

De manière générale, cet ouvrage est une introduction complète aux principaux courants et enjeux qui animent le champ de l'administration publique. Sans présenter toujours des idées particulièrement innovantes, il résume bien les grands débats ainsi que les différentes facettes de l'acteur dans les organisations publiques. Les différents chapitres permettent d'apprécier la place de l'acteur dans l'administration publique sous différents angles.

Bref, ce livre pose un regard contemporain sur l'acteur à titre d'objet d'étude en administration publique. Il est pertinent dans la mesure où il remplit un vide dans la littérature récente sur le sujet.

Federalism and the Welfare State in a Multicultural World

Elizabeth Goodyear-Grant, Richard Johnston, Will Kymlicka and John Myles, eds. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018, pp. 348.

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The title of this book does not let on that it is a Festschrift honouring the scholarship and career of Keith Banting, but that is surely what it is. And why not? Over the course of his career, Banting has made distinguished contributions to the study of politics and policy in Canada (and beyond). The scholars assembled for this fine volume—colleagues from Queen's University, former students and collaborators from near and far—riff eloquently on those contributions.

The quartet of editors note in their introduction that “Keith Banting’s career can be stylized as a preoccupation with federalism and the welfare state in a multicultural world” (4). This triadic preoccupation frames the volume’s organization. The collection begins where Banting’s writing on Canadian politics begins—with the relation between the welfare state and federalism. If the modern welfare state is to redeem its promise, Banting argues (chap. 2), it requires both a normative consensus about the importance of redistribution and the institutional capacity to deliver the goods. But doesn’t federalism threaten both conditions? Don’t localized identities and competing regional state institutions potentially weaken the national welfare state? Banting’s answer is “it depends,” and the cluster of essays in this section of the collection reflect the nuanced ambivalence of his scholarship. Of these chapters, two stand out: Alain Noël’s characteristically insightful analysis of the Quebec welfare state since the financial crisis and Kent Weaver’s smart and generalization-resistant discussion of the policy dynamics of a federal welfare state like Canada. Both are well worth the candle.

Of course, Canada is not simply a federal welfare state; it is a culturally diverse federal welfare state. Federalism and diversity intersect directly when it comes to immigration policy, one of the few policy jurisdictions that are shared between federal and provincial governments as a matter of constitutional design. The chapter by Jane Jenson and Mireille Paquet does a particularly good job of showing how federalism and diversity interact. Theirs is a story that is both institutional (tracing the growing leverage of provinces in matters of immigration and settlement) and ideational (in which distinctive provincial notions of citizenship are increasingly prominent). It neatly captures the interaction between normative concerns and institutional analysis that resonates with Banting’s distinctive intellectual voice. So, too, does Edward Koning’s piece on the relation between federalism and the politics of immigration and welfare—this time in a more general register of hypotheses that might be tested in, and applied to, a broader comparative context.

From federalism and immigration, the collection turns to the defining feature of Banting's more recent work—the relation, perhaps the tension, between diversity and the welfare state. Much of Banting's scholarship over the past decade has focused on exploring what he and others call the “progressive's dilemma”—the basic idea that there is a trade-off between recognition and redistribution. Whether a focus on diversity crowds out support for the welfare state or whether diversity corrodes the solidarity that is necessary to sustain redistributive policies, the worry is that diversity and the welfare state don't mix—hence the dilemma.

Banting's own view is that framing the question this way offers “a false choice” (39)—at least in Canada. And most of the other contributors seem to agree. David Green and Troy Riddell ask whether levels of immigration (or other indicators of diversity that vary provincially) affect levels of provincially administered social assistance. The chapter is a nicely designed study that keys on one step in the logical chain of the progressive's dilemma, and the evidence they provide is essentially consistent with Banting's own reassuring conclusions. For sheer intellectual firepower, however, the most notable essay in the collection springs from the collective pen of Stuart Soroka, Matthew Wright, Irene Bloemraad and Richard Johnston. They tackle the progressive's dilemma directly but measure diversity with the help of a cross-national Multicultural Policy Index (MCPI) that Keith Banting helped to develop. Working both with aggregate and individual-level data, they conclude—again more or less reassuringly—that “multiculturalism ... does not appear to exacerbate the (progressive's) dilemma” (287). Randy Besco and Erin Tolley, two of Banting's former students, aren't quite so convinced. They suggest that public support both for immigration and multiculturalism in Canada is rather less stable than others suppose, which means that the ways in which political actors and political institutions mobilize opinion matters a lot. The final (normative) word goes to David Miller, who nudges the theme of multiculturalism beyond policy into the realm of ideology, his shorthand for examining multiculturalism as “a justificatory theory which explains how liberal states should respond to cultural pluralism” (322).

Taken as a whole, the essays make for a fine *Festschrift*. The volume began its life as a conference centred on Banting's scholarship, and almost all of the authors map their contributions nicely onto his work. As a collection, however, the essays work somewhat less well. While the contributors speak to and about Banting, most (with the notable exception of Besco and Tolley) don't really engage with and question each other. Here, I think, the editors miss an opportunity to open up a more vigorous conversation about how the volume's key terms—federalism, the welfare state and multiculturalism—are defined and how they interact. David Miller's essay on multiculturalism as policy and ideology offers a tantalizing glimpse into a conversation that might have been.

Miller argues that what sets Canadian multiculturalism apart is its willingness to accept the idea that liberalism and cultural recognition are in principle compatible. The Multiculturalism Policy Index suggests strongly that one of the sites where the contested relationship between liberalism and cultural recognition works itself out is in schools. Yet it is difficult to see where this ideology/policy fits in the larger scheme of things because education—unlike health-care, pensions, social assistance and anti-poverty measures—does not appear to be a core function of the welfare state for most of the contributors to this volume. Cast largely in protective terms, the working definition of the welfare state here leaves little room for education—even if the Canadian attempt to thread the multiculturalism needle relies heavily upon what happens in schools. I was left wondering: Is it time to rethink how we Canadian political scientists usually define, historicize and analyze the welfare state? Is it time to recognize education as a key link between federalism, the welfare state and multiculturalism? If the test of a good book is that it leaves readers asking questions that push beyond the covers of the book itself, then this collection of essays is indeed both a fine tribute and a welcome contribution to the literature.