Book Reviews

Jailbait: The Politics of Statutory Rape Laws in the United States. **By Carolyn E. Cocca. Albany: State University of New York Press. 2004. 228 pp. Paper $21.95.**

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Carolyn Cocca notes at the outset of her book that she is interested not only in the nuts and bolts of morality policy but also in how the narratives about those policies circulate and justify, in this case, the regulation of sexuality. The book breaks ground in its sustained attention to an issue that has been insufficiently addressed by political scientists.

Cocca is interested in morality politics and the political battles and strategies with respect to statutory rape laws at the state level during the last 30 years, but she begins with a brief history of statutory rape laws in the United States. After a cursory review of the period prior to the twentieth century, she turns her attention to the two "waves" of feminist advocacy for reform: the effort early in the twentieth century to raise the age of consent, and the late-twentieth-century efforts to add age-span provisions and gender-neutral language. The first wave was fairly successful (though not without controversy), and most states raised the age of consent from the previous range of 10 to 12 years to 16 to 18 years. The second wave is the period that Cocca studies in more detail in the rest of the book.

As the author's introductory discussion notes, feminist reformers were not of one mind regarding the goals for reform of statutory rape laws. Some were concerned that consensual relationships between teens close in age were being needlessly punished. Others were more concerned with making the laws gender neutral and ensuring that provisions such as "promiscuity" exemptions were eliminated. As her empirical work shows, it was not only feminists who influenced the reform of statutory

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rape laws. Conservative groups and lawmakers, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, became a significant influence on the reform of statutory rape laws.

The three empirical chapters look at three specific policy changes. In Chapter 2, Cocca addresses the addition of age-span provisions that, as she puts it, "decriminalize teen sex." By 1999, 43 states had added such provisions. In Chapter 3, she examines the effort to make statutory rape laws gender neutral, which all 50 states had adopted by the year 2000. It is interesting to note that these changes were often driven by notorious cases of older women engaged in sexual relationships with teenage boys. The fourth chapter looks at the effort to increase statutory rape prosecutions in the 1990s, driven by concerns over teen pregnancy and its supposed role in "welfare dependency." Using data and feminist analysis, Cocca makes clear that the set of logical, behavioral, and policy connections required to make the leap from statutory rape law to welfare policy is tendentious at best, but this did not deter 10 states from implementing such policies.

Cocca examined legislative histories in all 50 states, as well as state and federal court decisions regarding statutory rape. She also selected three states for case studies of each empirical policy arena: Georgia, California, and New Jersey. She is careful to outline and to justify her quantitative methodologies, and the book thus has the kind of appeal needed to lend legitimacy to its findings with political scientists unconcerned with gender. However, the author also seeks to address an arena of policy of particular interest to feminists and those who study gender politics. She acknowledges the conflicts among feminist groups over whether, how, and when to advocate for changes in statutory rape law. But she is not always as clear as she might be about what factors lead to particular feminist organizations becoming involved, or not, in this policy question. The book also raises more questions than it answers about the relationship between feminist concerns and morality policies.

Nor is the empirical work as careful as it might be. Cocca takes great care to indicate her methods for the empirical work and her method of selecting the three case-study states. However, case studies require methodological attention as well, and nowhere does the author describe her approach. From the sources cited, it seems that the approach varied: Bill files are cited for some legislation but not all, and the interviews are not listed anywhere, although they are occasionally cited. For media reports, which are important to the analysis, her New Jersey case study relies on articles that appeared in the *New York Times*, but not on any New Jersey–based news sources. I have now lived in New Jersey long enough to know

that the *Times*, while it is the newspaper of record, certainly does not pay attention to New Jersey politics as keenly as do New Jersey news sources.

Despite these shortcomings, the author has provided a useful initial study of this policy area. That there are more questions to be addressed is an indication that political scientists, especially those concerned about gender, should expand their attention to morality policy, including the politics of statutory rape.

Political Women: The Women's Movement, Political Institutions, the Battle for Women's Suffrage and the ERA.

