

communities, especially when faced with external economic challenges. The author also maintains that communities, as informal institutions, can either enhance or block economic development activities at the local level. For all of his insights in this section, however, his concluding remarks in Chapter 8 are a bit puzzling. Storper criticizes analyses that focus on city-specific economic and demographic trends as causal in terms of either development or decline. Yet the fates of many cities in the United States and beyond continue to be tied to one or another declining or booming industry or sector. For example, many rust-belt cities built on the steel industry continue to struggle today decades after the decline of steel manufacturing.

The third part of the book addresses social interaction and urban economies, and here Storper contributes to a growing number of literatures involving numerous questions related to the effects of technology and globalization. The most interesting chapter deals with the continued importance of face-to-face contact. Drawing on research from several disciplines, he describes the critical role that trust plays in human relationships, and ultimately how it becomes a significant component of local economic development. Specifically, assessing one's motivation—an essential component of building trust—is an activity best done in a face-to-face setting: "And the most powerful such medium for verifying the intentions of another is direct face-to-face contact" (p. 171). Indeed, this chapter alone will be appeal to those interested in the larger questions related to the role of technology on social relations.

The book's fourth section addresses the political context of urban and regional development. Storper describes the key differences between the context of urban development in the United States and that in many other industrial democracies. Because of fiscal decentralization in the United States, cities and regions are substantially left to their own devices, a fact that is especially apparent when specific cases of urban decline are analyzed. In the last substantive chapter, which deals with the issue of justice and cities, he calls into question the soundness of both the public choice and liberal approaches to urban and regional justice, ultimately arguing in favor of a social-choice model of urban and regional policy, while at the same time admitting the difficulties of implementing such an approach currently.

In his two chapters on the politics of urban development, Storper largely confines his discussion to the state and national context of local policymaking. Thus, he pays little attention to the many ways that local governments attempt to lure and direct development, a subject that has received extensive attention by scholars of U.S. urban politics for several decades. He also fails to incorporate any of the significant work on regionalism, limiting his discussion primarily to political philosophy. While the topic of urban and regional justice is, indeed, critically important, and one that political scientists need to participate in, the last section of the book would have

benefited from explicit engagement with some of the more frequently debated works on regional politics.

Keys to the City contains a number of insights that will be of interest to urban scholars and policymakers. Storper's work will be a challenge for the nonspecialist, however. Even the brief concluding chapter, entitled "Dear Policy-maker," is demanding, as it simply restates much of the specialized language of previous chapters in a briefer, rather than more digestible, way. Despite this criticism, the book is a worthwhile contribution to a number of different debates related to urban development, and is a one that scholars of urban politics should find very useful.

The Rhetoric of Heroic Expectations: Establishing the Obama Presidency. By Justin S. Vaughn and Jennifer R. Mercieca

(Eds.). College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press. 2014. 279p.

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— Roderick P. Hart, *University of Texas at Austin*

"Simplistic rhetoric" is a sobriquet often used by Americans, and especially by political pundits, to describe White House issuances. But as the authors in *The Rhetoric of Heroic Expectations* demonstrate, there is nothing simple about rhetoric. That is doubly true for the nation's first African-American chief executive. Right from the start, say Vaughn and Mercieca, the prospects surrounding the Obama presidency flew off the charts, in part because high expectations have become de rigueur for presidents since the Progressive Era. For Mr. Obama, the celebrity culture to which he was heir and the imperial presidency to which he was also heir further increased the amperage.

The authors in this wide-ranging collection turn the Obama presidency inside out, keying in on what Mr. Obama said and how he said it early in his presidency. Jay Childers, for example, shows how the President embraced an "agonistic" rather than a deliberative mindset, thereby acknowledging that "some moral and political differences may never be overcome" (p. 41). Curiously, though, Childers does not identify Mr. Obama's legal training as a possible cause for his dialectical mindset. Similarly, David Zarefsky demonstrates how Obama's rhetoric eschewed the triumphalist discourse of the George W. Bush presidency, but he does not ask if Mr. Obama's professorial instincts might have steered him away from such bombast. Rhetoric, after all, is as much about temperament as it is about ideology, which may be why Jason Edwards finds a language of contrition in Obama's remarks, a sensibility that contrasts sharply with the exceptionalist tone of the Bush administration.

