

in Argentina. Those rules, Gervasoni argues, have been stable since the end of the dictatorship and are designed in national legislative bodies that overrepresent rentier provinces themselves.

One is struck by the seeming inadequacy of some of the change-inducing mechanisms that other scholars, like Gibson and Giraudy, have identified in their books on democratic regime transformation, including the “plural cities” phenomenon, which Gibson sees as a potential Achilles heel of authoritarian governors, and the possibility of provincial-level elite divisions and mass opposition emphasized by Giraudy. If Gervasoni is right, efforts to democratize Argentina’s many hybrid provincial regimes will logically have to prioritize rule change at the center, not necessarily to reverse the provinces’ fateful decision in the 1930s to delegate taxing authority to the federal government, but to rewrite the rules so that the size of transfers is determined by criteria like population density, developmental needs, and local tax effort.

Kent Eaton

University of California, Santa Cruz

Lindsay Mayka, *Building Participatory Institutions in Latin America: Reform Coalitions and Institutional Change*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019. Figures, tables, bibliography, index, 320 pp.; hardcover \$99.99, ebook \$80.

The participatory wave in Latin America—when civil society organizations, governments, multilateral development banks, and many other actors promoted mechanisms to make consultation and collective policymaking routine—is now more than three decades old. It had important roots in the region’s democratic transitions, as well as in changing development discourses that saw participation as contributing to greater governing effectiveness. Some of the new participatory institutions met those expectations, while many more failed to do so or never even really got started. Lindsay Mayka’s excellent new book provides a reflective roadmap for understanding the patterns of successes and failures, drawing on close study of four Brazilian and Colombian initiatives.

The initiatives Mayka studies are all nationally mandated local-level councils, chosen because they present a big logistical and political challenge, as well as being normatively important in their policy areas: health (Brazil and Colombia), social assistance (Brazil), and planning (Colombia). The health councils of Brazil are well established and highly successful, while Colombia’s planning councils hardly even were created—at their peak, they existed, weakly, in about one-third of localities. The others fall in between in their outcomes, with the Brazilian institutions as a whole much stronger than the Colombian ones.

The book is satisfyingly precise in its definitions and justifications of just what success might look like for such institutions. Mayka begins with central design issues like the development of strong and specific prerogatives and decisionmaking powers for participants in the councils that are backed up with enforcement powers. She goes on to look for extensive implementing practices, including the widespread cre-

ation of institutions with such powers in fact (“institutionalization”), as well as evidence that participants themselves come to value and look to the institutions to play important policymaking roles in the sector (“infusion with value”). The criteria have the dual virtues of being both observable and close to the core meaning of the concept of a participatory institution.

The most important contribution of the book is its account of just when participatory institutions are successfully created and when they fail. In Mayka’s telling, successful instances begin with sweeping changes in the policy sector that disrupt existing alliances and potentially activate stakeholders, both state and nonstate, who now have new interests and make new alliances in support of the participatory institutions. When the participatory institutions are proposed on their own, without that broader sectoral disruption, they struggle to take hold, as the supporting coalitions are much narrower. Even the sweeping sectoral reforms only open up opportunities for creation and consolidation, which must be seized by policy entrepreneurs. These have both ideational and concrete organizing tasks to accomplish. The ideational tasks are the most important for eventually achieving reforms that participants value and take for granted, while the organizational tasks require the resulting networks to follow through to build the institutions and keep them functioning.

State resources are critical for these tasks, as is the mobilization of diverse stakeholder groups gathered in coalitions. Given these many requirements for success, it is not surprising that many efforts to build participatory institutions fail to fulfill their aims or even to be fully executed in the first place. The logical progression through this largely sequential account is strong and plausible. The underlying argument that institutions are effectively created over time and require a great deal of contingent updating and development is a theoretical advance over more static understandings of institutions.

This creation-and-development story works very well empirically for Mayka’s cases, too. The most successful, the Brazilian health councils, show the full story in sequence, with all the actors and developments in place. The others stall at various points. The social assistance councils in Brazil advance nearly as far as the health councils—and are better institutionalized and valued than the Colombian ones—but policy entrepreneurs struggled to unify their supporting coalition behind a shared vision of reform, and so the participatory councils were not highly valued as decisionmaking locations. The Colombian health councils also benefited from a start in major sectoral reforms, as the Brazilian cases had, but lacked the policy entrepreneurs who could turn that opportunity into functioning, valued institutions. Policy entrepreneurs in the planning area, in contrast, worked hard to build networks and promote ideas but could not advance in the context of a narrow reform and a weak institutional design that included only civil society actors. In addition, the original institutions were not regulated and reformed as needed.

