Steven Peterson and Albert Somit, eds., *The World of Biology and Politics: Organization and Research Areas, Research in Biopolitics, Vol. 11* (Bingley, UK: Emerald, 2013), 231 pages. ISBN: 978-1781907283. Hardcover $114.95.

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Since 1991, the International Political Science Association (IPSA) Research Committee #12 has published an annual volume exploring the current state of research in the field. The 2013 contribution, *The World of Biology and Politics: Organization and Research Areas*, edited by Steven Peterson and Albert Somit, is a welcome continuation of this tradition. The contributors to the volume include founders of the biopolitical community, including Albert Somit and Steven Peterson, Robert Blank, David Goetze, and Andrea Bonnicksen as well as other eminent scholars and researchers from a wide variety of disciplines and approaches.

The book is made up of eleven chapters roughly organized from the most general overview of the discipline and its history to more specific chapters highlighting the current state of research in the field. Chapter 1, "Biology and Politics: An Introduction," offers an overview of the research methods employed by biopolitical scholars and discusses the variety of phenomena the field investigates, most of which will be familiar to readers. Somit and Peterson discuss new approaches such as neuropolitics and genetic analysis and how such methodologies can shed light on enduring policy debates. Chapter 2 is a somewhat fragmented collaborative effort laying out the organization and history of the Association for Politics and the Life Sciences (APLS) and IPSA Research Committee #12. David Goetze focuses on the history and current status of APLS, emphasizing the continuing debates over whether to rejoin the American Political Science Association (APSA) or whether to emphasize interdisciplinarity.

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Chapter 3 is a useful though somewhat awkward sketch of the current state of graduate education in the field, emphasizing the historic centers of SUNY Stonybrook and Northern Illinois University (NIU), with Rebecca Hannagan's contribution discussing a shift toward "biology-minded" graduate programs, rather than the traditional "biopolitics-specific" approach. Most contributors mention the challenge of recruiting Ph.D. students to the field and the difficulty some of those students have finding jobs with interdisciplinary degrees. The problem is not unique to biopolitics and demonstrates the continued disciplinary-specific structure of higher education broadly. Still, such disciplinary "silos" represent a serious threat to graduate programs in biopolitics, as demonstrated by the loss of NIU's program in 2012.

Chapters 4 through 10 move away from the history and organization of the field to look more closely at current research in biopolitics. These chapters are the heart of the book, persuasively arguing for the relevance of biological methods to political science broadly, and provide detailed background and guidance for future research while avoiding excessively optimistic assessments of the likelihood of dramatic disciplinary change. Chapter 4 by Tatu Vanhanen investigates the effect of national IQ on social phenomena, arguing that evolutionary variables are crucial for a full understanding of increasingly relevant challenges like democratization. In Chapter 5, John Friend and Bradley Thayer discuss the benefits of neuropolitics for the study of decision-making, in-group/out-group relations, and neuroeconomics. Their chapter attempts to answer critics of the nascent field who charge that brain imaging alone does not provide evidence of causation or that it lacks relevance for modern policy debates, pointing instead to concrete policy areas like crisis management or treatment of PTSD where neuropolitics would be helpful.

Johan van der Dennen looks to the Great Apes for the roots of human political behavior in Chapter 6. This chapter is an excellent overview of the current status of political research involving primates and emphasizes new findings on lethal aggression in chimps, including warfare, that are only beginning to be understood. The chapter also contains an extensive bibliography as well as suggested resources for further reading. Chapter 7, by Odelia Funke, provides an introduction to the subfield of biopolicy, linking it to

the fields of environmental policy, decision-making, medicine and public health, international relations, and ethics. She provides a range of current examples, from the safety of bioengineered foods to the ongoing crises of environmental security issues around the world, while cautioning practitioners to avoid the excessive claims of some in the evolutionary sciences that such a paradigm would replace traditional political and policy frameworks altogether.

