

“maximum campaign finance reform” (p. 63): after the implementation of the House Leadership and Open Government Act that banned personal gifts from lobbyists but before the Supreme Court’s *Citizens United* decision. Hence, during the act’s development, legislators could not rely on soft money, and lobbyists had to rely only on direct contributions and fundraisers to show support or build relationships. By painstakingly piecing together lobby and donation records, McKay builds a dataset consisting of contributions from both lobbyists and the PACs they control and, to avoid selection bias, the senators to whom they *might have given* contributions. The resulting dataset is the first to quantify how lobbyists direct PAC donations, including their timing and size. The related analyses, which all are based on multiple hundreds of thousands of observations, show that health care lobbyists gave or authorized more donations than other lobbyists in general during the drafting of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) and that these donations were disproportionately channeled to members of the Senate Finance and Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committees.

The final two empirical chapters of *Stealth Lobbying* contain some of the most compelling evidence of lobby influence presented in the book. McKay argues persuasively that introducing amendments is a low-cost activity for members of Congress. She also argues that amendments often provide organized interests with private or particularistic benefits. Hence, given the tremendous pressure for legislators to raise funds, the institutional context encourages rent-seeking (a term McKay does not use). Ultimately “members of Congress are skilled at framing their amendments in a defensible way... [but lobby groups] know they are the result of the lobbyists’ efforts” (p. 105). McKay calls these amendments “microlegislation” (p. 9).

Fortunately for McKay, who was working as a congressional fellow during the ACA’s development, the chairman of the Senate Finance Committee sought comments from the public about various options for reform. As a result, McKay was able to garner the requests or positions of nearly 900 lobby groups. Using software designed to detect plagiarism, she identified more than 200 instances in which a member of the Finance Committee introduced an amendment that was advocated expressly by a lobby group. Analyses reveal that “when a lobby group hosts a fundraising event for a senator, *that* senator is more likely to offer an amendment requested by *that* same group” (p. 126). But did any of these amendments appear in the Finance Committee’s final version of the law? Yes: in fact, campaign contributions from lobbyists or PACs were positively associated with amendments appearing in the committee’s final version of ACA. This effect is masked by the overall lobbying activity of amendment supporters, which helps explain why studies that examined only lobbying activities failed to find evidence of influence.

In general, *Stealth Lobbying* is a work of tremendous scholarly value. McKay delves into the details of congressional lobbying to a greater extent than nearly any other study except for, perhaps, her previous publications on microlegislation. “Stealth lobbying” and “microlegislation” are original concepts that belong in courses and textbooks on lobbying and interest groups. Although articulating these concepts are themselves valuable contributions, McKay’s book is particularly noteworthy because of the consistent statistical evidence it presents for the influence of money over policy. She is correct to highlight the inconsistent findings of previous studies on influence and argues persuasively that finding such evidence requires delving into the details of legislation. (Nearly all the datasets are presented for the first time.) Fortunately, the most powerful legislators appear to be less moved by lobby groups. This “inverse pull” narrative can provide insight into institutional reforms but is the least developed of the theoretical narratives and is tested less often.

Still, questions remain. In the final chapter, McKay does not sufficiently address the generalizability of her findings nor possible confounders. Surely, although she provides evidence that the content of the ACA was influenced by lobby groups, she presents her results as if they may apply to microlegislation of all types. At present, McKay assumes that all microlegislation is equally non-salient. (This is likely a fair assumption in the context of the ACA, but is microlegislation ever salient at all?) It especially remains to be seen how the emergence of “super PACs” in a post-*Citizens United* world affects the efficacy of stealth lobbying. Lobbyists no longer control funds as exclusively as they used to, so their individual influence on legislators might have weakened. Finally, it is worth considering how lobbyists’ use of *outsider* tactics may have affected the trends McKay finds. In an article that examines group activity on the Medicare reforms of 2003, Richard Hall and Molly Reynolds find that lobby groups targeted the constituencies of specific legislators with advertisements and timed their efforts strategically. It remains to be seen whether the insider techniques that McKay documents are affected by any outsider techniques that occurred during the ACA’s development. Nevertheless, the book’s merits far outweigh any of these issues, and that is why the book is likely to be cited by scholars of lobbying for decades to come.

The Elephant in the Room: Donald Trump and the Future of the Republican Party. Edited by Andrew E. Busch and William G. Mayer. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2022. 183p. \$75.00 cloth, \$28.00 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592723000944

— Richard Conley , University of Florida
rconley@ufl.edu

This edited book from Andrew E. Busch and William G. Mayer pulls together an outstanding collection of

thoughtful essays focused on three questions that the Grand Old Party (GOP) must consider in advance of the 2024 presidential election. First, did the presidency of Donald Trump positively affect the Republican Party? Second, which elements of Trump's presidency should be retained, and which should be abandoned? And finally, how can the answers to these questions enhance the probability of a White House and congressional victory for Republicans in the next election cycle?

