

case information collected by the author and presented in table 6.2). This would have broadened the book's contribution beyond the development of a comprehensive theoretical framework and would have provided the reader with a systematic test of its analytical usefulness for comparative analyses.

In the conclusion, the author summarizes his findings and provides a prediction of how left-wing elites may react to these recent right responses. Cannon urges left-wing actors (both political and nonpolitical) to learn from the right and to look beyond the political power network to promote postneoliberal ideas, for example, through their dissemination in the media or coordination with left-wing transnational think tanks and other civil society organizations.

In sum, Cannon raises important questions about the power of elites beyond state institutions that need to be studied further, and offers a new analytical tool to do so. In addition, the book provides a plethora of in-depth case information on the role of the media, the military, and transnational actors and their relationship to right-wing elites. The content of this book is situated at the intersection of several areas that aim at the study of elite power and is, hence, useful for Latin Americanists interested in political economy and international relations, as well as party politics.

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Jordi Díez, *The Politics of Gay Marriage in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, and Mexico*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015. Bibliography, index, 301 pp.; hardcover \$48.99, paperback \$29.99, ebook \$24.

Three different paths led to the success or failure of gay marriage in Argentina, Mexico, and Chile. Argentina started with a local experience involving one particular couple in the southernmost corner of the continent, but expanded gay marriage nationwide when its congress enacted national legislation. Mexico City adopted gay marriage, and while most other jurisdictions did not issue marriage licenses, the Mexican Supreme Court mandated that all of the country recognize those issued in the capital. In Chile, by contrast, respect for the basic rights of gay persons came at a painfully slow pace, and even prompted an international body, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights, to condemn the state's violation of the fundamental rights of a mother who was denied custody of her own children solely because she was a lesbian.

Jordi Díez's book seeks to explain why Argentina and Mexico advanced toward legalizing gay marriage while Chile did not. Díez is among the best-qualified scholars to undertake one of the first and most comprehensive efforts to account for policy change about marriage rights in Latin America. He has previously worked beyond LGBTQ rights to explore policymaking in the region, party systems, social mobilization, and institutional arrangements. This book reflects Díez's previous academic work by articulating each of those topics to provide an explanation of policy variation around gay marriage in Latin America centered on social mobilization, networks, and institutions.

A major contribution of Díez's book is that it documents and highlights the agency of gay and lesbian activists and organizations. The stars of Díez's argument are the gay men and women who created networks much larger than the LGBTQ social movement, often framing their cause within larger political struggles for human rights and feminist causes, and convinced many mainstream politicians and opinion leaders of the importance of equality for the society as a whole. As Díez puts it,

Policy change is induced by gay and lesbian activists who form extensive and influential networks of like-minded state and nonstate actors, which in turn develop strategies and policy frames that convince policy makers and important sectors of society of their cause. (9)

Whether those strategies succeed, Díez argues, depends on the strength and reach of the networks, but also on the institutional arrangements that govern policy change in each country. While Chile's slow-moving "consensual" democracy prevents rapid major policy changes, Argentina's and Mexico's fluid federal systems allow for the strategic use of local and national assemblies and courts to put gay marriage on the agenda. In both Argentina and Mexico, gay marriage was initiated in a local jurisdiction, immediately sparking a national debate. In Chile's centralist system, local jurisdictions cannot produce policy change in the same way. In his book, Díez identifies the potential of local jurisdictions with progressive social views to initiate national debates in federal systems, even in Catholic and conservative Latin America. In centralist systems, by contrast, local transformations are limited by hierarchical national politics.

Throughout the book, Díez offers a rich historical account of the progressive stages that led to the discussion of gay marriage and its eventual success in Argentina and Mexico but failure in Chile. The account starts with the historical origins of heteronormative marriage limitations in Latin America, introduced by Spanish colonizers and their Catholic beliefs and institutions, and continues throughout the early republican period and during the nineteenth century. At that time, several countries in Latin America adopted civil codes that regulated sexual relations, commonly by allowing the state to punish behaviors that offended public morality or customs. Sexual relations between persons of the same sex were treated as crimes or manifestations of mental disease, and in each case, the earliest struggles of the gay and lesbian movement sought to decriminalize and demedicalize their sexual practices.

Searching for the origins of organized mobilization around gay marriage, Díez shows that the devastating AIDS epidemic in the 1980s pushed gays and lesbians to quickly organize and demand action from the state. Such organizations established the first structural linkages with government officials to provide medical attention, create prevention programs, and eventually make antiretroviral treatment available for all. Many of those existing AIDS organizations and their members moved on to demand the expansion of rights for gays and lesbians and, decades later, used similar mobilization and network-building tactics to push for gay marriage.

