

become extraordinarily sophisticated in its messaging, skillfully communicating the same message (albeit with different intent) to religious and secular audiences alike.

Through its attention to the specific dynamics of culture wars over sexuality and gay rights, *Sin, Sex, and Democracy* fills an important gap in the literature investigating the Christian Right. Many scholars, such as Clyde Wilcox, John Green, Ted Jelen, and Laura Olson, have written theoretically and methodologically rigorous and sophisticated books investigating the relationship between religion and politics. Such studies have done much to dispel the stereotypes and myths about the Christian Right by exploring the relationship between religious affiliation and political attitudes and beliefs. Other scholars have investigated the Christian Right's influence on local, state, and national politics. A common thread throughout this literature is the illumination of the diversity of intellectual, theological and political beliefs contained under the banner of the Christian Right. Burack's book makes an important contribution to this rich scholarship.

**Free Labor: Workfare and the Contested Language of Neoliberalism.** By John Krinsky. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. 320p. \$58.00 cloth, \$23.00 paper.  
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— Guian A. McKee, *University of Virginia*

More than a quarter century ago, Ira Katznelson's *City Trenches* (1981) showed that divisions between workplace and community identities constrained the development of a durable working class politics in the urban United States. Drawing on Antonio Gramsci's metaphors of trench warfare, Katznelson maintained that the ethnic and religious associations of the neighborhood and home created a separate "trench" from those of the class identities forged in the factory. In *Free Labor: Workfare and the Contested Language of Neoliberalism*, John Krinsky extends and expands this Gramscian framework to encompass the cultural, political, economic, and policy discourses surrounding workfare in New York City at the turn of the millennium. His efforts have produced an extraordinarily important study that is a worthy heir to *City Trenches*.

Krinsky seeks to explicate the "process by which political claims gain currency, policy debate agendas are set, and political identities bounded" (p. 31). He pursues this goal by integrating "political-economic, organizational, cultural, and cognitive" analysis based on the ideas of Gramsci, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Lev Vygotsky (p. 31). The core achievement of *Free Labor* lies in Krinsky's skillful interweaving of such theory with his detailed empirical investigations of workfare in New York.

*Free Labor* proceeds from a grounding in New York City's recent political-economic history. Krinsky shows that the city's mid-1970s fiscal crisis exploded both the welfare

rights model and the generous municipal employee contract settlements that emerged from the 1960s. From that point forward, New York's social policies required ratification by bond raters, a deep constraint that shapes Krinsky's analysis of workfare. Following the crisis, the city developed a series of "neo-corporatist" arrangements for the continued provision of social services through private groups. This created an organizational framework of advocacy groups in fields such as housing, anti-hunger, and legal services from which opposition to workfare would emerge. Initially, such organizations opposed WEP through "soft-assembled coalitions" that formed around networks of "personal acquaintance and shared information" and led to "coordinated actions" against workfare (p. 73). Soon, however, a "hard-assembled coalition" emerged around the specific goal of organizing workfare participants as workers, with rights to unionization, decent working conditions, and pay at prevailing rather than minimum wage rates (p. 156).

This coalition, however, failed to attain worker status for WEP enrollees, largely due to high rates of turnover, fears of retribution among workers, and weak "choral support" from unions—in particular, the failure of AFSCME's District Council 37 to reinforce the core claims advanced by the anti-WEP coalition. This led organizers to pursue legislative, legal, and morally based modes of resistance. Claims about workfare shifted as well, from a characterization of participants as workers to one based on their needs as *potential* workers, such as training and transitional jobs that would facilitate escape from WEP. Meanwhile, a "Pledge of Resistance" campaign forged nonprofits and religious organizations into a soft-assembled coalition that resisted WEP's expansion into the non-profit sector through claims about the program's moral failings. Krinsky argues that the pledge actually represented a miscalculation, as it allowed the Giuliani administration to evade confrontation "when it reduced the [welfare] rolls fast enough to meet the federal standards without expanding the program" (p. 112). Krinsky points out that, in Gramscian terms, the pledge constituted a "war of maneuver," designed to achieve a single decisive strike, but that the workfare struggle was actually a "war of position" that had to be fought across multiple trenches of city politics.

