

of nature. The question, then, is less how to get out of the state of nature and more how to avoid it. Without the right institutional framework, normative obligations will not suffice to ensure that individuals comply with the laws of nature. Thus, the sovereign is central to Hobbes's political theory; his vigilance allows the laws of nature to bind his subjects not just in *foro interno* but also in *foro externo*. Equally important are the ways in which these institutions have consequences for the sovereign. As Hobbes put it, a sovereign who governs negligently should expect rebellion and rebels should expect slaughter. In a commonwealth governed in accordance with natural law, it would be hard to imagine how reasons of the right would be either inconsistent with or independent of reasons of the good.

Nevertheless, Abizadeh is correct when he identifies Hobbes's political theory as the starting point of a major shift in ethics. By bringing the social contract into prominence, Hobbes initiated a serious inquiry into the epistemological and juridical foundations of sovereignty and, thereby, democracy. That inquiry continues and is as pressing as ever. Abizadeh's attention to the ways in which individuals signal and read others in juridical terms is a welcome aid in the process.

**A Political Companion to W.E.B. Du Bois.** Edited by Nick Bromell. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2018. 376p. \$80.00 cloth.  
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— Ella Myers, *University of Utah*

This volume, the first to center W.E.B. Du Bois as a political theorist, arrives at an opportune moment. New readers are today locating in Du Bois's work an important and provocative "history of the present" – one that both powerfully maps the distinctive dynamics of racial capitalism in the United States and connects them to global patterns of exploitation and dispossession that redraw the color line.

The 11 essays included here (plus an introductory essay by the editor) address a wide range of topics and reflect a variety of interpretive styles, which is perhaps fitting for the genre-defying and polymathic Du Bois. The contributions are organized thematically into four parts: "Du Bois and Political Philosophy"; "Du Bois, Politics, and Poetry"; "Du Bois in the Space between the Known and the Imagined"; and "Du Bois and the Challenges of Black Politics."

The individual essays range from excellent to fair and also vary considerably in terms of their suitable readership. For example, those by Alexander Livingston and David Haekwon Kim in Part IV are fascinating reinterpretations of Du Bois's thought that will be appreciated by readers already well versed in his work and the relevant secondary scholarship. Livingston's "The Cost of Liberty: Sacrifice and Survival in Du Bois's *John Brown*" offers

a historically nuanced, close reading of Du Bois's changing representations of John Brown focused on a "paradox of sacrifice and survival." Kim's "'Love Is a God and Work Is His Prophet': Decolonial Extension and Gandhian Exploration in Du Bois's Interwar Years" builds on the growing body of scholarship that engages Du Bois as a decolonial theorist and makes an intriguing case for understanding him as advancing "Black Marxism-Gandhism," a distinctive, hybrid form of decolonial thought.

Other essays are suggestive because they touch on rich veins in Du Bois's work that warrant the attention of all students of politics. Arash Davari's "On Democratic Leadership and Social Change: Positioning Du Bois in the Shadow of a Gray To-Come" and Vijay Phulwani's "A Splendid Failure? *Black Reconstruction* and Du Bois's Tragic Vision of Politics," for example, indicate but do not fully theorize the importance of institution building in Du Bois's vision of abolition-democracy. Davari is right that Du Bois's work, even his earlier texts, offer valuable resources for challenging models of social transformation that rely on notions of elite charismatic leadership or the promise of "leaderless movements." And Phulwani's inquiry into Du Bois's "tragic" politics fruitfully reads his 1930s work calling for black consumer cooperatives as part of his effort to envision black political agency under the constraints of white supremacy. Yet although Phulwani refers to "the problem of how to build durable political institutions" (p. 273) in Du Bois's work, neither Davari nor Phulwani provide a rigorous investigation of his abiding preoccupation with institutions—those attached to the state, such as the Freedmen's Bureau, which figures prominently in his writings across decades, or those we might call "counter-institutions" that populate his scholarship (not only consumer cooperatives but also revolutionary parties, advocacy organizations, HBCUs, etc.). Both essays would be enriched by more sustained reflection on this topic, which seems integral to the questions they raise, as well as to theorizing contemporary democratic struggles.

Some essays included here are not particularly effective. "Alightings of Poetry: The Dialectics of Voice and Silence in W.E.B Du Bois's Narrative of Double-Consciousness" by Anthony Reed is cryptic, thanks to an elliptical style that makes the stakes of the analysis opaque. "A Democracy of Differences: Knowledge and the Unknowable in Du Bois's Theory of Democratic Governance" by Robert W. Williams argues that Du Bois "finds a role for scientific knowledge in democratic governance" (p. 181), yet completely overlooks how persistently he raised doubts, especially in *Dusk of Dawn*, about the efficacy of social-scientific methods for achieving interracial democracy.

