

explanations has merit to a degree, and Sanbonmatsu is clear and candid in pointing out instances in her six cases when these explanations seem to be pertinent. However, the confluence of variables and possible explanations for the differences among the six cases can become overwhelming in relation to the party influence over nominations. She is to be commended for using an alternative data source, the quantitative information about state legislative recruiting practices found in chapter 6, to test her conclusions from the six case studies and try to alleviate this problem to some extent. Nevertheless, her work serves as a reminder that within the richness of variation among state legislative practices can be frustration over the myriad differences among the states.

Two additional problems characterize the research here and are both acknowledged by the author. First, social desirability is likely an issue within the interviews; for instance, she notes that both Democrats and Republicans indicated that their party offered more opportunities for women candidates (p. 113). Several quotations from women legislators suggest that they may have felt more comfortable expressing doubts about the recruitment of women candidates to a female interviewer than men legislators would be. Second, the analysis here is based largely on one point in time, and therefore does not capture how changes in party involvement in the nomination process or concerted efforts to recruit women candidates (such as Iowa's Women in Public Policy, p. 142) may increase or decrease the number of women running for office in a state. Future studies could examine these changes, as well as how party influence (or the lack thereof) on the nomination process structures women's behavior once in office.

Overall, Sanbonmatsu's work is a substantial contribution to our knowledge about why more women candidates do not run for political office. The interview evidence she uses is so rich with observation about women, parties, and state politics that a short description of the central question here cannot do it justice. *Where Women Run* is a must-read for scholars in these areas of American politics.

Black Feminist Voices in Politics. By Evelyn M. Simien. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006. 196p. \$71.50 cloth, \$23.95 paper.
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— John C. Berg, *Suffolk University*

Evelyn M. Simien makes three major contributions in this book. First, and most important, she uses insights derived from a black feminist theory that is largely literary to inform hard, number-crunching empirical research. Black feminist theorists from Maria Stewart and Sojourner Truth to Kimberlé Crenshaw and bell hooks are used to derive operational definitions and testable hypotheses.

Those seeking unity in the discipline would do well to study this book.

Her second contribution, derived from the first, is to show that black feminism is something different from the additive combination of black race consciousness and feminism. As Simien puts it, “just because a citizen has a strong gender and race identity does not necessarily mean that person will recognize the unique situation faced by African American women” (p. 36). Conversely, black feminists may not identify with the women's movement because of a perception that it concerns itself only with the problems of white women.

Simien derives her own six-item scale of black feminist consciousness from questions included in the National Black Politics Study of 1993–94, supplemented with analysis of data from the National Black Election Study of 1984–88. Rather than asking separately about race and sex, these items asked whether race and sex discrimination were linked, whether black feminist groups help the black community, and whether black women should share in political and church leadership. Having derived this independent measure, Simien is able to conclude that black feminist consciousness is strongly correlated with race consciousness, but only weakly, if at all, with feminist consciousness. She contends that these “bolster the claim that items designed to tap feminist identification among white women are problematic because they yield a measurement of support for white feminism among black women—not black feminist consciousness” (pp. 50–51). She also concludes that support for black feminist consciousness is greater among black men than among black women—although additional analysis suggests that this may be more a matter of political correctness rather than of underlying beliefs (pp. 54–60).

Simien's third major contribution is the development and implementation of the National Black Feminist Study, a survey of 500 African Americans who were eligible to vote, conducted by telephone between November 2004 and January 2005. This brief survey makes it possible to measure change in several items from the National Black Political Study of 10 years earlier. She concludes that black feminist consciousness remains high among both men and women, and that such consciousness is now a stronger determinant of political activity—especially of voting—than it had been earlier.

Unfortunately, the last conclusion is not well-founded because of two methodological problems, one specific to this comparison and one much more fundamental. First, race consciousness is included among the determinants of black political behavior in Simien's analysis of the 1993–94 survey (p. 111), but omitted from the analysis of the 2004–5 survey (p. 149). Because race consciousness is strongly related to black feminist consciousness (p. 86), this omission itself may explain the greater apparent importance of black feminist consciousness in the latter study.