Krinsky next offers a series of models that explore the mechanisms through which actors shift dominant claims within particular configurations of actors, claims, and "context/objects." Through the construction of temporal blockmodels, Krinsky traces the discursive deployment of claims made about workfare in the *New York Times* and *Daily News* from 1993–2004. The results confirm the significance of DC 37's failure to support organizers' claims about the status of WEP participants as workers, as well as the capacity of "state executives . . . to secure hegemony precisely by picking multiple fights rather than by

securing simple consent” (p. 173). Krinsky’s second model, based on Cultural Historical Analysis Theory (CHAT), shifts attention to the nature and role of cognitive psychology in claim making. Building on the work of Vygotsky and Leontiev, Krinsky argues that “cognition depends on actors’ orientation to an object, mediated by environmental artifacts they use to make their objects tractable” (p. 180). Rather than emphasizing individual cognition in the formation and comprehension of political claims, Krinsky argues that “it is critical to take the actor’s point of view and to situate it in the context of the actor’s object oriented, tool-mediated, and socially structured activity” (p. 203). In *Free Labor*’s final chapter, he draws this analysis together in a convincing series of conclusions about the dynamics of political claim making.

A few qualifications are in order. First, the book offers little basis for comparing New York’s workfare program to similar efforts elsewhere in the United States. Krinsky is aware of this limitation, and offers a largely convincing defense (p. 220). Even a brief comparative section, however, might have added context and depth to the New York case. Second, Krinsky may be too pessimistic in his assessment of what workfare opponents accomplished. While they never achieved the abolition of WEP, they contributed to a significant decline in program enrollment, as well as a notable modification of the program through the addition of training and other non-work first options under the administration of Mayor Michael Bloomberg. In conjunction with the recent worldwide economic crisis, this might suggest that workfare marked not neoliberalism’s triumph, but merely a momentary peak that has proved even more ephemeral than the Keynesian regulatory regime of the post-World War II decades.

These minor caveats do not detract from the accomplishments of this highly significant book. Krinsky greatly advances understandings of social movements, coalition formation, policy development, and “the cognitive consequences on and recursive causes of strategic change” (p. 215). *Free Labor* deserves a wide readership among urbanists, cultural theorists, political scientists, sociologists, and historians (who will find a rigorous approach to historical contingency). It is a work that may match *City Trenches* in scholarly longevity.

**Institutional Change in American Politics: The Case of Term Limits.** Edited by Karl T. Kurtz, Bruce Cain, and Richard G. Niemi. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007. 240p. \$70.00 cloth, \$24.95 paper.  
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— Nancy Martorano, *University of Dayton*

The adoption and implementation of term limits on American state legislators represents one of the most significant institutional reforms to ever have an impact on state legislatures. This change has caused scholars to make a num-

ber of conjectures concerning how term limits would ultimately affect the functioning of the legislative process and its public policy outputs. Proponents of term limits argued that they were necessary to bring new blood into the legislative process and take power out of the hands of long-serving chamber and party leaders. Opponents argued that such frequent turnover of members would be detrimental to institutional memory and policymaking and would ultimately shift state policymaking power to special interests and legislative staff. However, more than a decade would have to pass before scholars could systematically and empirically analyze the question of how term limits have affected the composition, operation, and outputs of state legislatures.

*Institutional Change in American Politics* is the first comprehensive study of the impact of term limits and the editors and their contributors have objectively assessed how term limits have impacted the composition, representation, leadership, committee systems, lobbyists and interest groups, culture, staffing, legislative-executive relations, and policy of state legislatures. The book is the culmination of the work of the Joint Project on Term Limits—a team effort undertaken by political science scholars in connection with the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Council of State Governments, and the State Legislative Leaders Foundation.

A unique characteristic of this edited volume is that the contributors used a common source of data for their analyses that includes a 50-state survey of all legislators, demographic and electoral data on legislators in all 50 states, legislative turnover data, interviews and legislative procedure data from six term-limited states and three non-term-limited control states, and a survey of knowledgeable observers in nine term-limited states. The major findings of the analyses are that the effects of term limits vary with the length and severity of the legislative service restriction; that term limits have had a greater impact on those legislative chambers considered to be more professionalized; and that, on balance, the record of term limits is mixed in ways that call into question the most categorical claims made by both proponents and opponents of the term limits movement. The overall conclusion of the book, however, is that, in general, term limits have institutionally weakened state legislatures, though this effect is not as severe as it could have been, since term-limited state legislatures are effectively adapting to their new institutional environment.

This book is a thought-provoking read for anyone interested in the impact of institutional change or state politics. Further, it is organized and written in a manner that makes it accessible to a wide audience, thus providing insight for scholars, graduate students, undergraduate students, and the general public alike. For scholars, it begins to answer many of the questions concerning term limits that have long been on the agenda of political science.