

for finite beings. Aroosi's book does not consider this possibility, which eventually may limit its ability to trace the emergence out of despair and into something like a true democracy. Kierkegaard's turn to the comic suggests that this transition not only entails a certain distance from the process itself but also requires an affirmation of the inevitable twists and turns undermining the very idea of a clear goal. How to embody this

experience remains a challenge for any account of "true" democracy.

These comments should not distract us from the many achievements of Aroosi's book. Carefully argued—and skillfully written—it provides a much-needed boost to contemporary scholarship, showing how and why we must read Kierkegaard and Marx as part of the modern quest for democracy and self-determination.

AMERICAN POLITICS

All Roads Lead to Power: The Appointed and Elected Paths to Public Office for US Women. By Kaitlin N. Sidorsky. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2019. 248p. \$34.95 cloth. doi:10.1017/S1537592719004109

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Although countries that adopted quotas have had massive success in increasing women's representation in politics, in the United States today, social movements, the popular press, and feminist scholars decry the continued underrepresentation of women in political life. These disparities are particularly acute at the highest levels: there are far fewer women in executive positions like governorships and mayoralties than in lower-level positions like city council and school board members. Although there are debates about why there are fewer women at the top, a prevailing explanation is that women tend to be less "ambitious" for political power than men—perhaps because they prefer not to compete for office (with all the gendered connotations that competition implies) and perhaps because they perceive that they are less qualified to hold office. In other words, women are less overconfident than men.

But as Kaitlin Sidorsky argues in her new book *All Roads Lead to Power: The Appointed and Elected Paths to Public Office for US Women*, previous studies of political ambition have failed us in two ways. First, by being overly fixated on ambition for elective political office, studies of political ambition have neglected the many ways that citizens might ardently seek to serve the public, albeit in positions that do not require competing in an election. Second, Sidorsky argues that studies of political ambition have been too focused on "progressive ambition": a person's desire to be elected to higher political office. Women appointed to state-level positions are particularly insistent that their roles are not political. Instead, they interpret their work as necessary public service and comment on how the public role they occupy is an important springboard for work in the private sector or nongovernmental entities. These insights lead Sidorsky to argue that the women who hold appointed political positions have plenty of ambition, just not ambition for politics *per se*.

To craft this argument, Sidorsky studied both elected and appointed officials at the state level. She sent online surveys to a large set of officials in these groups and conducted interviews with some of the women respondents. Overall, 407 state legislators (14.4% of those contacted) and 1,129 political appointees (31.5% of those contacted) responded to questions about their prior political history, current positions, future political ambitions, and demographic backgrounds. From the respondent pool, Sidorsky interviewed 21 women, 17 who were political appointees and 4 who were elected officials (pp. 25–26). Segments from these interviews and from long-form survey answers are helpfully peppered throughout the text, providing a holistic sense of the commitments and justifications of public servants.

For those who are interested in gendered pathways to political office, a strength of the study is the careful comparison that Sidorsky makes with the work of Susan Carroll and Kira Sanbonmatsu (*More Women Can Run: Gender and Pathways to the State Legislatures*, 2013). Those authors conducted nationwide surveys of state legislators in 1981 and 2008, providing an extensive overview of the differences in pathways taken by men and women to reach their positions. Sidorsky's survey asks a similar set of questions, but with an additional focus on state-level appointees, enhancing our knowledge of gendered pathways to office in a new domain.

Like Carroll and Sanbonmatsu's findings for state legislators, Sidorsky's respondents who were women appointees are older, on average, than their male counterparts. Similarly, in Sidorsky's sample the women were less likely to be married than the men, and, among appointees they were less likely to have children (chap. 2). Women respondents were also much less likely to be recruited for their offices than men, especially among appointees. And consistent with other studies of women's political ambition, women appointees were more likely to seek or accept their positions because they were interested in the specific policy or issue area (table 4.2, p. 89). As in some of the studies that consider confidence and perceptions about political office, Sidorsky finds that, even among those who hold low-level appointments, women evince less confidence that they are qualified to hold their positions than do men (p. 104).