Three essays deserve special mention for being accessible, astute, and relevant for a general political science readership interested in Du Bois or in twentieth-century political theory more broadly. The volume's first two essays, by Charles Mills and Lewis Gordon, are ambitious

and incisive (as well as divergent) efforts to situate Du Bois's large and varied oeuvre in relation to recognizable traditions of political thought. Although the project of classification is fraught, especially in relation to Du Bois, each essay illuminates important dimensions of his thinking in ways that underscore his continued relevance for political theory. A third essay by Melvin Rogers (previously published elsewhere) also deserves to be singled out. This contribution differs from those of Mills and Gordon by presenting a more focused, fine-grained examination of a single (albeit complex) book. It provides a rich entrée into Du Bois's most famous work, *The Souls of Black Folk*, offering a deft analysis of the rhetorical strategies by which his text works to bridge the gap between "the people" in its descriptive and aspirational modes.

Charles Mills's "W.E.B. Du Bois: Black Radical Liberal" presents Du Bois as a thinker who, whatever else he may have been, was a "black radical liberal" for a good portion of his life. By this Mills means that Du Bois recognized a "racialized logic in [liberalism's] conceptual and normative apparatus," yet did not reject liberalism as a dead end and instead undertook a "deracializing reconstruction of liberalism" that could help "carry out an emancipatory racial agenda" (pp. 32–33). Mills documents this "reconstruction" in Du Bois's work along four lines: descriptive and moral metaphysics, racial exploitation, and racial opacity. Although the essay's rendering of Du Bois arguably tells us as much, if not more, about Mills's political theory as it does Du Bois's, it stages a smart and engaging encounter with Du Bois's work that many readers will appreciate. The portrait it offers of Du Bois is partial (in both senses of the word) but unquestionably valuable.

Lewis Gordon's "An Africana Philosophical Reading of Du Bois's Political Thought" fruitfully interprets Du Bois as a "pillar of Africana thought." Gordon conceptualizes three defining features of Africana political thought—a philosophical anthropology that "explores what it means for black persons to be human," a philosophy of freedom oriented toward struggle, and a metacritique of reason that "questions the conditions of knowledge" secured by white supremacy (pp. 58, 76)—and shows that Du Bois's work elaborates all three. Gordon's reading of Du Bois is especially intriguing because he does not abide by the usual periodization of his work, demonstrating instead that these features persist across his entire corpus. The endurance of Africana political themes in Du Bois's thought underlines the claim with which Gordon opens the essay: despite the well-known shifts in Du Bois's political thought, he was in an important sense a "radical" his whole life. His radicalism was a constant because his relentless insistence on black humanity challenged every philosophy with which he was associated, whether liberalism, socialism, or Communism.

Melvin Rogers's "The People, Rhetoric and Affect: On the Political Force of Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*"

offers a new and evocative reading of a book about which so much has been written. His piece situates *Souls* within a tradition of democratic contestation that mobilizes a "dual aspect of the people" to move citizens to act on behalf of a "not yet realized ideal" (pp. 124, 127). More specifically, Rogers maps the rhetorical moves by which Du Bois aims to elicit certain emotional states—sympathy and shame—from *Souls*' white readers, which in turn might open the possibility of transforming American democracy to fully include blacks as citizens and persons. One of the most compelling aspects of Rogers's argument is the way he draws on Du Bois's 1926 essay "Criteria of Negro Art," in which he portrays art as a mode of persuasion, to understand the rhetorical character of *Souls* written two decades earlier. Rogers shows that Du Bois was already practicing an aestheticized politics in 1903 that he went on to explicitly formulate later. Additionally, by stressing Du Bois's efforts in *Souls* to shape the "perceptual capacity of Americans" (p. 133), Rogers's reading implies that an insight that Du Bois presents as new and unsettling in 1940's *Dusk of Dawn*—that race prejudice was not simply "a matter of ignorance to be cured by information"—had in fact shaped his writing from the start. When Du Bois observed in 1940 that the "folkways of the nation," much more than a lack of knowledge, stood in the way of racial equality, he named just one possible remedy: "a long, patient, well-planned and persistent campaign of propaganda" (*Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward an Autobiography of a Race Concept*, 2007, p. 98). Rogers makes a strong case for regarding *Souls* as an indispensable part of that campaign.

One final note: it should by now be embarrassing to produce an edited volume on the work of a major thinker in which every single contributor is male. If either the editor or series editor felt unease about creating such a collection, it did not prevent them from doing so. The appearance of an all-male anthology on the political thought of Du Bois in 2018 is especially egregious because there is no shortage of female scholars, including female scholars of color, writing smart and original scholarship on this very subject. (Some of them are cited and even extensively quoted in this book.)

This uneven volume offers some sharp, generative readings that will inspire politically minded readers to return to Du Bois's visionary writings for further study.

#### **Interpretive Social Science: An Anti-Naturalist**

**Approach.** By Mark Bevir and Jason Blakely. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 224p. \$91.00 cloth, \$33.00 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592719002214

— Donald Moon, *Wesleyan University*

The debate over the extent to which the social sciences should model themselves on the natural sciences seems