

young evangelicals. And although more liberal views (compared to their coreligionist elders) on gay marriage, immigration, and the environment have not yet altered their political behavior radically, new historical events might alter the subculture. Just as happened with an evangelical political movement formed around the issue of abortion, new evangelical political movements might gain prominence around the humane treatment of immigrants or environmental stewardship or some other issue.

In *Rock of Ages* we have a very insightful analysis of the reasons why a political reversal among white evangelicals has not come to pass. However, having witnessed several important recent rifts within evangelicalism, scholars should continue to monitor this pivotal group of voters.

In Defense of Public Lands: The Case against Privatization and Transfer. By Steven Davis. Philadelphia: Temple

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Although public lands dominate the landscape in many parts of the United States and account for nearly one-third of the nation's land, they have never dominated political science discourse. In neighboring disciplines such as public administration, public lands and natural resource management organizations have been used to explore broader themes of power, communication, leadership, and control (for example, Herbert Kaufman's *The Forest Ranger*, 1960). Moreover, drawing largely on classical economic theory, a cadre of political scientists and economists have developed a veritable cottage industry publishing arguments for transferring federal public lands to state or private ownership. In this book, Steven Davis considers these privatization arguments and, one by one, carefully dismantles them in an engaging and thoughtful manner. In so doing he connects to a variety of threads running throughout political science scholarship.

Davis starts with an overview of the history and trends of public land ownership, focusing on the federal level. He provides concise but essential information about the major federal land-management agencies, and he convincingly demonstrates that calls for privatization are currently on federal and state policy agendas, including a laundry list of legislative proposals put forth since 2011. He next moves on to summarize classical economic arguments for privatization, drawing on prominent thought leaders in the libertarian/privatization camp; he provides enough detail to distinguish the nuances of their arguments, so as not to lump them all together. Rather than setting up a straw man, the author faithfully describes the pro-privatization arguments. These arguments center on the efficiency and productivity of the free market, which moves resources to their most economi-

cally valued uses without the heavy hand of a central controller (the government). They also highlight the problem of bureaucracy as lacking market discipline to ensure that lands are well tended and of the negative aspects of political conflict and litigation.

In the book's four middle chapters, Davis lays out his main arguments against privatization of public lands, including ecological, economic, political-democratic, and political-bureaucratic reasons. In the ecological realm, Davis points out that pro-privatization writers fail to provide systematic evidence to support their claim that private control yields better environmental outcomes. Instead they cherry-pick specific examples where public ownership led to ecological problems. He marshals evidence from numerous systematic studies supporting the argument that public lands perform better ecologically than private lands, along a variety of indicators such as less fragmentation, more suitable habitat, greater ecosystem stability, and greater proportion of land undergoing ecological restoration.

In the economic realm, Davis confronts arguments on their own terms. He asserts that pro-privatization arguments based on economic efficiency and highest valued uses fail to include many important nonmarket benefits. Here the author clearly describes key natural resource economic concepts including transaction costs, willingness to pay, multiplier effects, and externalities. The crux of this chapter is that economists often include in their calculations only commodity values and not other values such as ecosystem services. The sections on ecosystem services summarize the concept well, and the author shows that the challenges of creating markets for ecosystem services means there is a positive role for government in taking on the costs. Davis goes on to describe environmentalist critiques of cost-valuing ecosystem services; namely, that they encourage anthropocentrism and monetization of nature, which can divert us from moral and philosophical arguments for protecting nature. The author supports both views about valuing ecosystem services, arguing that we have a moral obligation to protect nature while also recognizing the monetary value that humans derive from it. Finally, Davis counters critics of spending government money on public lands by showing that such spending is dwarfed by funding allocated to other government services that we do not expect to generate revenue, including national defense, subsidies to farmers, education, and so on.