By Alana S. Jeydel. New York: Routledge. 2004. 223 pp. $125.00.

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Resource mobilization theory and, more recently, political process/opportunity theories dominate the study of social movements. The pioneering work of Jo Freeman and Anne Costain uses these theories to explain the emergence and mobilization of the contemporary U.S. women's movement. According to this perspective, women's movements have the incentive to act when their chances for success are high. They take advantage of new opportunities and open new ones for themselves. These opportunities are a function of their internal resources and of external factors, such as governmental structures and rules that provide access. Because the U.S. women's movement often has been more oriented toward changing gender role norms and practices, rather than achieving rights, it has received relatively little attention from political opportunity structure (POS) scholars.

Alana Jeydel provides an important corrective by examining two landmark policy goals, the Nineteenth Amendment to enfranchise women and the failed Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) to assure sex equality under the law. She examines the conditions under which political leaders (Congress and the president) are responsive to the women's movement and the timing of the movement's access to these institutions. She argues that an analysis of social movement–elite relations is crucial to understanding how the movement's agenda gains support from presidents and is introduced into Congress, given hearings, and reported out for floor votes. Resource mobilization theory is combined with political process/opportunity theories to demonstrate how social movements gain

access with the help of external allies. According to this model, political leaders become more responsive when the POS is opening.

The author divides the women's movement into three waves: 1848–89, the dawn of suffrage demands; 1890–1928, the height of the suffrage movement with the formation of the National American Woman Suffrage Association and the first demands for the ERA; and 1960–85, the era of the ERA campaign. The waves are well justified, with the possible exception of the third wave, which begins with the election of John Kennedy and his establishment of a commission on the status of women and ends with failed attempts at congressional passage after the deadline for ERA ratification expired in 1982. Arguably, either 1982 or 1989, when the *Webster* decision provided a wake-up call for preserving legalized abortion and a new rallying cry to mobilize the movement's membership, could have been used as the end of the ERA wave.

Jeydel's major contribution is operationalizing the POS. An open POS in Congress is indicated by low party unity, high electoral instability, rules weakening party leaders' powers of appointment, and favorable public opinion toward movement goals. Similarly, an open POS in the presidency is marked by high electoral instability and supportive public opinion. Access to Congress is measured by hearings on suffrage or the ERA held in each Congress and by the number, type, and position of groups and individuals testifying in those hearings. Presidential access is indicated by women's planks in national party platforms, meetings with movement and women's groups, and establishment of women's bureaucracies. Measures of congressional response are bills introduced, reported, brought to the floor, and passed. Presidential response is indicated by statements on suffrage, the ERA, and women generally, and by the signing of legislation and executive orders on women. These measures are supplemented by archival materials of several women's groups. The study is very carefully done and the data are clearly displayed. Despite many problems of measurement, which the author notes, the model here generally describes changes in access to and response of Congress and the president to the women's movement during the periods covered.

Many will find this book excessively detailed in its description of access and response and the nature of the POS in each Congress and presidency covered. Several measures are missing or meaningless. For example, group endorsements are used as an indicator of mass opinion on suffrage, and polling on the ERA was only conducted after congressional passage in 1972. Electoral stability in the Senate is meaningless until the adoption of direct election. Congressional hearings were often

customary and the number of pro-suffrage witnesses probably reflected those sent by the movement. The public papers of the presidents were not available until the Truman administration. Some of the measures, such as general attention to women's issues and women's groups, do not appear to be related to the women's movement, indicating that a more parsimonious model may be possible. Even so, the study fills a gap in our understanding of congressional passage of suffrage and the ERA and the role of the president in each campaign. There has been much greater attention paid to the state ratification campaigns by scholars. The study also clearly shows the lack of attention in Congress and by presidents to gender issues and women's groups during much of the last two centuries.

