1988: A Case Study of Welfare Reform in the 1980s, 2002), I was intrigued by the overlay of gender strands onto political ideologies and the emergence of Welfare Policy Orientations from the Guiding Gender Principles and gender paradigms. The case study of Wisconsin's implementation of national welfare policy provides the reader with a detailed look at its harsh and punitive impact on women's lives.

Two other concerns arise from my reading. One is the authors' introduction of new and idiosyncratic words such as "feminal" and "feminalist orientation." The authors pioneer the word "feminale"—"the quality of being female" (pp. xiii, 14–15)—as a substitute for currently used words such as feminine and feminist. They are confident that feminale, when employed on a more universal basis, can move us beyond the seemingly restrictive understandings of feminist and feminine and broaden the conversation to include the concerns of women writ large, as biologically not socially constructed. Even though they defend this change at length in Chapter 3, I find it dubious.

My second concern regards the authors' contention that requiring women on welfare to work made them "masculine mothers" and breadwinners (Chapter 5). In 1996, welfare reform *did* require women on welfare to work. Unfortunately, this requirement undermined prior welfare policy that recognized both job training and postsecondary education as essential pathways to meaningful work. However, in PRWORA, meaningful work was not of concern to its architects. Of paramount importance was a job, any job, and women were forced into the marketplace to work, often for meager benefits. My concern here is that by describing women who work as masculine mothers and breadwinners, the authors presume that women who work do so only involuntarily and not for personal or professional aspirations and gain.

The kind of work women on welfare often do affords neither them nor their families security or stability; therefore, it is wrong to associate work with the "masculine role of breadwinning" (p. 117). In doing so, the authors set up an either-or dichotomy that belies the desire of (single) women, with or without children, to be the sole source provider. This categorization also assumes that all women on welfare wish to devote themselves exclusively to the role of stay-at-home mother. When women on welfare were, under prior welfare policy, able to enroll in postsecondary education, thousands did so with the intent of pursuing professional positions for themselves as well as seeking future financial security and stability for themselves and their families. Women have fought for too long and too hard to enter and achieve meaningful positions in the labor market to now see themselves as merely embracing masculine roles.

None of this is meant to minimize the book's well-documented exposure of harsh, retaliatory attitudes toward mothers in need of government assistance, attitudes that led to significant changes in the ways in which government supports poor families. Dependency, albeit often brief, is mistakenly seen as the antithesis of the unwavering American belief in independence, self-reliance, and individualism. Yet as Virginia Sapiro so aptly reminds us, "the goodness or badness of dependency depends on who is depending on whom" ("The Gender Basis of American Social Policy," in Linda Gordon, ed., *Women, the State and Welfare,* 1990, p. 45).

Welfare scholars will discover rich findings in this book that supplement the increasing volume of work seeking to counter prevailing presumptions that current welfare policy is a success.

No Child Left Behind and the Transformation of Federal Education Policy, 1965–2005. By Patrick J. McGuinn. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006. 320p. $40.00 cloth, $19.95 paper.
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— Peter W. Cookson, Jr., *Lewis & Clark College*

No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is an attempt by the federal government to regulate educational policy in the 50 states. By imposing on states a set of standards, benchmarks of yearly progress, and imposing sanctions on failing schools, the U.S. Department of Education has made a significant step from being more than a federal bully pulpit and a perch for fading politicians to a genuine ministry of education. This is ironic because the U.S. Constitution reserves to the states educational policy, except when it comes to enforcing civil rights. The strong bipartisan support for NCLB is a political, policy, and constitutional sea change in American history. How—and more importantly, why—did this happen?

In his new book, *No Child Left Behind and the Transformation of Federal Education Policy, 1965–2005,* Patrick J. McGuinn addresses this issue with the historian's eye for detail and the political scientist's ear for the subtext as well as the text of policymaking. He writes, "The new federal focus on student achievement is seen by many reformers as an essential precondition to school improvement efforts nationwide and to the campaign for greater equity in educational opportunity" (p. 196). His book reframes the debate over the federal intervention in educational policy and is an excellent example of how scholarship can inform contemporary policy and political controversies.

As one who has observed federal education policymaking from several different perspectives, I will confess that I have grown increasingly skeptical about the motives and efficacy of the federal government in improving schools, and I am deeply concerned that the testing regime imposed by NCLB is actually a huge step backward in our struggle to create more flexible, creative, and responsive schools. I am not entirely alone in this view; as the consequences of NCLB are felt at the grassroots level, teachers, parents, and politicians are raising fundamental questions. For this

reason, McGuinn's scholarship comes at a critical time, particularly because the No Child Left Behind Act is about to be considered by Congress for reauthorization.