Among the most interesting chapters in the Vaughn and Mercieca book are those that trace rhetorical contrarities. James Aune, for example, identifies "soaring, even religious, appeals" (p. 153) in Obama's rhetoric but also a "wonkish" devotion to orderliness, a quality that makes the President

seem pedestrian, even petulant, to some observers. Also interesting is the “secular humanist” strains found in Obama’s rhetoric, which Katie Langford elegantly traces to Mr. Obama’s distaste for High Church oratory. By avoiding “a list of oughts” (p. 181), says Langford, Obama could reach out to progressive evangelicals via communal appeals. David Tell finds even more complexity when investigating Obama’s voting rights speech in Selma, Alabama in March of 2007. Obama’s use of biblical tropes (especially the Jeremiad) raised the moral stature of his remarks, says Tell, but the African-American spin he put on that ancient story gave it special urgency. All presidents have their complexities, but the middle-class Ivy Leaguer and intellectual community activist known as Barack Obama trumped many of them.

Most of the chapters in the Vaughn and Mercieca collection perform careful exegeses of individual speeches. Rarely, however, do they comment on the “rhetorical scene” with which Mr. Obama must compete day-in and day-out. An exception is the chapter by Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha which shows how the surrounding media discourse both advantages and disadvantages a president. The advent of cable news, says Eshbaugh-Soha, has undermined presidential management of the news by “concurrently reducing the number of accidental viewers of the president’s speeches” (p. 98), thereby decreasing the White House’s ecology of influence.

The majority of the essays in *The Rhetoric of Heroic Expectations* are “N of 1” studies in which the authors dissect one of Obama’s speeches to make some larger point. As Eshbaugh-Soha notes, however, tracing the effect of a single presidential address is maddeningly difficult and, by my lights, quite unnatural. Any presidential speech, that is, is preceded and followed by a barrage of White House communications and, equally, by a skein of Congressional, press, and popular commentary. Given such a complicated, intertwined world, it seems daft to try to trace a single Response (i.e., altered public opinion) to a single Stimulus (i.e., a presidential speech).

And yet much ink has been spilled attempting to do just that, an enterprise encouraged by George Edwards’ *On Deaf Ears: The Limits of the Bully Pulpit* (2006). Bravely, Brandon

Rottinghaus wades into this battle and emerges with multiple, often contradictory, findings: (1) Sometimes, the greater the rhetorical density, the greater the attitudinal effect; (2) sometimes, the more a president talks about an issue the less impact he has; (3) sometimes, the more the public knows about an issue the more the president can lead them; (4) sometimes, making serial pitches over multiple days or using the Oval Office as a backdrop can move public opinion. For this reviewer, trying to draw a causal arrow between something as diffuse as “presidential rhetoric” and something as diffuse as “public opinion” is foolhardy given the kind of evidence available (i.e., survey data) and the complexity of political life in an era of near-constant communications.

The essays in the Vaughn and Mercieca volume are often insightful. Eric Dieter, for example, notes that one of the president’s under-studied obligations is that of teaching citizens how to be Americans, something that Barack Obama does by relating “pieces of himself” (p. 60) to the rich demography of American life. Another chapter by Cara Finnegan traces how White House photographs link the current occupant to the ghosts of history, thereby “reauthorizing” the sitting president. Also interesting is the chapter by Bonnie Dow which keys in on rhetorical strategies fetishizing the family. Press reports featuring such themes, says Dow, made Michelle Obama whiter and less exotic, a “postfeminist and post-racial success story” (p. 241) and, hence, an important adjunct to the Obama Popularity Machine.

Vaughn and Mercieca try to make “heroic expectations” a linchpin for the book but that strategy largely fails. If presidential expectations have in fact become more “heroic” over the years, that is, how does one explain the “culture of cynicism” that also emerged in the twentieth century and that still abides? In their introductory essay, the editors identify several big arcs of history to contextualize the Obama presidency but such efforts seem premature. All one can say at present is that the Obama presidency is an exceedingly complex and historically unorthodox constellation still working its way out. There is little doubt, though, that when the definitive story of the Obama years is finally told, the President’s rhetorical problems—and rhetorical skills—will be a central component of the legacy he left.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Digital Media and Political Engagement Worldwide: A Comparative Study. Edited by Eva Anduiza, Michael J. Jensen, and Laia Jorba. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 304p. \$104.99 cloth, \$34.99 paper.

Democracy’s Double-Edged Sword: How Internet Use Changes Citizens’ Views of Their Government. By Catie Snow Bailard. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014. 176p. \$34.95. doi:10.1017/S1537592715001838

— Jessica L. Beyer, *University of Washington*

Both books under review focus on the impact of digital media on political engagement. In *Digital Media and Political Engagement Worldwide*, editors Eva Anduiza, Michael J. Jensen, and Laia Jorba define “political engagement” as falling along three dimensions: participation, information consumption, and attitudes. In contrast, Catie Snow Bailard focuses in *Democracy’s Double-Edged Sword* on citizen satisfaction, which causes her to consider questions about attitudes and participation, as well as the way information consumption shapes both. Each volume offers an important perspective on the impact that digital media are having on politics worldwide.