Despite some weaknesses, the model (or parts of it) is worth further testing. A comparative study of the abolition and suffrage movements during 1848–65 (with the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment) might indicate the degree to which the POS is gendered (i.e., works better for women than for men, or the reverse). Or a study of elite access and response during the entire history of the ERA, 1923–82, might be undertaken, as was done here for woman suffrage. Alternatively, the application of this approach to an issue that is not a constitutional amendment might be considered inasmuch as an extraordinary congressional majority is required for the submission of an amendment, the president has no formal role, and further state action is needed for adoption. For example, abortion policy would afford an opportunity to compare the POS of both the pro-choice and pro-life movements and perhaps shift to the state level in a group of case studies. In summary, this is a welcome addition to the literature of women and politics, and scholars will find that it presents many new possibilities for further research.

VideoStyle, WebStyle, NewsStyle: Gender and Candidate Communication. By Dianne G. Bystrom, Mary Christine Banwart, Lynda Lee Kaid, and Terra A. Robertson. New York: Routledge. 2004. 240 pp. $23.95.

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In their ambitious and timely book, Dianne Bystrom and her colleagues seek to answer the following question: Why are women still so underrepresented among political officials? The authors design an im-

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pressive study to examine whether gender differences in campaigning style influence voters' reactions to candidates.

This study is guided by the theory of *videostyle*, introduced by Lynda L. Kaid and Dorothy K. Davidson in *New Perspectives on Political Advertising* (1986), as well as the theory of "feminine" style introduced by K. K. Campbell in *Man Cannot Speak for Her* (1989). "Videostyle," as explained by Bystrom and her colleagues, examines the verbal content, nonverbal content, and video production techniques of televised political advertising. To understand the videostyle adopted by male and female candidates, it is important to examine the "feminine" and "masculine" styles of presentation. The feminine style of presentation relies more on personal experiences, inviting audience participation, addressing the audience as peers, and identifying with the audience's experiences. The masculine style of presentation, in contrast, includes affirmations of one's own expertise, use of expert authority, and use of impersonal or incomplete examples.

In this book, Bystrom and colleagues seek to examine if male and female candidates differ in their style of presentation in their political advertisements, in how they develop their websites, and in how the news media represent their candidacies. The authors also examine whether male and female voters differ in their reactions to these styles of presentation.

The authors use content analysis to examine political advertisements, websites, and newspaper stories. They use experimental designs to test citizens' reactions to political ads, websites, and news stories. They use survey research to examine differences in how male and female citizens use the media. Finally, they use case studies to examine a small number of Senate and gubernatorial campaigns in greater detail.

The strongest aspects of the book are the content analyses of political advertisements and websites. The weakest aspects are the experimental and survey studies examining voters' reactions to men's and women's messages. I begin with the examination of political advertising. The authors look at mixed-gendered races for U.S. Senate and governor between 1990 and 2002, examining almost 1,400 advertisements. In their analysis of the advertisements, they look at a variety of dimensions, including the tone of the advertisement, the types of issues emphasized, the discussion of character traits, the visuals, the facial expressions of the candidates, the dominant dress of the candidates, and the appearance of families in the advertisements. Overall, the authors find some differences between the videostyle of male and female candidates (e.g., women use more negative ads, women are more likely to attack their

opponent's personal character, women are more likely to emphasize education, men are more likely to emphasize taxes), as well as some similarities (e.g., men and women use similar image traits in their ads, the production content of men's and women's ads are similar). When the authors look at the interaction of gender and status (e.g., incumbent, challenger, and candidate in open race) and party, they find a conditional effect where the gender, status of the candidate, and the candidates' party influence the candidates' choice of videostyle.

Bystrom and colleagues examine voters' reactions to videostyles by looking at how subjects viewed candidate advertising in the 1996 and 2000 presidential campaigns. The subjects, students from several different universities, watched a set of advertisements (three negative spots and one positive spot for each candidate). These experiments seemed disconnected from the previous analysis of videostyle in Senate and gubernatorial races. The authors do review a few experimental studies examining subjects' reactions to advertisements in a small number of statewide races. Unfortunately, these studies also rely heavily on student samples, and the results may have been influenced by the dynamics of the small number of races (about nine races across three election years) examined. I think the usefulness of the experimental studies would have been improved by manipulating aspects of the feminine and masculine style of presentation found in the content analysis in a series of advertisements. For example, subjects could have viewed a male candidate relying on a feminine style of presentation in one condition, where other subjects could have viewed a female candidate, using the same advertisement (e.g., the same feminine style of presentation) in another condition. With such an experiment, alternating the style of presentation with the gender of the candidate, the authors could more authoritatively examine the impact of videostyle on citizens.

