The Undeserving Rich: American Beliefs about Inequality, Opportunity, and Redistribution. By Leslie McCall. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2013. 300p. $94.99 cloth, $29.99 paper.
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— Gregory A. Huber, *Yale University*

In the last few decades, income and wealth inequality have increased substantially in the United States and abroad, and yet instances in which governments have enacted policies to "soak the rich" remain rare. Why? In *The Undeserving Rich*, Leslie McCall digs in to understand the broad contours, both across individuals and over time, of Americans' attitudes toward inequality and efforts to reduce it.

We learn not only that Americans are not blind to growing pay inequality (Chapter 3), but also that perceptions of levels of inequality or its growth are not enough to lead Americans to support broad wealth redistribution from rich to poor. This does not appear to be because Americans simply believe in the notion of going it alone on the basis of hard work (Chapter 4), since there is variation over time in concerns about inequality and the willingness to act to ameliorate it. (Indeed, Chapter 2 shows that media attention to inequality emerged in the mid-1990s during a period of overall economic expansion).

So what does explain variation over time in concern for inequality? McCall's central argument (see Chapters 3 and 4) is an important one: Americans care more about inequality during periods when it appears that things should be getting better but only those at the top seem to be benefiting. During downturns, everyone suffers, but if during good times those benefits are not equitably distributed so that everyone has a chance to do better, it violates notions of fairness and leads to increases in support for various policy efforts to reduce inequality.

What are those policies that become popular? Chapter 5 confirms that Americans' willingness to take money from the rich and give it to the poor remains minimal. The poor are not popular beneficiaries, and simply punishing the wealthy is not desirable either. Support remains much greater for efforts to increase equality of opportunity through support for education and health spending, as well as for some risk-sharing programs like Social Security. However, only education spending preferences appear linked at the individual level to concerns about inequality.

Two things stand out in this important work. The first, consistent with what appears to have now become political best practices, is that Americans do not react to growing inequality with a sudden embrace of simple redistribution. For whatever reason (primitive antitax sentiment, concerns about the work-reducing incentive of certain social policies, fear of a large state, etc.), they are concerned primarily about inequality when it means that some who work hard will make do with too little or will not be able to get ahead. So inequality is a political issue when it threatens the American dream, and the preferred solutions are those policy efforts that resuscitate it.

A more general lesson to draw here is that in trying to understand public opinion, a common missing ingredient is what Americans actually believe. Here, McCall shows that perceptions of inequality as a problem do not mirror growing earnings and wealth inequality. This is a dynamic that is likely prevalent in other policy areas, too. What do Americans think will happen if we legalize many undocumented migrants currently living in the United States? From my review of the literature, it does not appear that we bother to ask. Instead, as with inequality, we tend to ask what Americans think about policies without taking the time to understand why—a gap leading us to assume that Americans act for one reason when it might be another.

Second, McCall's work shows that we know far too little about what Americans really think about different social and economic policies. One of the most impressive features of this book is that the author gathers what appears to be a *census* of survey questions about inequality and efforts to ameliorate it. Ideally, we would have a rich time series of questions to draw on for Americans' views about their preferred goals for public policy, what effects they anticipate from different concrete policy proposals, and how they trade off among the benefits and costs of different efforts. McCall provides the best evidence to date about the over-time dynamics of perceptions of inequality and whether it is a problem (a figure that peaks in the mid-1990s), but the time series is very sparse (see, for example, Figure 3.2, showing the six years for which we have data, from 1987 to 2010), and the questions that are asked about policies are often so vague as to limit out understanding of what is politically feasible. This means that to understand patterns of over-time change, we are forced to rely on only a few years of data and have to compare variation across individuals in how perceptions of inequality affect policy attitudes, a limitation that makes it hard to sustain strong causal claims. McCall is the first to recognize this limitation about past data collection, writing in the conclusion to Chapter 5: "If our surveys contained questions about other kinds of policies that would make a dent in labor market inequality . . . we might have found additional avenues of redress. . . . But until the collection of data . . . catches up with the reality of inequality, we will not know" (p. 218).

So absent a sudden ability to get into a time machine and begin asking the questions we would find useful 20 years later, what else can we do? Here, I would press McCall to be even bolder. Let us not just ask about support for other policies but go further and try to understand what people think would happen if we started to regulate executive pay, raised the minimum wage, or provided child-care subsidies. Do Americans think that these programs are very costly? Would they encourage or discourage work? Would they reduce inequality, and if so, who would they benefit (what portion of the income distribution)? We ought to be able to answer these questions.

