Local Control in American Public Education makes a significant empirical contribution to ongoing debates over federalism, local control, and funding equity.

Racial Democracy and the Black Metropolis: Housing Policy in Postwar Chicago. By Preston H. Smith II. Minneapolis, MN: Universtity of Minnesota Press, 2012. 433p. $82.50 cloth, $27.50 paper.
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— R. Allen Hays, *University of Northern Iowa*

Too often in the past, scholars addressing the problems of disadvantaged minorities have given insufficient attention to the ways in which members of these groups themselves understand and attempt to cope with the difficult situation in which discrimination and exclusion places them. There has been a tendency to see minority citizens as passive victims of society, rather than as active agents who try to shape their own destiny. Preston H. Smith's thorough and well-written book provides a needed corrective to this tendency by focusing on the beliefs and understandings developed by prominent members of the African American community in Chicago as they responded to the massive housing discrimination and neighborhood exclusion that their community faced from the 1940s through the 1960s.

Between World War I and 1970, over six million African Americans left the rural south for the urban north as part of the Great Migration, seeking greater employment opportunities and relief from the rigid southern apartheid system. Many substantially improved their situations, but they also experienced intense racism that greatly restricted where they could live and work. Chicago was one of many cities that experienced a rapid increase in its black population, and the response of both white elites and ordinary white citizens was to try to contain African Americans within certain restricted areas and to keep them out of white neighborhoods. Methods ranged from legal exclusions such as restrictive covenants to mob violence against black families who moved into white neighborhoods.

Smith's principal thesis is that leaders within the African American community could have framed the issue from one of two basic perspectives. The first he refers to as the "social democratic" perspective which views both racial exclusion and class exclusion as contributors to the problems of African Americans and formulates solutions which address the needs of all classes within the African American community. It also furthers the possibility of common class interests across racial lines. This view was chosen by only a few leaders. The second framing, "racial democracy," came to be the prevailing view among leaders and stresses the common racial exclusion experienced by all African Americans, treating them as a single community with shared problems. In the process of stressing commonality, it ignores the very different needs and experiences of working and middle class African Americans and tends to respond by primarily benefitting the more prosperous members of the community.

Utilizing this analytic framework Smith provides a detailed analysis of the challenges that African Americans faced in finding decent, affordable housing in Chicago. Because they were excluded from white neighborhoods, rapid population increase among this group often led to severe overcrowding. Both single and multi-family homes were carved up into "kitchenette" units: multiple families and individuals were crammed into limited spaces, resulting in problems with sanitation and interpersonal conflict. Thus, there was a tremendous push from African Americans to find new housing. Often, this was accomplished by "block busting" in which a few families would gain a toehold in a neighborhood, precipitating white flight and, thus, opening up more housing to African Americans. African American leaders worked to gain access to new neighborhoods, even though this process intensified white fears in adjacent neighborhoods.

Finding affordable homes also revealed differences in the needs and perspectives of working class versus middle and upper middle class African Americans. The former simply sought more space, while the latter utilized the modest affluence they had been able to achieve to create a respectable middle class existence in single family, owner-occupied housing. For wealthier African Americans to reduce white fears of integration and open up more housing opportunities, they needed to prove that African Americans could be responsible, respectable neighbors, and they did so by differentiating themselves from the working class African Americans. According to Smith, upper middle class African Americans viewed their own advancement as the "leading edge" of advancement for their entire community. Their "racial democratic" perspective led them to conflate their own interests with those of the entire community.

Smith also discusses several major challenges faced by Chicago's African American community in the post-World War II era. One was the development of public housing. The federal public housing program presented an opportunity to relieve overcrowded African American housing by providing affordable units to lower income families. However, white elites were determined to utilize public housing to perpetuate and intensify racial segregation, rather than to provide new housing opportunities in other areas of the city. For this reason, middle class African American leaders were divided in their views of public housing. Some supported it because it addressed their community's acute housing needs while others viewed is as having a potentially negative impact on existing African American neighborhoods while perpetuating the community's racial isolation. Even with a united front, it would have been difficult for them to counter white determination to maintain segregation, but according to Smith, their divisions keep them from being as effective as they might have been.