The sharp focus on Republican politics and the party's future prospects will both please and exasperate any conservative or libertarian wrestling with "The Donald's" continuing grip on the GOP. This book will also be of interest to Trump's detractors and Democrats wishing to glean insight into future electoral battles. Intertwined throughout are critical issues that consider the former president's electoral viability, intraparty divisions, the challenges of election integrity, and whether the phenomenon of "Trumpism" is possible without Trump himself, as rising stars in the party like Ron DeSantis or Kristi Noem eye a White House run.

The eminently readable chapters are more prescriptive and normative in orientation than theoretical. A major strength of the book is the degree to which they represent an impressively balanced and diverse set of perspectives about Trump's populist leadership style, policy accomplishments, and divisive approach to electoral politics and governance. One liability of the book, through no fault of the editors or contributors, is that the chapters were written before the 2022 midterm elections. Thus, the authors' analyses and prognostications of Trump's relative influence on the success of the GOP are limited to Biden's first year in office and are not directly tested in the most recent national electoral contest. From an alternative view, however, the book beckons readers to juxtapose the authors' observations and judgments with the outcome of the elections last November in which a "red wave" failed to materialize. Some of the most stunning losses, including Senate races in Georgia and Pennsylvania and gubernatorial races in Arizona and New Hampshire, were of Trump-backed outsider candidates who sought to borrow from the former president's stylistic and rhetorical playbook.

Several chapters argue that Trump's personality and approach to politics are a net liability, while accentuating a fundamental conundrum for Republicans. Steven E. Schier's "Pick Your Battles Wisely—Trump Did Not" contends that Trump's shortcomings outweigh his advantages for a 2024 White House bid. His narcissism, penchant for unnecessary conflict, fanciful embrace of conspiracy theories, and affiliation with fringe elements harm the party's chances for victory if he is renominated. Schier opines that Republicans must "gradually move beyond Trump himself" to "retain the electoral and policy benefits of Trumpism" (p. 1). Here is the proverbial box in which the GOP finds itself: the "sad fate of the Republican

Party is that it cannot prosper without Trumpism but also cannot prosper with Trump" (p. 9).

John J. Pitney's chapter titled "What Is Trumpism?" similarly posits that Trump's abrasive personality is a potentially insurmountable liability for the GOP in expanding its future share of the electorate. Pitney contends that Trump's "performative patriotism," alongside his protectionist trade policies, isolationism, and an exploitation of "aversive partisanship," does not represent a coherent ideology. Furthermore, his uneven policy legacy and belief in unbridled executive power eschew constitutional precepts on checks and balances. "Trumpism is simpler than Madisonianism" (p. 63), and without guiding principles Republicans cannot be a party of ideas.

William G. Mayer's chapter, "Some Great Political Genius: How Donald Trump Damaged the Republican Party," uses opinion and presidential approval data to substantiate the proposition that, if renominated in 2024, "Trump will be an almost certain loser in the general election" (p. 101). Mayer highlights how Trump's personality flaws—most notably, dishonesty, mendacity, and narcissism—and his "politically foolish and self-destructive" (p. 83) conduct place a ceiling on his electoral appeal. "The challenge for Republican candidates," he writes, "is to avoid being linked closely with Trump while still retaining the votes of his many enthusiasts within the Republican Party" (pp. 99–100).

Other chapters are less critical of Trump's policy legacy and more sanguine about his imprint on Republican Party politics. In "The Republican Way Forward: Four Questions for 2024," James E. Campbell maintains that it is imperative to separate Trump's message of "nationalist-populist conservatism" (p. 14) from the messenger himself. Using an array of electoral data, Campbell underscores Trump's appeal to various factions in the party, as well as gains in his support among minorities. Campbell's elegant decision tree for the Republican nomination in 2024 (p. 23) suggests that Republicans' best option is a candidate with Trump's support, while the worst option is a candidate lacking Trump's full support. Noteworthy (and commendable) is Campbell's intrepid discussion of the need for election integrity in light of irregularities in 2020 ignored by the media and dismissed as conspiracy theory.

In "Expanding the Republican Coalition: Four Lessons from the Trump Presidency," John H. Hinderaker avows that Trump's ability "to explain convincingly to middle- and working-class Americans that he was on their side" (p. 108) is his greatest legacy—and a quality that future GOP candidates should emulate. The author also lauds Trump's "America first" policies at home and abroad. Echoing Campbell, he emphasizes that Republicans must be the party of election integrity in light of Democrats' 2020 tactic of using COVID-19 as "an excuse to change election laws in many states, arguably illegally, to make

them more lax” (p. 107). However, Hinderaker counsels Republicans to abjure Trump’s fiscal irresponsibility and deficit spending.