After examining the candidates' use of political advertisements, the authors examined the candidates' use of websites in the 2000 and 2002 campaigns. More specifically, they examined 48 websites from mixed-gender gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races. Overall, they report similar content on the websites of male and female candidates. To examine the impact of *webstyle* on voters, the authors conducted an experiment where subjects were exposed to the websites of the presidential candidates. As before, a more sophisticated experiment manipulating the webstyles of male and female candidates for Senate and governor would have been more interesting.

The last section of the book is devoted to gender differences in *newsstyle*. This time, the authors look at the newspaper coverage of the mixed-

gender U.S. Senate and gubernatorial races contested in 1998, 2000, and 2002. These results suggest that some of the gender differences in news coverage found in earlier analyses of male and female candidates have disappeared (e.g., female candidates do not receive less coverage than do men). However, other differences persist. For example, certain issues are more likely to be linked with male candidates (e.g., taxes), and other issues are more likely to be linked with female candidates (e.g., education). Marital and family status receive more attention for female candidates. In their analysis of news coverage, I would have liked the authors to control for the status of the candidate as well as the type of office (e.g., senator vs. governor), given that we know that coverage patterns differ by status and race type. The authors conclude their examination of news coverage by looking at whether male and female respondents differ in their use of news in presidential and statewide races. This analysis, as they note, relies on small samples and simple measurement techniques, and they find that men and women sometimes use the media differently in presidential campaigns, but find fewer differences in statewide races.

Overall, this book represents an important contribution to the study of women in politics. I am particularly impressed with the authors' extensive content analysis of political advertisements and campaign websites. The examination of the impact of videostyle and webstyle on male and female candidates was more preliminary, but this avenue of research is important and should be pursued in the future. Finally, I think their decision to focus on mixed-gender races may limit the generalizability of their findings since male candidates may campaign differently when running against a woman. However, this is an impressive book with a great deal of valuable and timely information about how men and women use the media in their campaigns for office.

Activist Faith: Grassroots Women in Democratic Brazil and Chile. By Carol Drogus and Hannah Stewart-Gambino. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press. 2005. 212 pp. $55.00.

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In the 1970s and 1980s, civil society–based movements rose up to fight against authoritarian regimes in the Southern Cone of Latin America.

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Some of the most unexpected, and inspirational, of the actors involved were poor women. Many of them were mobilized through Christian "base communities," lay study and action groups organized by the Catholic Church during its liberation theology period.

With the transition (back) to democracy in places such as Chile and Brazil, the surge of mobilization declined. What happened to the unusual protagonists of the redemocratization movement? This is the central question that Carol Drogus and Hannah Stewart-Gambino, ably assisted by two Brazilian researchers, Cecilia Loreto Mariz and Maria das Dores Campos Machado, seek to answer in *Activist Faith*. In 1999, they interviewed 73 women from base communities in Santiago, Chile, and São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, to see whether—and in what ways—these women stayed active in sociopolitical issues. The authors also investigated the women's organizational development, particularly if they were sowing seeds for another movement "cycle."

After Chapter 1 introduces the topic and its subjects, Chapter 2 is devoted to an overview of the concept of movement cycles. The authors claim that base communities "must be understood as social movements associated with processes of redemocratization" (p. 23), and moreover, since they are part of a cycle, they did not disappear with the restoration of "normal" politics (that is, politics channeled through political parties, elections, or state institutions). As with other "cycle" proponents, Drogus and Stewart-Gambino argue that important political work goes on even during periods of seeming quiescence; this work may be in personal, organizational, or network development.

