

influencing other activities in a product value chain, such as research and development, raw materials sourcing, customer service, marketing, and end-of-life disposal.

The book proceeds straightforwardly, beginning with a history of the old regulation and an evaluation and critique of it. Middle chapters analyze various influences that promote the greening of portions of the business community and the many, mostly nonstatutory, initiatives of the federal and state governments that experiment piecemeal with flexible performance-based approaches. Fiorino also considers some conceptual issues relevant to the politics of regulation, putting his arguments for a new regulation in the context of developments in reflexive law, civil governance, policy learning, and civic environmentalism. The final chapter presents his design principles for a new regulation, discusses the kinds of changes in laws and agencies that a transition will require, and identifies the near-term steps that need to be taken to facilitate longer-term fundamental change when the political conditions for that become more propitious.

Aside from an eight-page analysis of Dutch regulation, *The New Environmental Regulation* does not look much to other countries for comparative insights into regulatory policies generally or industrial pollution regulatory systems in particular. Fiorino acknowledges, for example, that the design and evolution of environmental regulation in the United States has been influenced by both a constitutional system that fragments power and a cultural belief in a limited state, but he does not explore the significance of federalism and a constitutionally limited state as compared with other countries, notably constitutionally limited federal ones.

Thus, the book's strengths are also its main weaknesses. It is a book of limited scope, and so it may be of limited interest for many political scientists. It has no pretensions of theoretical profundity. As mentioned earlier, it makes no effort to compare industrial pollution regulation with other areas of environmental regulation, nor does it draw much from, or speak to, the political science literature on regulation generally. But it is a significant, integrative work that addresses a crucially important matter of practical policy reform, and so it is worthy of attention. The analysis it offers is thoughtful, cogent, and insightful. Fiorino's writing is accessible, and he discusses many real-world examples, making the book an excellent resource for politicians, practitioners, scholars, and students interested in improving industrial pollution control regulatory policy specifically.

Full Disclosure: The Perils and Promise of Transparency. By Archon Fung, Mary Graham, and David Weil. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 282p. \$28.00. DOI: 10.1017/S153759270707243X

— Brian J. Cook, *Clark University*

One of the cornerstones of Woodrow Wilson's policy agenda, even before he formally sought the presidency,

was transparency. To neutralize corporate misbehavior, for instance, he called for "turn[ing] the light" on corporations: "They don't like light. Turn it on so strong they can't stand it. Exposure is one of the best ways to whip them into line." Although the authors of this superb work do not acknowledge Wilson's part in the evolutionary line of transparency policy, they do show by means of thorough and enlightening description and analysis the fruit finally borne of ideas like those Wilson espoused. Indeed, the authors tell a story of policy design that demonstrates the continuing value of careful legislative craftsmanship and policy refinement over time, based on feedback from administration and enforcement. It is a tale of effective *legislative* governance, particularly at the national level, that far too many American citizens, and even political leaders, believe is impossible or at least unlikely anymore.

The focus of this study is "targeted transparency policy," a form of regulation that, the authors argue, is readily distinguishable from, and complementary to, both standards-based and general market-based policy instruments. The distinctions are rooted in the nature of the public problems for which different policy approaches are best suited, as well as in the obvious differences in central design elements. Standards-based regulation aims to address problems in which "uniform performance across all regulated parties" (p. 175) is essential. Market-based programs are best aimed at problems in which costs of compliance vary considerably across regulated entities *and* variations in levels of achievement by those entities is tolerable. Targeted transparency policies, in contrast, aim to reduce information asymmetries, empowering consumers with information by mandating "public disclosure" by publicly or privately regulated parties of "standardized, comparable, and disaggregated information" that concerns "specific products or practices" so as to "further a defined public purpose" (p. 6).

The authors begin with an introductory chapter that sets the context of the study by stressing the social, economic, and political transformations linked to advances in information technology and the general failure of the scholarly community to keep pace with the policy responses that have emerged. They then look at the history of what they consider the politically unlikely emergence of transparency policies as an innovation that at least sometimes has actually worked. They move on from there to the core of their study by examining in successive chapters the logic behind, and the common design elements of, targeted transparency policies, the critical question of what makes for successful transparency policy, and the equally vital matter of how such policies can be made "sustainable." The authors shift briefly from what is primarily a U.S. domestic policy focus to examine the special challenges of targeted transparency policy at the international level. They also consider the next stage of innovation in targeted transparency policy, as the continued advances in

information technology and the accompanying social and cultural changes have initiated a shift toward greater interaction and collaboration in the relationships among information users, information disclosers, and government.