Yet in contrast to other studies, Sidorsky finds that the drivers of progressive ambition may be distinct for

political appointees. She finds that for women involved in a host of different commissions—from land surveying boards, advisory water planning councils, nature preserve commissions, to alcoholic beverages commission, disability advisory boards, and health works commissions—household composition has a big impact on ambition for elective office (table 5.7, p. 108). Thus, unlike the high-powered career women in Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox's series of papers drawing on their Citizen Ambition survey (e.g., "Reconciling Family Roles with Political Ambition: The New Normal for Women in Twenty-First Century U.S. Politics," *The Journal of Politics*, 76(2), 2014), Sidorsky's women appointees with young children were less likely to express elective ambition than men, suggesting that intra-household dynamics may deserve renewed attention by scholars of representation.

In addition, and perhaps most evocatively, Sidorsky finds that a key reason why women appointees sought their office was to gain more experience or enhance their primary careers (38% of women appointee respondents vs. 25.3% of men listed this reason). Women appointees further clarified these dynamics in interviews, detailing how the skills they gained and the networks they forged in their positions were relevant for their other career interests. In other words, a young environmentalist working for a nonprofit parks organization might join the trails preservation commission because all the major players in her industry are also on that board.

The book is an important contribution to our understanding of the less visible and less studied world of political appointees (p. 166). And yet its most interesting theoretical contribution—that if we expand our concept of ambition beyond the elected realm, all roads do lead to power—could have been better substantiated with a rigorous sampling strategy and a more targeted survey. Because Sidorsky uses a convenience sample, we must draw our own conclusions about the representativeness of her respondent pool. These concerns make comparisons with previous work more fraught, compromising our efforts to gain incremental knowledge of gender and politics.

In addition, Sidorsky's survey asks public officials a host of questions about political positions, their feelings about politics, and household dynamics, but only asks one question about experience in the private sector. Therefore we cannot say much about the correlation between respondents' careers and the world of appointed positions or whether having held an appointed position increases the opportunity for appointees to take new or better positions thereafter. Nevertheless, the objections that Sidorsky raises to ambition studies, and some of the intuitions that emerge from her interviews—particularly, the idea that women appointees are able to do their work precisely because they do not consider it to be political—

will be the basis for future research on ambition beyond the ballot.

The Idea of Presidential Representation: An Intellectual and Political History. By Jeremy D. Bailey. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2019. 272p. \$34.95 cloth. doi:10.1017/S1537592719004717

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Regardless of party or ideology, presidents have long claimed to be the representative of the whole nation and tribune of the public welfare. We are familiar with the classic articulations of this idea from Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson in the early nineteenth century, and from Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson in the early twentieth century. The research of B. Dan Wood (*The Myth of Presidential Representation*, 2009), Douglas Kriner and Andrew Reeves (*The Particularistic President: Executive Branch Politics and Political Inequality*, 2015), and John Hudak (*Presidential Pork: White House Influence over the Distribution of Federal Grants*, 2014) has empirically poked holes in the presidential claim of representation, and in an era of hyper-partisanship the idea itself seems implausible. Nonetheless, the conceptual shift from presidents as constitutional officers to presidents as leaders of the people has considerable staying power.

Until now, we have lacked a thoroughgoing investigation of how presidents have come to claim the role of national representative. Moreover, we have lacked a critical history that questions whether the idea of the president as people's champion has truly supplanted the original idea of a constitutional executive. In *The Idea of Presidential Representation*, Jeremy D. Bailey has accomplished both of these tasks in impressive fashion.

Bailey's history begins before the American Revolution and concludes with the contemporary party system. Chapters cover the founding era, the reconstructive presidencies of the nineteenth century, the Progressive era, the early Cold War period, and the divergent executive conceptions of Democrats and Republicans today. Each chapter is framed around the debate between law and opinion. What is most original and striking in each chapter is the voice of the critics who resist the claim of popular representation and uphold a legal perspective on presidential authority.

The book's focus on the defenders of law over opinion is illustrated in the title of the second chapter: "Jefferson's Federalists, Jackson's Whigs, and Lincoln's Democrats" (p. 42). Driven into minority status by the popular leadership of Jefferson and Madison, the Federalists who were gathered at the Hartford Convention of 1814–15 proposed several constitutional amendments to prevent a plebiscitary presidency in the future. Reversing the position of the Federalists' founder Alexander Hamilton—that the opportunity for reelection was