

The fact that across different electoral races between 40% and 70% of Republican ads were funded in ways that required no disclosure highlights how endemic the issue is currently and how, the authors argue, it is likely to worsen.

Despite the negative implications, however, Fowler, Franz, and Ridout return to a core premise that the more advertisements broadcast, the more voters are likely to be somewhat more informed and so able to make better decisions. If that is the case, then citizens are extremely well informed, especially during top-of-the ticket races and if they live in states where there is strong competition. The authors document the creativity of production, evidence of sophisticated targeting and microtargeting, and the increasing use of the online environment, again highlighting multiple opportunities for exposure to political campaign messages wherever citizens consume media. They provide different patterns of usage across online platforms, in terms of platform use and content posted by candidates, though it is disappointing that there is no discussion of the reasons. However, the consistent finding is the level of negativity and its increase, with a rise from 36% to 65% in 2000–14 and the uniformity of content style independent of platform. Critiques of negative advertising abound; hence, this factor might in itself lead us to question whether advertising leads to more informed citizens making better decisions.

The authors defend their claim firstly by arguing that a majority of political advertisements offer substantive policy detail at some level, suggesting this is beneficial for democratic debate. However, when they discuss effects, the data are used to arrive at the somewhat nebulous conclusion that as campaigns are characterized by two-sided flows of information and argumentation, any effect is conditional on the character of the citizens, their context, the levels of exposure enjoyed, and their intellectual sophistication. The positive perspective of advertising therefore rests on accepting that, within the moment of exposure and cumulatively over the course of campaign, a citizen feels informed by a trustworthy source. Yet citizens claim that the most credible advertisements are those from 501c organizations, which can make any claim they wish, generally claim to have strong patriotic ties, and can promote a candidate on any basis desired. The authors recognize this to be problematic but downplay its significance when considering how citizens interact with campaign communication.

It is of course true, as the authors set out in Chapter 7, that advertising is crucial for unknown candidates running in down-ballot races where name recognition needs to be established. But whether it is accurate, as suggested in the subsequent chapter, that exposure to an advertisement can lead to elaboration and independent information seeking is not proven but presented as a likely consequence only. The argument rests on data suggesting that between 66% and 95% of policy advertisements

make specific promises and claims to aid voter choices. Questions relating to negativity are somewhat dismissed. Voters accept any attack they deem fair, though this can be influenced by partisan attachment, and any loss of support due to voter distaste for negativity is deemed minimal. In the authors' conclusion, advertising is deemed positive, remains essential, and so is likely to increase, with greater levels of targeting and 501c-sponsored ads likely.

The positive perception of political advertising may jar with many readers' sensibilities; the narrative is that advertising is increasingly negative and voters are falling out of love with this style of campaigning. Certainly the media have reinforced this perception, and the Wesleyan team offers counterevidence based on hard data available. The argument is not wholly watertight, however. Some citizens may find negativity offensive and be increasingly prone to avoiding all political messages; others may find negative spots informative. Determining an aggregate effect is complex at best, possibly impossible. The authors build an evidence-based case to give an overview of how political advertising works in America, and in doing so offer a more positive view of its impacts. The work should certainly encourage lively debates in the classroom while providing food for thought for the academic community that wishes to learn more about this complex topic. To those academics and the many students of politics, *Political Advertising in the United States* will prove an invaluable resource.

**The White House Vice Presidency: The Path to Significance, Mondale to Biden.** By Joel K. Goldstein.

Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016. 440p. \$34.95.  
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— Christopher J. Devine, *University of Dayton*

In his book, Joel K. Goldstein has made an ambitious attempt to explain “the most impressive development in American political institutions during the past four decades” (p. 301): the creation of the “White House vice presidency.” The essential features of this newly invigorated institution—historically hobbled by its limited constitutional role and divided institutional identity—entail serving as a senior adviser to, and troubleshooter for, the president, with the support of necessary resources. Key among those resources are regular access to the president and his staff, access to intelligence briefings and Oval Office paper flow, and the integration of vice presidential staff within White House operations.

The vice presidency's “path to significance,” Goldstein argues, is not a narrow research interest; rather, this evolution has broad implications for scholars' understanding of processes of institutional change. As vice presidential power has expanded since the 1970s, new patterns also have emerged with respect to vice presidential selection,

vice presidential campaigning, and the vice president-elect's role in presidential transitions. It is a central insight of this book that "[n]one of these practices are legally mandated" (p. 10); instead, they gain force from the "repetition of accumulated precedents" (p. 310) that have "been developed and refined over time in a phenomenon resembling a nonjudicial version of the common-law process" (pp. 308–9). This is hardly an institutional deficiency, according to Goldstein. In rejecting many existing proposals for legally codified changes to the vice presidency as counterproductive, he cites the development of "informal institutions"—particularly ones promoting the selection of highly qualified running mates and exposing them to public scrutiny—as the most likely sources of "[m]eaningful reform" (p. 300).