Although the authors claim that the basis of their extensive and multitiered analysis is 18 policy cases—15 domestic and three international—they subject only eight domestic cases to the full dissection that generates most of their insights and policy prescriptions. Most generally, targeted transparency policies succeed when they are “user-centered” and effective when they gain “in use, accuracy, and scope over time” (p. 11). Policy success and effectiveness in this area are also dependent on the peculiar “action cycle” that the authors have adeptly distilled: Mandated information disclosure initiates information user perceptions, calculations, and actions, which in turn generates information discloser perceptions, calculations, and actions. Ideally, the feedback on both user and discloser perceptions and actions should guide refinements in the information disclosure mandate.

Perhaps the core analytical insight is the authors’ notion of “embeddedness.” Transparency policies are successful when users perceive value in the disclosed information and find it both compatible with their decision-making routines and easily comprehensible. This embedding in the decision making of users is only half the battle, however. The responses of information users must also become embedded in the decision making of disclosers in similar fashion. Disclosers must see the responses of users as affecting core organizational goals, compatible with organizational decision routines, and comprehensible.

The authors are not shy about advancing prescriptions for both policy design and political management of the design process, and it is here that readers may find a reason or two to harbor reservations. First and foremost, the methodological constraints of a study based on a limited set of cases, which the authors readily acknowledge, make their conclusions about policy success more defensible as hypotheses to be tested with further research than as definitive generalizations. Second, their assessment of the political challenges of crafting effective transparency policy to begin with, and then of assuring its sustainability, is based on the categorization of this kind of policy as one generating perceptions of concentrated costs for disclosers and widely dispersed benefits for users. This elicits “entrepreneurial” policy politics, in James Q. Wilson’s parlance, but the authors give insufficient attention to an understanding of the factors that will draw policy entrepreneurs to the challenge of creating transparency policy, and more important, sustaining their attention to policy maintenance and improvement over the long term.

Of their eight core policy cases, the authors categorize three as highly effective, three as moderately effective, and two as failures. In a complex, diverse, and highly fractious policymaking environment, this is a remarkable result

achieved with virtually no centralized executive orchestration of the sort our political system seems so enamored with lately. This rich, carefully researched, well balanced, and readily accessible study shows us that good governance, with legislators at the local, state, or national levels in the lead, is surely difficult but far from unattainable. This is hard-nosed scholarship demonstrating, as the authors themselves discovered, that pragmatism about both policy expectations and policy results should prevail among political leaders and citizens alike.

Devolution and Black State Legislators. By Tyson King-Meadows and Thomas F. Schaller. Albany: SUNY Press, 2006. 302p. \$85.00 cloth, \$29.95 paper.
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— Quentin Kidd, *Christopher Newport University*

It has been nearly a half century since the Civil Rights era, and there are today hundreds of black state legislators in the United States. Until now, however, no comprehensive examination of their contemporary legislative influence has been conducted. The need for such a study is clear, and Tyson King-Meadows and Thomas Schaller’s research—part of the SUNY Series in African American Studies—is rooted in an interesting set of political trends. Since the Reagan Revolution of the early 1980s and the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, devolution (or new federalism) has pushed much power and many resources (though some would argue not enough resources) to the states. At the same time, since the early 1980s the number of black state legislators has increased substantially. The authors want to know whether these two trends have resulted in greater real (as opposed to symbolic or descriptive) representation of African American interests in state policy. They suggest that the answer generally is that it has not.

This study is soundly developed, and the narrative reads easily because the authors’ descriptive and empirical analysis is woven together very well. King-Meadows and Schaller draw on a diverse set of both quantitative and qualitative data, including interviews with many black legislators. The writing is clear and coherent, chapters are organized logically, and the methodology is generally sound. Where there are potential questions with the operationalization and measurement of variables (such as in Chapter 6 with the operationalization of black political incorporation at the state level), the authors are clear and frank about the limitations of their work. The book is divided into eight chapters, but three main points emerge from the project as a whole.

First, the authors show that contemporary black legislators are a rather monolithic group who came into office at a time when Republicans were ascendant (Reagan’s revolution, the Republican takeover of Congress in 1994, and the election of many Republican governors around the country) and when conservative principles both fiscally