The most effective strategy for activists to push for marriage equality, Díez argues, has been linking gay and lesbian rights to a broader discussion of human rights and the expansion of democratic practices in each country. In this way, gays and lesbians gained key allies in growing social movements in Latin America that demanded truth about human rights violations under past authoritarian regimes, as well as among feminist activists who saw the gay and lesbian cause as related to their own demands.

Gay and lesbian activists succeeded in bringing about gay marriage in Argentina and Mexico through the consolidation of wide-issue networks and strategic mobilization to include their demands in the agendas of local or national legislative bodies. Even if activists sought to engage the media and also used “strategic litigation” to make courts part of the discussion, Díez argues, legislatures were “the primary sites of struggle” in the three cases. The adoption of gay marriage locally in Mexico City and nationally in Argentina came after the activist network managed to convince politicians, mostly but not exclusively from the left, that gay marriage was a key step in a larger process of democratic consolidation that all progressive forces should support. In both cases, the rapid action of activists and their successful strategy to quickly gather just enough votes in the legislature left opponents, most important the Catholic Church, unprepared to block the advancement of equality.

While marriage equality successfully advanced in Mexico City and Argentina, Díez argues, in Chile the activist network around gay rights was weaker and the institutional setting more resistant to policy change, blocking the advancement of gay marriage. After decades of military dictatorship, the transition to democracy in Chile did not eliminate the capacity of the right to block social change. Through the installation of a “consensual democracy,” the right and the church maintained a veto over new legislation that has so far blocked gay marriage, and only too slowly has permitted the decriminalization of consensual sex practices and the inclusion of sexual orientation in an antidiscrimination bill.

While the book is a great contribution to our understanding of the politics of social change and gay rights in Latin America, one downside is its methodological framing. The book uses a problematic causal language based on independent and dependent variables. Instead of demonstrating a causal relationship between variables (Díez offers three independent variables and one dependent variable that cannot be mutually correlated using only three observations), the book does an excellent job at mapping mechanisms, actors, strategies, conditions for success, and paths toward policy change. In other words, this book answers the question about

how policy change is achieved, thus requiring a methodological framing of processes and mechanisms and not one of dependent and independent variables.

A few months after Díez finished his work, Colombia joined the short list of countries with marriage equality. The Colombian experience offers an alternative path that complements but also challenges some of Díez's claims. Unlike the cases presented in his book, the Colombian Congress was not the "primary site of struggle," and, as he recognizes briefly in the final passages of the book, the local gay and lesbian movement was not as strong. In the case of my own country, gay and lesbian activists used litigation instead of coalition building in Congress. Facing demands from gay, lesbian, and allied activists, who included some of the most prominent human rights legal advocates, an independent and traditionally progressive Constitutional Court first avoided deciding on the issue, then sent it to Congress for review with a two-year time limit, and finally, when Congress failed to enact legislation, recognized gay marriage as the law of the land.

Díez's book will surely be acknowledged as a major contribution to the study of gay rights in Latin America, setting an agenda for more research that includes the many processes of mobilization taking place currently in the region. But beyond gay marriage, Díez has articulated the study of institutions, party systems, social mobilization, and policy change in the region in a way that has the potential to inform wider debates among students of Latin American politics.

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Julio Ríos-Figueroa, *Constitutional Courts as Mediators: Armed Conflict, Civil-Military Relations, and the Rule of Law in Latin America*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. Illustrations, figures, tables, bibliography, index, 256 pp.; hardcover \$110, paperback \$34.99, ebook \$88.

Civil-military relations are often surrounded by the dilemma of how to build efficacious armed forces that are also bounded by the law and respect for constitutional rights. This dilemma often generates tension between the civilian government and the military, and this tension often ends up creating uncertainty over the legal consequences of their actions, the limits of emergencies permitted by the constitution, and the necessary balance among the clashing constitutional principles. This book presents a stimulating insight into this debate and provides an interesting approach to how constitutional courts can become relevant players in this arena.

Ríos-Figueroa's book concentrates not on whether or not constitutional courts should be responsible for intervening in political cases the military is part of, but on what role the constitutional court should adopt in these cases. The author advances the argument that courts should embrace a mediator role rather than an arbitrator or delegate role for reaching an agreement between the parties involved. In fact, courts can become "commanding mediators" with power, because they use their own resources to influence the parties in the dispute to reach a legal solution to a conflict.