In fact, at a time when political rhetoric has transitioned from protecting the poor to protecting opportunity, we would like to see if those persuasive efforts have any effect on what Americans believe about good public policy.

In addition to these contributions, there are two avenues for future scholarship to build on this work. The first is to understand the role of government policy in shaping demands for future policy. For example, public support for health-care spending has decreased since the 1990s. Does this mean that Americans do not view it as a solution to a problem of inequality, or rather is it because of the many policy efforts that have, for better or for worse, transformed the policy landscape? Medicare drug benefits have expanded, the State Children's Health Insurance Program now provides care to many more poor and low-income working families, and, more recently, Obamacare has increased insurance coverage substantially. In light of these efforts, Americans might not want more health-care spending because they have already gotten it.

The second area for future work is to dig in deeper on whether it is really perceptions of the deservingness of the rich that drive attitudes toward policy. The data presented in this book show a correlation between unease about who is benefiting from economic expansion and support for certain policy efforts, but it is uncertain if this is *because* Americans vilify the rich or, instead, simply recognize that markets are not working. Would a jobless recovery that was not accompanied by the wealthiest Americans doing better (if, for example, most profits were going offshore) also cause support for different tax and spending policies? In that case, how important are beliefs about the rich compared to beliefs about the failure of the market to adequately share the benefits of growth?

These questions aside, *The Undeserving Rich* is a welcome addition to a growing literature that tries to link objective measures of economic outcomes to public opinion, a key intermediary in the production of policy in democratic governments.

Keys to the City: How Economics, Institutions, Social Interaction, and Politics Shape Development. By Michael Storper. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013. 288p. $39.95.
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— Neil Kraus, *University of Wisconsin, River Falls*

In this book, Michael Storper covers a great deal of territory in his exploration of the factors affecting urban and metropolitan development. His scholarly background as an economic geographer includes numerous works addressing various aspects of development, and *Keys to the City* appears to represent the culmination of many years of work on this issue. The general subject will be of interest to scholars of urban politics and economic development, even if much of the literature Storper draws upon may not be too familiar to political scientists working in these fields.

The central questions addressed in the book concern why some cities grow and maintain sustainable growth patterns over time while other cities cycle back and forth between economic prosperity and decline. These questions have been addressed by scholars of urban politics and urban sociologists and are central to more recent debates about regionalism. Storper takes a different approach, however, combining qualitative methods and case studies with theoretically sophisticated quantitative methods. Further, *Keys to the City* is infused with the author's knowledge of many of the world's leading cities, which helps to balance some of the more dense academic discussions that appear throughout the chapters.

Storper's work is divided into the four broad sections of economic context, institutional context, social interaction, and political context. The most substantive of these is Part I, which addresses the economic context of urban and regional development. Here, the author analyzes the age-old question of whether people follow jobs or vice versa. In the process, his work speaks to such well-known authors as Richard Florida, who argues that people relocating to more tolerant places leads to economic development, as well as to new neoclassical economists, who maintain that people move in search of various amenities and climate. Storper convincing lays out the shortcomings of these two approaches. Primarily through a case study of the U.S. Sunbelt, he shows that population migrations follow urban and regional economic growth. Although relatively brief, his multimethod approach convincingly demonstrates that jobs led the way, and the population followed.

Storper then builds on the arguments of the new Economic Geography (rooted in the work of such well-known analysts as Paul Krugman), to emphasize the notion that jobs and production are at the heart of urban development. He further develops his argument through another chapter dedicated to the significance of disruptive innovation. Storper then turns the work of Florida even more on its head by arguing that tolerance is a product of economic development, rather than a driver. He accurately points out that regions or cities that are quite diverse, thus seen as tolerant, are often racially and economically segregated when examined at the block or neighborhood level. This fact undermines those who optimistically claim that recruiting tolerant individuals is one method of economically reviving distressed central cities. For Storper, tolerance depends on "each group's ability to manage diversity's benefits and costs" (p. 74). Tolerant elites are able to enjoy the benefits of diversity in social and economic terms, yet live in neighborhoods and send their children to schools that are often not very diverse in any meaningful way.

The second part of the book, which addresses the institutional context of development, centers on informal institutions, specifically groups or communities, as opposed to government or other formal institutions. Informal institutions and historical accidents are both essential for