

portray them in an unfavorable light, it becomes easy for political opportunists to draw on a tradition that portrays some groups as inherently inferior and undesirable.

Finally, Kim's analysis of congressional dynamics is likely to leave Congress specialists unsatisfied. His description seems to draw on an older model of powerful committees and extensive decentralization and does not reflect the substantial increase in leadership power in recent decades. The full story of Asian American legislative successes is somewhat more complicated.

Despite these shortcomings, *The Racial Logic of Politics* deserves attention. It both supports and expands Paul Frymer's argument that race continues to exert a powerful influence on political party dynamics. We know far too little about the interaction of race and political institutions, and Kim has made a valuable contribution toward addressing this substantial shortcoming.

Business and Environmental Policy: Corporate Interests in the American Political System. Edited by Michael E. Kraft and Sheldon Kamieniecki. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007. 372p. \$62.00 cloth, \$25.00 paper.
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— Robert F. Durant, *American University*

Perhaps nowhere has more rhetorical heat been generated amid less empirical light than on debates over the influence of business on public policy. Moreover, researchers tackling this important question systematically reach dissimilar conclusions. No one doubts that business influences public policy. At issue is the extent of its influence relative to other actors. In the tradition of Charles Lindblom's classic *Politics and Markets* (1977), some recent scholarship has found that business holds a privileged position in policy debates because of its unparalleled resources and centrality to the nation's economic prosperity (e.g., see Kay Schlozman and John Tierney, *Organized Interests and American Democracy*, 1986; David Vogel, *Kindred Strangers*, 1996; Richard Lehne, *Government and Business*, 2001). Others tread more in the tradition of Raymond Bauer, Lewis Dexter, and Ithiel de Sola Pool's 1963 classic, *American Business and Public Policy*, finding that business is constrained and increasingly on the defensive amid an explosion of politically and media-savvy interest groups (e.g., see Mark Smith, *American Business and Political Power*, 2002; Jeffrey Berry, *Interest Group Liberalism*, 1999; Frank Baumgartner and Beth Leach, *Basic Interests*, 1998).

Into this debate sprints *Business and Environmental Policy*. The book explores what we know, how we know it, and what else we need to know about business's power in the environmental policy domain. Edited by two leading and prolific environmental policy researchers, and with accomplished environmental policy scholars as contributors, this volume is a welcome addition to the literature. It addresses three key questions: What is business trying to

accomplish in the policy process, what factors affect its success, and does success vary in different institutional settings? From these analyses, the editors argue that business is less likely to dominate when the issue involved is highly salient to the public, when an industry is smaller and has fewer resources, when environmental groups are strong and the general political environment is hostile, and when political institutions create electoral incentives for actors to embrace environmental protection.

For newcomers to this topic, the book offers a comprehensive, accessible, and informative introduction to the major issues, research, and research challenges informing the debate. For veterans, the book affords a uniquely well-integrated, nuanced, and thought-provoking synthesis that, at once, confirms and surprises. It does so by clearing away some of the conceptual underbrush (e.g., differentiating influence across different stages of the policy process); by unpacking the conventional wisdom (e.g., state renewable portfolio standards can be driven by desires as much for economic advantage as for reducing greenhouse gas emissions); and by exploring the methodological challenges facing researchers (e.g., the absence of state court databases), while simultaneously suggesting fruitful areas for future research.

Readers also will benefit from the unprecedented way the book assesses the impact of business from each level of the Madisonian system (federal, state, and local), across various stages of the policy process (problem definition and issue framing, adoption, and implementation), within different decision fora (legislative, administrative, and judicial), and over time. In the process, the contributors disabuse readers of any notion of historical determinism favoring industry. The chapters consistently chronicle outcomes produced by the interaction of history, shifting sociopolitical contexts, and the seizing of immediate advantage. In the process, various contributors summarize trends in the patterns of interest group politics, strategies, and tactics in such issue areas as energy exploration (Dorothy Guber and Christopher Bosso), global warming (Judith Layzer), air pollution (Gary Bryner), land use (Kent Portney), and renewable energy (Barry Rabe and Philip Mundo). Joining them are contributors who assess business's tactics and influence in political campaigns (Robert Duffy), agency rulemaking (Cary Coglianese), and the courts (Paul Weiland and Lettie McSpadden) involving mining, gas, transportation, and ranching issues.