The explanatory framework Mayka offers nicely structures and clarifies the substantive comparison among the cases while also allowing her to introduce material that is more specific to the policy areas. As a result, the book provides a good introduction not just to the participatory councils, but also to the sectors studied—their

changing regulatory frameworks, the stakeholders involved, and even some policy outcomes. Each case receives almost two decades of study, as the participatory councils are observed from their start to the recent past. All of these empirical conclusions are based on careful analysis of core government texts, as well as in-country fieldwork in both Brazil and Colombia, including numerous interviews with both participants and observers.

As just noted, the theoretical framework fits well with Mayka's cases, and plausibly accounts for the differences among them. I did have two different concerns about how the framework might transfer to other cases. One is a more general concern about whether the identified factors, which appear sufficient to account for the patterns of outcomes in these cases, are actually necessary to account for the successes and failures of participatory experiences elsewhere. Except for those with a narrowly rationalist view of institutions, scholars often acknowledge that there are many possible trajectories for institutional creation and transformation over time (e.g., Wolfgang Streeck and Kathleen Thelen, *Beyond Continuity: Institutional Change in Advanced Political Economies*, 2005). The framework Mayka proposes is strong and credible enough to try as an accounting of the outcomes of other participatory institutions, but other routes seem possible and even likely.

In an opposite concern, I wondered whether the framework could be masking deeper or broader explanatory variables at the national level. The endogeneity question can always be raised in a study of developments over time, as there are always other factors that precede those studied. Mayka often tries to account for these in the individual cases; for example, discussing not just that policy entrepreneurs are missing in the Colombian health sector but why they might be. Still, the analysis overlooks some broader cross-national comparisons that hint at these deeper variables. For example, why are Brazilian bureaucrats always more interested in promoting participation than Colombians are?

There is a short section in the conclusion that discusses "lessons from Brazil" that takes up the actual participatory outcomes in more detail, acknowledging the mixed results for inclusion of marginalized groups and their needs. What it does not mention is that similar councils existed in many other policy arenas at the same time in Brazil. There were 84 national councils with state and societal participation in the 1990s, many of which had subnational councils as well, and more came in the 2000s. In many of these, including the environmental and housing arenas, to name just two, bureaucrats also promoted participation and worked closely with civil society actors.

Mayka shows convincingly in her book that this is not just *uma coisa do PT*, since many of the most important developments came before the Partido dos Trabalhadores came to power in 2003. But perhaps the success of participatory institutions has been *uma coisa do Brasil* in ways that this book does not adequately analyze. That is, some of the success of the Brazilian health and social assistance councils, in their original institutional framing, the ensuing follow-up, and the presence of the right kinds of advocates, may be attributable to that larger ecosystem of participatory councils and the processes that put them in place, rather than limited to these specific policy areas.

Books cannot be expected to make sense of everything that comes after them, but it seems worth noting that current Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro has used his decree powers to abolish 35 national councils with civil society participation, similar to those studied in this book. His decree affected only those also created by decree, leaving legally based councils like the health and social assistance councils still in place. While the fuller implications are yet to be studied and understood, the decree runs against that participatory ecosystem that dates back to the 1988 Constitution and shows again just how deep a rupture this current government represents in Brazilian politics. Future research will have to assess whether this is a personal break with the participatory tradition or a sign that the councils were not as infused with value as argued here.

Kathryn Hochstetler
London School of Economics

Cynthia McClintock, *Electoral Rules and Democracy in Latin America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. Tables, figures, abbreviations, appendixes, notes, bibliography, index, 334 pp.; hardcover \$99, paperback \$34.95, ebook.

Elections are central to representative democracies, and the systems used in their conduct are crucial because they can profoundly influence political outcomes. Electoral rules have effects on political party systems (e.g., number of parties and level of polarization) and may also help to ease or exacerbate conflict. Furthermore, they help shape the behavior and incentive structures of political actors. They may even influence what use politicians might make of public resources to build linkages with their constituencies.

Thus, particularly relevant in the Latin American region are the presidential electoral rules, the focus of Cynthia McClintock's book. This book offers a detailed analysis of the two dominant models: plurality (first past the post, even if not receiving a majority of the votes) and runoff (second round of votes between the two leading candidates of the first round). There are arguments to support (or reject) both. But a very interesting point emerges from who supports what. While a vast majority of political leaders support runoff, as shown by the PELA survey and the author's interviews with Latin American MPs, scholars tend to be skeptical and more inclined to support plurality.

The typical argument is that plurality inhibits the proliferation of political parties and concomitantly decreases the risk of outsiders, as well as executive-legislative blockages (favoring legislative majorities), which can provoke democratic breakdown. On the other hand, runoff, McClintock argues, "opens the political arena to newcomers; it lowers barriers to entry into effective competition in the presidential election. But, at the same time, it assures that (a) the president has majority support and, accordingly, legitimacy and (b) the president is not at an ideological extreme" (3).

The military coup that overthrew the Chilean leftist president Salvador Allende in 1973 is commonly used as an example of the negative consequences of plurality. Allende was elected in 1970 with 36.6 percent of the vote, while the rightist candi-