Locating this analysis of the vice presidency within a larger institutional context helps to focus the work, as a whole, and to clarify its intended contributions. It succeeds in doing so, to the extent that it makes a compelling case for the value of informal institutional changes to the vice presidency. However, such processes' applicability to other challenged institutions, executive or otherwise, is generally asserted and thus essentially implicit. A detailed discussion of where such change is needed, and where formal institutional change has proved deficient, beyond the vice presidency would help to generalize the author's impressive case for the value of informal institutional change.

Goldstein also makes a distinctive contribution, in comparison to authors of other recent studies of the vice presidency such as *The American Vice Presidency* (Jody Baumgartner with Thomas Crumblin, 2015), with his rigorous treatment of Jimmy Carter's and Walter Mondale's roles in crafting, implementing, and helping to institutionalize the White House vice presidency. Indeed, following an introduction of the text in Chapter 1 and an engrossing account of the vice presidency's constitutional design and pre-Carter/Mondale institutional development in Chapter 2, Goldstein devotes four chapters to an extensive analysis of the "Mondale model"—specifically, Mondale's 1976 selection and campaign role (Chapter 3); the envisioning of a new role for the vice president during Carter's presidential transition (Chapter 4); the implementation of that role during the Carter administration (Chapter 5); and the factors that facilitated successful implementation of the Mondale model (Chapter 6).

While recognizing the trend toward expanded vice presidential power prior to Mondale—primarily due to the office's (functional and physical) relocation to the Executive Branch and several succession-related events in the preceding decades—Goldstein clearly stipulates Carter's and Mondale's unique contributions to the process of institutional development. Perhaps most important was Mondale's insight that rejecting "line assignments" would free him to advise and assist the president on general

matters of significance without being seen by Carter or other administration officials as beholden to particular bureaucratic interests. Carter, for his part, executed a deliberative and transparent search process that clearly communicated to potential running mates, advisers, and the public his commitment to vice presidential empowerment.

In Chapters 7–9, Goldstein traces the development of the White House vice presidency from Mondale's successor, George H. W. Bush, to Joe Biden. In doing so, he is careful not to treat the institution as fixed—explicitly noting at one point that the White House vice presidency is not synonymous with the Mondale model (p. 4)—by identifying its central features while allowing for deviations particular to a given president's or vice president's personal characteristics and political context. Most significantly, subsequent vice presidents have deviated from Mondale's model by selectively accepting line assignments. However, in most cases, these assignments have involved substantial policy initiatives that worked to enhance the vice president's prestige without significantly undercutting his status as a "generalist" within the administration.

Chapters 10–12 analyze the institutionalization of vice presidential selection and campaigning since 1976. These chapters advance the theme of institutionalization by documenting the persistence of major innovations in vice presidential selection (e.g., structured, lengthy, and invasive vetting procedures) and campaigning (e.g., rollouts, convention speeches, and debates), and by explaining their relevance to the White House vice presidency in terms of enhancing visibility and incentivizing the selection of qualified running mates. Here, Goldstein draws empirical conclusions about vice presidential selection patterns and electoral effects that, in some cases, would benefit from more systematic analysis. For instance, he does not systematically compare selections before and after 1976 to substantiate claims that geographic (p. 211) and ideological (p. 214) ticket balancing have decreased over time; furthermore, most recent tickets (11 and nine of 14, respectively) exhibit such balance. Home-state considerations also are discounted, with the exception of Lloyd Bentsen, primarily based on electoral vote counts (Table 11–2). Yet competitiveness is a better measure of a state's electoral appeal, given the modesty of vice presidential home-state advantages, and other evidence would suggest home-state influences on recent selections, including John Edwards and Paul Ryan (see Christopher Devine and Kyle Kopko, *The VP Advantage*, 2016).

In summary or in individual cases (e.g., George H. W. Bush, p. 211), Goldstein sometimes attributes selection to a given factor and rejects others; yet if selection criteria have weighted—rather than discrete—influence, then to quote his astute observation of a different decision-making process, one factor's influence only demonstrates that another "was not decisive, not that it was irrelevant" (p. 247).