The editors also provide a balanced overview of this complex topic. Readers will find different essays showing, for example, how court delay both advantages and disadvantages business (e.g., Weiland and McSpadden), and why the dice are either increasingly loaded for or against environmental groups jousting with industry. Various contributors also show how environmental interest group numbers in Washington have spiraled to prevent business dominance, but so too have industry contributions to

legislators on key oversight committees. And while Republicans overwhelmingly coalesce against environmental initiatives, Democrats split over the environment on the basis of regional interests (e.g., Bryner and Duffy). Simplistic conceptualizations also fall under the book's empirical weight. It is folly, for instance, to assume that either business or environmental groups have unified interests, an implicit assumption of the way the argument is typically framed (e.g., Bryner, Portney, and Layzer). This is especially true in the courts, where business is acutely fragmented (Weiland and McSpadden).

Equally problematic is expecting either business or environmental interests to adopt uniform tactics across all stages of the policy agenda or under all circumstances. Business is more apt to pursue and gain advantage during implementation by agencies rather than policy formulation, when issues are salient at all levels of government (Layzer, Portney, and Scott R. Furlong). Nor can recent shifts in business and environmental strategies toward issue framing in the legislature, in agency rulemaking, and in the courts be ignored when trying to understand business influence and policy outcomes (e.g., Duffy, Layzer, Bryner, Coglianese, and Furlong).

This volume is not without shortcomings. The tone of some of the chapters implies that business victories are always private-regarding, whereas environmental group victories are always public interest-oriented. One also wishes in places for the book to hike contributors' arguments to a more theoretical level involving, perhaps, elaborations and refinements to agency design and evolution theory. As always, one might also suggest topics that were not included but could profitably inform the issue of relative business power (e.g., the international standards movement and the social investors' movement). But these pale when compared to the positive contributions of *Business and Environmental Policy*. The book fills an important gap by examining business influence in empirically grounded ways and by synthesizing prior research that is typically compartmentalized into disparate stages of the policy process and institutional settings. The editors' model of business's influence also affords hypotheses for testing, elaborating, and refining in future research. The book does not resolve the debate over business's influence in environmental policy, but no one will think about this debate in the same way after reading it.

How Voters Decide: Information Processing in Election Campaigns. By Richard R. Lau and David P. Redlawsk. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 366p. \$75.00 cloth, \$29.99 paper.

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— Beth Miller, *University of Missouri-Kansas City*

Models of voting behavior go a long way toward predicting the choices individuals make in elections. And, for

practical purposes, prediction is critical, as it gives us important insight into the potential outcomes that might ensue, given certain conditions. However, research on information processing is increasingly focusing our attention more explicitly on understanding the process by which voters make decisions rather than focusing exclusively on the decisions themselves. This is exactly what Richard Lau and David Redlawsk do in *How Voters Decide*. This book departs from previous information processing research because not only do the authors propose a comprehensive process-oriented model of voter decision making, but they also test the various steps in the process using data gathered in an explicitly dynamic format.

In this process-oriented approach, voters gather and process campaign information in order to evaluate candidates and make electoral decisions. Evaluation, voting, and the quality of the vote decision are perceived to be a function of various elements of information processing, memory for that information, and the nature of the decision task.

The first step in the model proposes that various factors—demographic characteristics, political sophistication, and campaign features—influence the perceived nature of the decision task that individuals face in an election. In turn, the nature of the decision task influences the processing of information (depth of information search, the comparability of search across candidates, and the systematic nature of information search). Different combinations of these information elements produce what the authors term decision strategies that conform to four relatively common models of the vote decision in the political science literature: standard rational choice (Model 1), early socialization or cognitive consistency (Model 2), fast and frugal (Model 3), and bounded rationality or intuitive decision making (Model 4).

The extent to which information is processed or the decision strategy used will affect the quantity and accuracy of memory for that information. Information processing, memory, and the nature of the decision task in turn influence candidate evaluation, vote choice, and decision quality. The authors outline a series of testable implications based on this theoretical model.

To test these implications, a dynamic information environment is necessary. One of the book's important contributions is the adaptation of a standard process tracing methodology—the static information board—to the ever-changing information environment of political campaigns. In a series of experiments, the authors use their dynamic information board to create mock presidential election campaigns and trace the information that subjects choose to access about fictitious candidates and the electoral decisions of these subjects in both primary and general elections.

Rather than recite the entire array of findings from these tests, I would like to highlight a few findings suggesting