patient reading and rereading of *Votes from Seats* is going to produce influential insights for years to come.

In Rome We Trust: The Rise of Catholics in American Political Life. By Manlio Graziano. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2017. 256p. $85.00 cloth, $25.95 paper.

Secular Faith: How Culture Has Trumped Religion in American Politics. By Mark A. Smith. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015. 288p. $25.00 cloth.
doi:10.1017/S1537592718001469

— Laura R. Olson, *Clemson University*

For several decades, many (though not all) scholars of U.S. politics have been cognizant of the roles played by religious affiliation and religiosity in motivating political attitudes and behaviors among Americans. Against the backdrop of ever-intensifying political polarization, religion's relationship to politics would seem to matter more today than ever. That said, perhaps it is the case that the Religious Right's emergence as a political force has had the unintended effect of *diminishing* religion's unique political relevance. Once the Republican Party branded itself as a friend of organized religion ("Faith and the 2016 Campaign," Pew Research Center, 2016), American political conservatism became less secular almost by necessity. There are stark divisions between conservatives and liberals regarding matters such as whether one must believe in God to be a moral person and the extent to which religion should be separated from government ("Political Typology Reveals Deep Fissures on the Right and Left," Pew Research Center, 2017). Along with being patriotic and skeptical of Washington, being religious simply is seen as part and parcel of being conservative.

Two new books that rely on historiography help refine and challenge our understanding of the means by which, and the reasons why, religion is so politically salient in the United States. Together, these books offer clues about how religion and polarized politics might continue to affect one another in the future. In his *In Rome We Trust*, Manlio Graziano focuses on the relatively recent rise of a specific religious group—Catholics—within the ranks of American political elites. In a separate vein, Mark Smith's *Secular Faith* challenges the presumption that religion directly shapes American politics. Instead, he argues that religion's political relevance is a reflection of broader cultural phenomena.

Graziano presents a provocative argument: Contrary to perceptions of decline in Catholicism (among non-Latinx communities), the church today actually is more politically consequential than ever because of the increasing presence of Catholics among the ranks of political elites. The Obama administration included a record number of Catholic officials, notes Graziano, and five of the nine current U.S. Supreme Court justices (Samuel Alito, Anthony Kennedy, John Roberts, Sonia Sotomayor, and Clarence Thomas) are Catholic. Separately, the substantial political clout of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has grown ever since Vatican II afforded bishops the latitude to speak publicly about politics.

It is empirically true that Catholics are better represented among political elites today than has been the case in previous generations. At least nominally speaking, Catholics are overrepresented in the 115th Congress: 31% of its members are Catholic, compared to just 21% of the U.S. population (Aleksandra Sandstrom, Pew Research Center, Jan. 3, 2017, "Faith on the Hill"). By comparison, only 19% of the 87th Congress was Catholic. Moreover, there are plenty of Catholics to be found on both sides of the political aisle, both at the mass and elite levels, and the USCCB has meaningful access to both Republicans and Democrats because the bishops espouse conservative positions on some issues and progressive positions on others.

Graziano does a fine job of documenting the unlikeliness of these outcomes from a historical standpoint. The church and the United States never have been especially big fans of one another. The history of discrimination against Catholic Americans by the Protestant majority is long and ugly, and

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