Several chapters are noteworthy for novel perspectives on Trump’s legacy. Charles R. Kesler’s insightful essay, “Trump, the Republican Party, and American Conservatism: Retrospect and Prospect,” situates the forty-fifth president historically, noting that he was *not* a “movement Republican.” Rather, Trump espoused a type of conservatism linked to figures such as William McKinley, William Howard Taft, and Calvin Coolidge on issues such as immigration and the role of business. Glen Harlan Reynolds’s chapter “Donald Trump and America’s New Class War” places Trump’s populist appeal in comparative context, linking the phenomenon to dissatisfaction with elites in democracies elsewhere. Reynolds asserts that “Trump is the symptom of a ruling class that many of the ruled no longer see as serving their interest” (p. 76).

The chapter by David Brady, Morris Fiorina, and Douglas Rivers, “The Future of the Republican Party: 2022, 2024, and Beyond,” presents a bevy of ideological, public opinion, and electoral data. The authors demonstrate convincingly how control of the White House and Congress is determined by a “sliver of a sliver of the electorate” (p. 51). Of note is Trump’s disproportionate impact on congressional candidate selection.

Andrew E. Busch’s final chapter, “The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly,” summarizes one of the most essential drawbacks of Trump’s political style. “While Trump’s *policies* opposed authoritarianism...his *character* pointed in a different direction” (p. 144). Busch suggests that future Republican hopefuls avoid the toxic elements of Trump’s divisive leadership approach and exploit incumbent Joe Biden’s failures by emphasizing fiscal responsibility and a stable foreign policy, national unity, fundamental rights, and limited government.

This book is a serious and thought-provoking attempt to reconcile both the legacy and the future of the GOP as Trump continues to cast a long shadow over the party. Whether the GOP’s prospects will be eclipsed by Trump’s liabilities remains a critical question.

White Nationalism and the Republican Party: Toward Minority Rule in America.

By John Ehrenberg. New York: Routledge Press, 2022. 140p. \$170.00 cloth, \$48.95 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592723000932

— Christopher A. Cooper , Western Carolina University
ccooper@email.wcu.edu

In this fascinating book, John Ehrenberg convincingly argues that Donald Trump does not represent a different brand of Republican Party politics but rather the continuation of a brand that has been honed over the course of the last half-century. Using examples including Barry Goldwater, Richard Nixon, Ronald Reagan, George Bush,

George W. Bush, and Newt Gingrich, Ehrenberg draws a clear historical throughline from decades-old forays into white identity politics to the Republican politics of today.

That does not mean, of course, that Trump’s presidency and Trump himself did not mark an inflection point in the evolution of the party’s message. In Ehrenberg’s words, Trump’s “dalliance with racial antagonism was qualitatively different from that of his Republican predecessors” (p. 108). In his telling, therefore, Trump did not start the fire but rather acted as an accelerant to a Republican Party already adept at using racial resentment to gain electoral supremacy.

The heart of the book moves chronologically, tracing in detail the people and events that helped move the Republican Party toward a party that is willing to manipulate institutions to gain and maintain power. Ronald Reagan, the Tea Party, George Bush, Pat Buchanan, and David Duke all play key roles in Ehrenberg’s story of the devolution of democratic ideals. The chapters are organized loosely around each president’s time in office, a structure that allows for a fairly easy-to-follow narrative flow.

The final chapter of *White Nationalism and the Republican Party* discusses the effects of this increasing Republican focus on white nationalism in the face of an increasingly diverse nation and concludes that the only logical result is minority rule: “Faced with profound demographic changes that will only intensify, the Republican Party has become increasingly authoritarian and antidemocratic. Having closed off all alternatives save one, it has mastered the art of using the most antimajoritarian institutions of the federal government” (p. 114). This chapter provides the crux of the argument summarized in the subtitle of the book, *Toward Minority Rule in America*.

The past half-century of Republican rule, as told in this book, is also notable for its regional flavor. Ehrenberg cites V. O. Key (p. 23), the eminent southern political scientist regarding the role of race and electoral politics in the South, discussing at great length the southern strategy to curry the favor of white voters by, in the words of Barry Goldwater, going “hunting where the ducks are” (p. 8). The Republican Party, in Ehrenberg’s telling, is one that is based largely in the South and has used and will continue to use explicitly southern appeals to white nationalism. This part of the book and its argument is reminiscent of Angie Maxwell and Todd Shields’s masterful *The Long Southern Strategy* (2019). Like Maxwell and Shields, however, Ehrenberg recognizes that appeals that initially saw success in the South are now national in scope: “What used to be a southern problem is now a national problem” (p. 115). This argument should appeal to scholars of southern politics who have long argued that American politics is increasingly southernized, and it ties to