Chapter 8, Robert Gilbert's account of Reagan's presidential success after the serious attempt on his life, seems somewhat out of place in the volume but reflects the continuing debate in the field over whether to include issues of health within a biopolitical framework. Steven Peterson examines the evolutionary roots of cooperation in Chapter 9 and argues that understanding these roots can help us assess the practicability of different strands of anarchist thought. Both chapters are rather narrow for inclusion in an overview of this sort, and Peterson's focus on Kropotkin and Stirner is unlikely to be of much interest to the wider political science community, in contrast to the previous chapters that focus on broad areas concern for political science as a discipline.

Chapters 10 and 11 map the future of the field, highlighting the increased acceptance of biological explanations in academia broadly. Chapter 10 discusses, among other challenges, the tension between the existence of interdisciplinary journals like *Politics and the Life Sciences* and the need to publish in discipline-specific journals to encourage the mainstream acceptance of biopolitical approaches. Chapter 11 looks at a few areas of controversy in evolutionary theory, such as the debate over group selection and attitudes toward religion. The authors suggest that the hubris of evolutionary thinkers like Dawkins has harmed the field and advise caution when drawing conclusions from biological evidence; they also note that methods in biology and genetics change like all sciences do. Interdisciplinary practitioners must practice humility and use rigorous research methods, an important reminder.

Organizationally, the book reflects the fragmented nature of biopolitical research. As the authors acknowledge, the field has split into different directions and this lack of focus, while reflecting the variety of ways in which biological thinking can be brought to bear on social and political phenomena, can leave the outside observer feeling disoriented and give the impression of a disorganized field. The book shares some of these problems. The chapter on Reagan's health sits uncomfortably next to a chapter on anarchism. While these diverse views reflect the work being done in biopolitics, there is little connecting these chapters to the rest of the book. More careful editorial attention to explaining the logic behind the inclusion of some methodological approaches or subjects over others would help the reader relate these chapters to the larger dialogue. Editing errors lend to the feeling of fragmentation, especially in the collaborative chapters.

A serious omission is that only a single brief mention is made to the contributions made by political theorists to biopolitics. Roger Masters' early efforts were revolutionary in laying out a theoretical foundation for much of the work that followed, and Larry Arnhart is one of the few scholars (along with Masters) to have a biopolitical article published in the *American Political Science Review*. The work of Kenneth Blanchard and other political philosophers continue to provide the field with theoretical rigor. Ignoring these contributions for the sake of emphasizing empirical research may be a short-sighted nod to the direction of political science as a discipline, which seems to privilege data above all else, whether or not such data are rooted in a solid theoretical foundation.

The book's emphasis on graduate education is commendable, and another area for future volumes might be to look at schools that offer undergraduate courses in politics and the life sciences, such as Rochester Institute of Technology, Northern Illinois University (despite the loss of their graduate track), and, from an interdisciplinary direction, Binghamton University's certificate in evolution and human behavior, among many others. As Hannagan so astutely points out, "graduate students are likely to be attracted to the field if they (1) know it exists, and (2) have had some exposure to its content as undergraduates" (p. 39).

Overall, this volume will be of interest to members of the Association for Politics and the Life Sciences as well as IPSA's Research Committee #12. *The World of Biology and Politics* provides a broad overview of the current state of the discipline. The chapters on graduate study will be helpful for advisors and those assisting undergraduates and early graduate students with placement in graduate programs. Chapters 4

through 7 are thorough resources that would be ideal for an introductory graduate seminar on biopolitics or even advanced undergraduate classes. The authors are each well-regarded experts in their field, and while the volume provides little in the way of original scholarship, it more than amply meets its goal as an overview of the field and a document laying out the state of the discipline.

While biopolitical research confronts very real challenges including cost of new research equipment like fMRI machines, difficulty attracting Ph.D. students, and fragmentation of the field, we are also living through a time of unprecedented acceptance of biological explanations for human social and political behavior. Even as the future of "biopolitics" as a discrete field of study may be unclear and the paradigm revolution that many foresaw in the early days has not come to pass, the more moderate goal of incorporating biological thinking into the social sciences is largely a success.

Despite the challenges, there is much to be optimistic about.

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