McGuinn's scholarship is impressive; few researchers would have the patience to sift through the mountains of reports, reports about reports, and policy studies that both illuminate and obscure the how and why of NCLB. The author's work is particularly important because it ties political science theory together with how it came to be that Democrats and Republicans decided that local control was the problem, not the solution, to the shocking facts of educational inequality. It is an eerie fact that our educational system reproduces our school system with such accuracy; it seems almost an automatic process. But, of course, there is no invisible hand in the social world. Our social system is highly stratified, and a network of institutions reinforces this stratification, often through the very institutions that claim to provide mobility. School systems, generally speaking, are not interventions in social reproduction; they facilitate and legitimate intergenerational inequality.

No Child Left Behind is meant to disrupt this process by forcing schools to be transparent and to make their failures public knowledge. McGuinn documents how this intervention grew from the margins of the policy arena to dead center. He examines in detail how Republican and Democratic "regimes" eventually despaired of piecemeal reform and went to the heart of the matter—federal dollars could be used to leverage transparency and accountability and to force school districts to "close the achievement gap."

All of these developments are described by McGuinn with admiral evenhandedness. He is particularly astute in weaving together the story of how conservatives came to believe that the federal government was the philosophical focus of regulatory school policy at the local level and even the school-by-school level. His book is good medicine for all of us because at a time when school improvement is so politicized, it is salutary to step back and to put the policy wars into perspective.

Today, Americans are still concerned about education, although the "war on terror" has overshadowed educational reform in the last several years. Much of McGuinn's work is centering the educational policy debate on the political environment that shapes public perception. He writes, "In particular, the political environment since the 1980s has encouraged national politicians to emphasize ideas and symbols in their rhetoric and to make more frequent public appeals for political support; this is especially true for presidents and presidential candidates" (pp. 203–4). We live in an age of the permanent presidential campaign, and we can expect that educational improvement, for many years to come, will be one of the policy chapters written by politicians as they promote the gospel of social wealth.

If I were to differ at all with McGuinn, it would be my concern that he somewhat underemphasizes the educational agenda of what constitutes the political Right in American politics. NCLB is loaded with rhetoric about educational equality, but it also can serve to deregulate public education by demonstrating its incompetence and, thus, fulfill the ambition of the deregulators by a means other than vouchers. We have seen that deregulation is far from a magic bullet and that the federal government is not a neutral arbiter when it comes to rewarding its friends and punishing its enemies through the process of awarding grants, contracts, and consultancies.

It is McGuinn's great virtue that he looks at the record with the cool, trained eye of the scholar. His experience as a high school government and history teacher grounds his work admirably as a political scientist and historian. "In studying policy change," he writes, "it is necessary to place political and policymaking developments in their broader historical context, to create, in Paul Pierson's phrase, 'a moving picture' " (p. 208). McGuinn has created for us a detailed moving picture, and we can only hope that he continues to develop his research agenda and contributes even more richly to our understanding of the interaction between educational politics and policymaking.

Routing the Opposition: Social Movements, Public Policy, and Democracy. Edited by David S. Meyer, Valerie Jenness, and Helen Ingram. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005. 360p. $70.50 cloth, $23.50 paper.
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— James M. Jasper, *Contexts Magazine*

Most social scientists cling to a progressive image of history, in which one group after another organizes for various rights and interests, pursues them in a number of arenas until—often after much struggle and bloodshed—they gain the legal recognitions and influence on policies they seek. The circle of rights and recognition slowly and inexorably expands outward. Scholars of social movements, in particular, are committed to the idea that the protestors they study have a broad impact and play a key role in history. Their faith in this idea often outpaces the evidence and makes the proposition difficult to test.

Anyone who studies regimes that claim to be democratic faces a similar question: How do preferences among organized and mass publics work their way into political decisions and public policies? Or do they? Most current theories of political movements were formed during and inspired by the protests of the 1960s and 1970s, which kept the progressive vision alive despite occasional setbacks. Perhaps we need new theories that incorporate the lessons of the great backlash that began in the 1970s and entrenched itself in two globally powerful governments with Margaret Thatcher and Ronald Reagan. Has progress toward social justice stalled, or actually reversed?

The editors and contributors to *Routing the Opposition* (mostly political scientists and sociologists) examine the interaction between state and movement in some detail,