The rest of the book explores the base community (or former base community) members' past, present, and potential future activism. Chapter 3 compares the development of base communities in Chile and Brazil under authoritarian rule. The Chilean communities became involved in radical political protest at the national level, whereas the Brazilian communities focused mainly on sociocultural transformation and local demands, such as day care. This differentiation reflected the structure of the national churches, as well as the nature of the regime in power. The Chilean Catholic Church exerted centralized control through its vicariate structure, helping the church, and base communities, respond to the repressive tactics of the Pinochet dictatorship. In contrast, the Brazilian Catholic Church permitted more autonomous development of its base communities, while the relatively less repressive Brazilian government allowed local demand making. Chapter 4 turns to the reasons for the decline in base community activism: The withdrawal or diminution of

church support was the central factor in Chile, while other factors were as important in Brazil.

Despite the decline in church support, Chapter 5 reveals, in the late 1990s the majority of the interviewees were still engaged in some kind of social or political activism, mainly at the local level, through base communities or other organizations. Reflecting the more general opportunities for civil-society organizing in the two countries, poor Catholic women's organizing is more "networked" in Brazil, while in Chile there are more partisan divisions. Chapter 6 focuses on the potential for networking with poor Pentecostal women, since Pentecostalism is the fastest-growing religious affiliation in both countries; Chapter 7 turns to the possibilities of work with "classic" middle-class feminist groups. Neither sector offers much in the way of ongoing collaboration: Religious and class differences are hard to overcome, particularly in Chile, where coinciding rather than cross-cutting social cleavages are the norm. Overall, the authors find more evidence for the personal empowerment of individual women through their base community experiences, rather than for strong networks ready to support mobilizations.

The great strength of this book is its detailed examination of the impact that social movement participation has had on the lives of the women from base communities. The authors also assess the potential for future "visible" mobilization, and are sanguine (if hopeful) about the potential for larger network possibilities. In terms of the causal links they explore, their most valuable contribution is a clear-eyed assessment of the important role that the Catholic Church has played in both mobilizing and demobilizing these women; this work takes the variable of religious faith more seriously than do many social movement analyses.

Nevertheless, the book remains limited in the scope of its analysis. Given the excellent discussion of the church's role in women's organizing, the "political opportunity structure" approach, which addresses the importance of political context in social movement development, deserved at least a passing mention. More seriously, the definition of the movement under study is vague. Early on, the authors claim that the base communities themselves are social movements related to the larger redemocratization movement (pp. 23–24). But how exactly are organizations movements? And what is the next movement the authors hope will emerge? A "more organized and resistant civil society," "protest politics," fighting "poverty and community deprivation," a "liberationist" movement, or one "rooted in poor urban communities or run by poor women" are variously mentioned. One problem here is the reliance on

the overall redemocratization movement as the "cycle" in which the women participated. One senses some nostalgia for the good-old bad-old days, particularly reading phrases such as the "women did not go home in defeat" during the "low ebb" of mobilization (p. 36); surely, if they were part of the redemocratization movement, they were not defeated at all!

Although the authors take seriously several facets of their informants' multiple identities, they almost completely neglect the important dimension of race. The brief reference to race with respect to women's identity (pp. 149, 151) is within a religious framework (the importance of "African-based religious traditions" in Brazil). It is difficult to believe that race was not more central to poor Brazilian women's identity development or activism, considering that "poor" is often a synonym for "Afro-Brazilian."

Activist Faith seems to be written for an audience that has a good background in the subject. The meaning of a "base community" is not given until page 40, and other key terms go undefined. Finally, the importance of these women to civil society at large is asserted rather than argued. According to the authors, "poor women making a first foray into critical politics through the church communities" were "the focal point of all the hopes and aspirations for stronger democracies in postmilitary Latin America" and thus "the critical social movement . . . to follow in order to understand the long-term impact of movements on postmilitary civil society" (p. 24). While this reviewer would agree with these statements, she fears that readers in the "main/malestream" of political science may not; and this story is at once too specific, and yet not explicit enough, about the importance of its subject to convince them.