Multivariate analyses, whether original or cited from existing empirical research (e.g., Jody Baumgartner, “The Veepstakes: Forecasting Vice Presidential Selection in 2008,” *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41 [October 2008]: 765–72) would more effectively characterize the weight of relevant selection criteria, particularly when comparisons to previous eras are drawn.

Notwithstanding such relatively minor concerns, in general Goldstein’s analysis is remarkably insightful, exhaustively researched, and substantively persuasive. Its overarching conclusions are supported and enlivened by genuinely perceptive treatments of such diverse matters as Dick Cheney’s diminished second-term influence, in relation to his rejection of the White House vice presidency’s generalist model (p. 166); the virtues of vice presidential ambition (pp. 286–88); flawed charges of an “imperial” (pp. 289–92) or antidemocratic (pp. 294–300) White House vice presidency; and the process by which invocations of the Twenty-Fifth Amendment’s (temporary) succession provisions have become institutionalized, as well as the White House vice presidency’s value in preparing for such events (pp. 248–64).

For scholars and others seeking to understand the vice presidency, this book is an indispensable resource—and, for that matter, a captivating read. In fact, it is not going too far to say that if you have one book about the vice presidency on your bookshelf, this should be it.

**Interest Groups and Health Care Reform across the United States.** By Virginia Gray, David Lowery, and Jennifer K. Benz. Washington, DC, Georgetown University Press. 2013. 248p. \$29.95. doi:10.1017/S1537592716003650

— Michael Doonan, *Brandeis University*

This book makes a major contribution to an understanding of what influences state and national health policy. While the focus is on the role of interest groups, the models add insight into the range of influences on policy development, including political party control, competition between parties, issue saliency, ideology, and political action committees. Although *Interest Groups and Health Care Reform across the United States* adds value to the health policy field, in several places it is better at identifying effects than explaining the magnitude of the effect or impact on policy.

After providing background on interest-group theory, the structure of health care in the United States, and organized interest-group literature, Virginia Gray, David Lowery, and Jennifer K. Benz analyze three health-care policy areas: state pharmacy programs, regulation of managed care, and universal health-care efforts in the states. Variation within state policies is used to assess the influence of interest groups and other factors that impact policy adoption and revision. The driving theory is derived from the Energy Stability Area (ESA) model,

which focuses on the density and diversity of organized interest.

State pharmacy programs assist low-income seniors not eligible for coverage through Medicaid. Prior to the passage of the Medicare Part D prescription-drug benefit in 2003, 34 states had drug assistance programs. Findings are based on variations among state programs. The authors question why these assistance programs were able to happen at the state level but were blocked nationally for so long. A key finding was that organized interests had little impact on program adoption but significant impact on subsequent modifications. This finding reinforces the supposition in ESAs that interest groups react more to the policy agenda than create it. Citizens’ belief in a broader role for government had a positive impact on adoption, but Democratic Party control did not. However, Democratic control was essential for program expansion. Interparty competition, state wealth, and a higher percentage of seniors all increased chances of adoption. Higher health maintenance organization (HMO) penetration had a mitigating effect on adoption. Additionally, the authors found that the “greater number of health interests in a state, the lower the generosity of the program” (p. 87).

Politics of healthcare in the states differed from Medicare Part D. The authors conclude “that the politics of state health care is far more complex, far more interesting, and potentially far more optimistic than the national story” (p. 89). They accurately characterize the politics of Medicare Part D as “the purchase of a benefit at the expense of a wide array of pork barrel expenditures for providers, insurance companies, and pharmaceutical manufacturers” (p. 89). However, the political variations are more likely due to the differences in the nature of state programs compared to Medicare Part D. States with programs in 2002 covered just 16% of the people eligible and included waiting lists and benefit restrictions. The best state, New Jersey, covered just 40% of those eligible. In 2000, the largest such program, again in New Jersey, spent \$324 million and covered 187,000 people (Kimberley Fox et al., “Managing Program Costs in State Pharmacy Assistance Programs,” *The Commonwealth Fund*, February 2004). In comparison, more than 1.5 million beneficiaries in New Jersey are eligible for Medicare Part D and expenditures are in the billions; nationally in 2014, Medicare Part D spent \$97 billion, \$2,203 per beneficiary (“10 Essential Facts About Medicare and Prescription Drug Spending,” *The Kaiser Family Foundation*, July 2016). While Medicare Part D is complex for consumers and a boon to industry and insurers, it provides comprehensive benefits to nearly all eligible Medicare beneficiaries. A program the magnitude of Part D could make or break the pharmaceutical industry or health insurance companies. State programs are not comparable.

The second major focus is on the politics of managed-care regulation. The 1990s backlash against managed care