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Another challenge was urban redevelopment. As in other cities, white leaders in Chicago saw this program as a means of pushing back African American "encroachment" on central city real estate that they viewed as valuable. As a result, a number of existing African American neighborhoods were cleared, despite the fact that they contained much housing that was in relatively good condition. In spite of this, some African American leaders hoped that new opportunities for the development of middle class housing that would be available to them. They shared the view of whites that overcrowded housing occupied by working class African Americans was an "undesirable" land use.

Smith succeeds in his objective of clearly laying out the differences in perspectives among black leaders as they coped with white intransigence. He shows a sophisticated understanding of why they made the choices that they did. However, he reveals a preference for the "social democratic" perspective, which would have been more inclusive of the diverse needs of the African American population and could possibly have mobilized white and black working class people according to their common interests. The fact that this perspective gradually lost traction among African American leaders after the Great Depression, in favor of the alternative perspective that accepted the class inequality generated by capitalism as a given, is part of a broader historical tendency in American politics, documented by many scholars, to subordinate class identity to racial/ethnic identity. The work would have benefitted from framing the choices made in Chicago within this broader national context. One of the tragedies produced by racism in the United States has been its reduction of the power of ordinary working people of all backgrounds to exert effective political leverage on behalf of their shared needs and interests.

In addition, it would have been useful for the author to explore more fully how the southern backgrounds of many of these leaders might have influenced their thinking. Most black Chicagoans were one generation or less removed from the South, where the possibility of whites and African Americans working together along class lines had been thoroughly expunged from the political system and from people's consciousness. Coming from that background it is not surprising that they would focus on all African Americans sharing a common fate and common interests. These leaders' strong urge to prove to whites their worthiness to be included in society through the embrace of white middle class virtues was rooted in decades of stigmatization and subordination.

Despite relatively minor shortcomings, this work makes an important contribution to our understanding of the dynamics of racial politics in urban areas within the U.S. and should be read by anyone seeking a more nuanced understanding of these processes.

Madison's Metronome: The Constitution, Majority Rule, and the Tempo of American Politics. By Greg Weiner. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2012. 208p. $29.95.
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The extent of James Madison's political career makes it difficult to write a complete assessment of his political thought. As Greg Weiner points out in his book, Madison was the last surviving signer of the U.S. Constitution when he died in 1836, and "he was present at or a respected commentator on virtually every major political event" (pp. 11–12) from the Philadelphia Convention until his death. He was also a prolific writer, leaving us plenty of material by which to evaluate where he stood. Many scholars and biographers have taken Madison as a subject, enough that one might question the value of one more interpretation of his political thought. Weiner's contribution is nonetheless a worthwhile one. *Madison's Metronome* is not an effort to explain Madison's thought, just one aspect of it. In this sense, the focus of the book is modest and narrow, but nonetheless important.

Weiner's central argument is that Madison's understanding of government was one of "temporal republicanism," that majorities ought to rule only after they have proven to be resilient. This is a deceptively simple yet maddeningly difficult idea. On the surface, as the most prominent advocate of separation of powers and checks and balances in the Constitution, Madison looks nothing like a majoritarian. He championed bicameralism, a strong executive, and an absolute congressional veto power over state laws. Each of these seemingly would have raised a barrier to majorities, or at least an obstacle to be overcome. He was the chief proponent in Congress of the constitutional amendments that would become the Bill of Rights, the revered safeguard of individual liberty against majority rule. At times, Madison seems fearful of majorities, most prominently in his celebrated *Federalist #10*. On this point, though, Weiner contends that Madison has been misunderstood: He fears mob rule, not democracy. He objects to majorities acting precipitously, not majorities acting after careful deliberation. "Madison's challenge was not how to divert power from an interested majority to an impartial authority," Weiner writes, but "how to ensure the interested majority ruled as impartially as possible" (p. 85). A fair majority should produce consistently positive results; what is necessary is for the majority to be made to consider all sides of an issue, and to persevere in its position before it may rule. In short, a majority must endure over time in order to achieve any kind of impartiality; majority tyranny emerges from intemperate majorities acting on impulse.

Time, then, is the crucial element to Madison's version of majoritarianism; a majority built on a temporary whim or political passion will fall apart before it can cause any problems in a well-constructed political system.

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