In the political-democratic realm, Davis emphasizes the importance of looking beyond individual preferences to construct the public good. He describes arguments from Mark Sagoff ("The Allocation and Distribution of Resources," in *Debating the Earth*, edited by John Dryzek and David Schlosberg, 2005) and Scott Lehmann (*Privatizing Public Land*, 1995) about the importance of collective values and claims that the government's main

purpose is not to help individuals satisfy their preexisting preferences. Instead Davis embraces the democratic principles of contestation and conflict as a means to allow diverse members of society to navigate their differences and find collective values. For public lands, these collective values include cultural heritage, egalitarianism, and freedom. Davis provides empirical evidence, such as the large numbers of volunteers on public lands and the high percentages of survey respondents who express support for keeping public lands public, to show that individuals have preferences beyond individual interests. The notion of the social construction of preferences through politics has been an important theme in political science, including scholarship in natural resource management (Edella Schlager and William Blomquist, *Embracing Watershed Politics*, 2008; Ronald D. Brunner, Christine H. Colburn, Christina M. Cromley, Roberta A. Klein, and Elizabeth A. Olson, *Finding Common Ground: Governance and Natural Resources in the American West*, 2002).

In the political-bureaucratic realm, Davis lays out the case that privatizers make an overly simplistic assumption about the motivation driving bureaucratic behavior: budget maximization. Although this assumption is not new to politics (see, for example, William Niskanen, *Bureaucracy and Representative Government*, 1971), Davis argues that it overlooks more powerful motivations. Here the author provides a nice overview of public administration scholarship about the forces shaping bureaucratic behavior, which can be viewed on a continuum from professional/insulated/expert at one end to flexible/open/accountable at the other. He describes how the Forest Service has shifted from the former to the latter over time, while state and local forest agency personnel have not. To examine bureaucratic motivation, Davis summarizes scholarship showing that public servants are often motivated by professionalism, dedication, and autonomy and are less likely to be motivated by self-interest than are private sector employees. In this chapter Davis also addresses the criticism that federal public lands decisions are made by bureaucrats following centralized commands from afar, who are out of touch with the local stakeholders. He describes arguments that scholars have made that local control would be undemocratic for nationally owned resources, and he points out that federal lands have decentralized management that often works with locals through collaborative arrangements.

The book ends with a description of the first major public land issues of the Trump presidency: reducing the size of several national monuments and increasing oil and gas production. Davis then lists numerous strategies for turning widespread public support for public lands into strategies to defend them, focusing on issue framing and coalition building. He describes longer-term threats (population growth, cultural shifts away from the outdoors, climate change) and opportunities (growing support for environmental protection) for a robust public land base.

Throughout, I found this to be an engaging book. It is also eminently accessible. Davis is not a neutral bystander in this debate. He lays his cards on the table with the title and preface, where he states that the book “unapologetically makes the case for public lands on biological, economic, and political grounds” (p. xiii). The author’s own photographs of public lands show his love of these places. The tone makes for lively reading, yet at the same time it may be off-putting to those who think privatization of public land has merits. For example, Davis describes the privatization advocates’ “audacious claims” (p. 53), “more mercenary motives” (p. 53), and “obtuse refusal to identify any objective standards” (p. 58). This tone may be at odds with his desire to “build as broad a coalition as possible,” because “the movement to protect public lands needs a grand coalition that can cut across class, cultural, and political boundaries” (p. 196).

Overall, this book makes important connections to a variety of political science literatures. Readers will gain a fuller understanding of the arguments for and against keeping federal public lands in the public domain and, in particular, their ecological, economic, and political dimensions.

Inconsistency and Indecision in the United States

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What happens when the United States Supreme Court hands down a decision without a clear rationale behind it? In Matthew Hitt’s new book, he admirably undertakes an examination of these types of decisions, which he calls “unreasoned judgments,” explaining not only the circumstances under which the Court makes these judgments but also their impact on lower federal courts, Congress, and the public.

The main contribution of the book is that it addresses an important and interesting question comprehensively and systematically. The book is empirically sophisticated, testing theoretical predictions with analytic rigor. In the preface, Hitt argues that a well-functioning constitutional court should be both decisive and consistent; however, he asserts that these goals seem to conflict: a “court that prioritizes decisiveness will generate more unreasoned outcomes as it resolves to tackle complex but important cases. And a court that maximizes the logical consistency of its opinions will inevitably avoid . . . some of those complex but important cases” (pp. xxiii–xxiv). The author defines a consistent judgment as one that is supported by reasoning, which itself is supported by a majority of justices on the Court.