Simien's analysis suffers from a more basic flaw, as well. Most—and perhaps all—of her ordinal variables are coded as if the data were interval-level, and then analyzed with statistical procedures valid only for the latter. For example, urban residence was coded as 1 for those who said that they lived in a “large city,” 0.75 for those replying “suburb,” 0.5 for “small city,” 0.25 for “small town,” and 0 for rural (p. 80); the data are then analyzed by ordinary least squares regression (p. 83). Similarly illegitimate manipulations are performed on several other ordinal variables (pp. 104–5, 149–51). Unfortunately, this error renders a great many of Simien's tables invalid, and calls her conclusions into question, particularly those about the factors associated with black political participation. Because the raw data still exist, all is not lost. It is to be hoped that Simien will rerun her analyses using coding and statistics appropriate for ordinal data.

The book has some stylistic flaws. It is clumsily written and poorly edited. Contradictory statements are made, or the direction of a relationship is confused (see the discussion of the effects of single parenthood on liberalism, pp. 148–49). The book clearly began as a set of dissertation chapters, with Simien's 2004–5 survey discussed only in an epilogue, and some extraneous material has crept in unnoticed. For example, we find what must surely have been meant for a promotional flyer—“The transparent narrative style makes the survey data and empirical analysis accessible to both undergraduate and graduate students,” (p. 15)—in the middle of Chapter 1; an interesting but irrelevant analysis of the problems faced by black women faculty in teaching privileged white students (pp. 74–76); and a “conclusion”—that “Rather than earn the trust of nonelite civil servants through critical action and collective struggle, black intellectuals typically operate in isolation and confine themselves to the Ivory Tower”—that has no connection to any data or analysis elsewhere in the book. She is perhaps too confident that high support for her measure of black feminist consciousness proves “that black feminist intellectuals have been successful at disseminating their beliefs about the matrix of domination” (p. 144). Finally, she does not seem to be aware that there might be some tension between her claim that men are slightly more supportive of black feminism than women (p. 145) and her insistence that black women's leadership is badly needed because “black patriarchy exists today” (p. 154).

Despite these serious flaws, I recommend the book to anyone interested in the politics of race and gender in America today. Simien's (flawed) statistical analyses have the potential to be improved; her integration of normative theory with quantitative analysis is pathbreaking; and her operational definition of black feminist consciousness will prove to be of great use to scholars.

The Truce: Lessons from an L.A. Gang War. By Karen Umemoto. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 232p. \$57.50 cloth, \$18.95 paper.
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— Neil Kraus, *University of Wisconsin, River Falls*

The Truce, by Karen Umemoto, chronicles a gang war in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Oakwood that occurred between 1993 and 1994. Umemoto states that her “central concern” is “the relatively quick process through which rather harmonious social relations across racial boundaries are overcome by racial tensions and distancing, which set in place a more fractured pattern of race relations” (p. 5). The book, then, is primarily an analysis of the complex and changing dynamics of racial conflict, and the author uses the gang war to explore that conflict.

The Truce is divided into eight chapters that address different aspects of the gang war, including two chapters on how law enforcement and other officials reacted to the gang war, and one dealing with the mediation process that occurred within the community. Umemoto conducted 58 formal interviews with individuals involved in various aspects of the events studied. She also used a diverse mix of documentary sources, including government reports, newspaper accounts, and census data, to support her claims. Although both the publisher and author describe the book as ethnography, the author's research methods are more similar to a traditional case study because of her reliance on multiple data sources. This is not intended to be a criticism, but rather a description of Umemoto's methodology. Urban ethnography brings to mind recent works like Eric Klinenberg's *Heat Wave* or Scott Cummings' *Left Behind in Rosedale*, both of which provide firsthand detailed accounts of tragic individuals and events in disadvantaged neighborhoods. *The Truce* is a different kind of book and, in my view, provides more distance from the subject matter than was likely intended by the author. Within the context of her case study, Umemoto combines both traditional positivist social science research methods with post-modern analysis of how individuals interpret the meanings of events. The author is well aware of the theoretical tension between these two approaches and addresses this issue in a lengthy footnote in Chapter 1. Umemoto's combination of theoretical perspectives provides for an interesting yet, at times, problematic synthesis.

Perhaps the most important contribution of this book is the development and application of the concept of “morphing” to help explain the dynamic nature of racial conflict. The metaphor of *morphing*, which Umemoto consciously borrows from technology first developed in the visual arts, is used to refer to the transformation of a conflict over time, which “includes the ebb and flow of racial and other lines of division in the evolution of conflict as well as the substance and forms of contestation as they alter over the course of interaction” (p. 5). This concept