

control. A third involves the very general level at which the analysis of polity is cast. Though Foweraker articulately discusses the vast differences across Latin America, he does not take the next step of spelling out what a typology or set of possible ideal types within polity might look like. Are certain constellations of features across state, regime, and civil society more likely? How might contrasting bases of private property and oligarchical power differentiate across types of polities? Perhaps the author will take up these and other questions in future analyses.

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Fernando Rosenblatt, *Party Vibrancy and Democracy in Latin America*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 2018. Illustration, tables, figures, abbreviations, appendix, bibliography, index, 304 pp.; hardcover \$74, ebook.

In this book, Fernando Rosenblatt makes an invaluable contribution to the literature on Latin American political parties and beyond. This work is the result of rigorous research that aims to answer the following questions: what conditions explain party vibrancy? And what explains a given party's ability to remain a vibrant organization over time and across critical junctures? Rosenblatt's work is exemplary in different aspects. First, the research question is substantive and relevant. Second, it introduces a phenomenon and concept that is original and theoretically rich. Third, the study presents a causal argument that combines complementary theoretical approaches. Fourth, the qualitative-based research design guarantees the accumulation of relevant data and primary sources for different cases. These strengths make this book an obligatory reference for students of political parties and comparative politics. In the remainder of this review, I will briefly refer to each of these aspects. At the end, I will suggest some ideas for a future research agenda.

The book's research question is suggestive. According to the Americas Barometer (2017), trust in political parties and levels of partisanship decreased in Latin America in the 2006–16 decade. The lowest level of the two indicators was observed in 2016. In this context, the identification of “vibrant parties,” that is, lively political organizations “that generate intense attachment from an important set of activists over time” (4), is not only surprising but also encouraging for the region's representative democracies. Although the region does not have many of these parties, Rosenblatt shows that some Latin American countries still have enduring political parties that fulfill their functions during and between elections. Other stable parties, he shows, have become ossified or exhausted. They do not contribute to the democratic regimes' good health. Vibrant parties, though, might become irrelevant if the causal factors that explain their liveliness lose relevance. This, in turn, affects the quality of democracies.

Party vibrancy, the study's dependent variable, is an understudied phenomenon. Although political parties have been the units of analysis in other works, only a few researchers have paid attention to the role that activists play in them and to the mechanisms that explain activists' attachment to or disaffection with the organ-

ization. The concept of vibrancy is a complex one. It has different dimensions or variables, each of which has specific properties that provide elements to analyze the stability of political parties and their vibrancy levels in one specific moment and over time. The richness of this concept lies in its capacity to disaggregate parties' organizational structures. The observation of each dimension provides the researcher the possibility to achieve a clear description of the parties under study. This is also useful for comparing different units. The clear definition of party vibrancy is an invaluable contribution to the studies that deal with political parties as their units of analysis. It not only adds to the literature that defines and classifies types of parties, but it also contributes to clarifying measurement issues related to party organization.

To explain party vibrancy, Rosenblatt develops a sophisticated argument that combines historical institutionalism and rational choice theory. He argues that four causal factors, which develop over time and interact among themselves, explain party vibrancy and a party's ability to persist across time and junctures. Trauma and purpose are based on the historical institutionalism approach, while channels of ambition and moderate exit barriers build on the rational choice theory. The author carefully defines each of these variables and explains how each of them is fundamental for the quality of democratic stability.

Purpose refers to the "worldview, the set of ideas, the ideology or project of the organization" (35). Parties with purpose are programmatically coherent. Trauma emerges when party members share horrific experiences, such as a civil war, a dictatorship, or persecution. These experiences provide party members with a sense of belonging and generate retrospective loyalty.

Channels of ambition refer to the party's internal mechanisms that promote their members' political careers, and moderate exit barriers are incentives created by electoral rules and party-level factors—e.g., party brands—that motivate party members to remain with the organization or to leave it. These variables foster party organizations and explain party vibrancy over time. However, not all of them need to be present simultaneously for a party to keep vibrant. While trauma and purpose tend to weaken over time, channels of ambition and moderate exit barriers help parties to remain alive or vibrant, though to a diminished degree. When parties fail to attract new members, or when their members do not reach power positions, the likelihood of defection is higher. In that scenario, parties become irrelevant or exhausted. Their reinvention, though not impossible, is difficult.

A significant contribution of this book is the author's capacity to integrate theoretical approaches that are not easily combined. The argument's consideration of history, juncture, and agency allows the author to expand the existing knowledge of political parties as complex organizations.

To test the argument, Rosenblatt carried out a systematic qualitative analysis. He did fieldwork in three countries—Costa Rica, Uruguay, and Chile—between 2010 and 2013. During his experience, he accumulated evidence from 76 in-depth interviews with party leaders across these democracies. In addition, he used primary and secondary sources to obtain knowledge of these countries' histories and their parties' trajectories.

In order to make connections between concepts, measures, and observations and to test in that way the theoretical argument, Rosenblatt defined clear and transparent procedures and rules. For example, interviewees were selected by considering variation in their trajectories and positions in the parties, their age, and their ideological postures, among other criteria. All interviews were coded with the purpose of detecting the presence or absence of the relevant causal factors. When contradictory evidence emerged, Rosenblatt knew exactly how to code the cases. Secondary sources were useful to complement interviews and, in some cases, to verify information. Because the unit of observation (interviewees) differed from the unit of analysis (political parties), the author “relied on inter-subjective agreement to determine the presence or absence of each factor” at the party level (56). Party vibrancy and the causal factors that account for it were observed through a series of indicators that Rosenblatt was able to capture in the questionnaire that he applied to his interviewees.

The case studies in Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay (chapters 4 to 6) enrich this work. They are invaluable. The reader learns a lot about the countries’ political history and about each of the parties that compose the system. The description and analysis of 13 political parties (5 in Chile, 5 in Costa Rica, and 3 in Uruguay) reveal variation in the dependent variable and show that party vibrancy can result from more than one conjunction of factors.

Rosenblatt tests the theoretical argument outstandingly. For each party, he does careful and brilliant work presenting the causal mechanisms that explain the presence or absence of vibrancy. He analyzes trauma, purpose, channels of ambition, and exit barriers in all cases and identifies variation (or total absence) in their conjunction across cases. Thick description of cases is possible due to intense fieldwork and profound knowledge of the cases. In these chapters, the reader understands how concepts, measures, and observations connect to verify a persuasive and original theoretical argument. All these issues are illustrated through interview fragments and secondary literature.

In closing, I would like to underline the relevance of this work for future research. Based on this study, other scholars might add knowledge of other political parties in the region and beyond. As the author explains, the countries in this study are all “located at the upper end of various indices of democratic quality and governance” (22). It would be interesting to observe the levels of party vibrancy in other settings. This study aims to understand the conditions under which party vibrancy takes place. Future studies might ask questions related to the effect of this phenomenon on democratic stability and democratic representation. In doing this, new measurement and concept-building challenges will emerge.

This is an inspiring work. Students of political parties and comparative politics will learn a lot from it. For historians and those interested in knowing more about these countries’ political trajectories, this is an excellent source.

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