

must first describe it, and Hertel-Fernandez is the first scholar I know of who has so thoroughly and precisely described employer mobilization of employees. These chapters (and indeed, all the others) are essential additions to the canon on business and politics.

In Chapter 5, Hertel-Fernandez notes, on the one hand, that businesses have always been active in American politics but, on the other hand, that the *widespread* employer mobilization of employees is probably relatively new (though there is no way to be certain, as time series data on the phenomenon do not exist). A number of factors, including the *Citizens United* case (which had far-reaching implications for business political activity outside of elections), technological improvements that make connecting with employees easier and cheaper than ever, and a decline in the bargaining power of workers, appear to explain the increase in employer mobilization.

Part II, which comprises Chapters 6–9 and the Conclusion, is leaner than Part I. It asks: What difference does employer mobilization make? Another way to ask this question is: Does employer mobilization actually affect government decisions? Unfortunately, Hertel-Fernandez does not provide us with a definitive answer to either of these questions. But this is not his fault, as answering either question definitively is next to impossible, as generations of scholars who have sought to understand and explain interest-group influence can attest.

Yet the results are suggestive at the very least. In Chapter 6, the author shows via a survey experiment that workers do indeed respond to employer efforts to affect their opinions. On the results of a survey experiment conducted on workers he reports: “Workers change their minds on political issues based on fictional employer messages” (p. 149). Also on the basis of data gathered from survey experiments, Hertel-Fernandez concludes that workers are more likely to contact members of Congress if their employers ask them to, and that workers attain political knowledge from their employers. Finally, he shows that employer messages can stimulate participation among workers. In sum, Chapter 6 shows that the immediate goal of employer mobilization—to affect the opinions or attitudes or behavior of workers—is often met.

Does this mean that employer mobilization actually affects government decisions? Hertel-Fernandez addresses this question in Chapter 7. First, he shows, via a survey of 101 congressional staffers, that employer mobilization can be effective. Fully 92% of the congressional staffers he surveyed “reported that having businesses mobilize workers to support members’ electoral campaigns was useful” (p. 165). Moreover, as a group, congressional staffers “have a strong bias in favor of correspondence from private-sector employees, above and beyond ordinary constituents” (p. 169). Staffers, Hertel-Fernandez reports, are “more attuned” to the opinions of private-sector

employees than they are to the opinions of either ordinary constituents or members of citizen groups (p. 169). Second, the author briefly conducts two case studies of specific policy battles—first, a fight over an oil-producer tax repeal in Alaska in 2014 and, second, the battle over the Affordable Care Act—in which employer mobilization was prominent. Unfortunately, in neither case does Hertel-Fernandez have a direct measure of employer mobilization, and so the results of the case studies are suggestive (though strongly so), rather than conclusive.

Chapter 8 examines the activities of BIPAC (Business-Industry Political Action Committee)—a national organization whose mission is to help businesses in their efforts to mobilize their employees for political purposes—in an effort to show that businesses are indeed often successful in increasing voter turnout among their employees. Using data from BIPAC itself, Hertel-Fernandez shows that “states with the most intensive BIPAC mobilization campaigns” had the highest rates of employee vote support for Republican gubernatorial candidates (p. 193). He also shows that the more top managers of a company contributed money to a particular candidate, the more employees of that company contributed to the same candidate.

In Chapter 9 and his conclusion, Hertel-Fernandez ends with a discussion of what all of this means for American democracy. His thoughts are important, compelling, and balanced (he does not, for example, dismiss the possibility that a political workplace might be a net-plus for democracy and civic engagement). Nevertheless, he closes by decrying the fact that a great deal of employer mobilization of employees is essentially coerced (either directly or indirectly). This is indeed troubling, and I find the author’s suggestions for regulating the practice of coercion in all its forms eminently reasonable.

Politics at Work is an important addition to the growing literature on business and politics in the United States. The book presents new and unique data, asks novel and important questions, and highlights numerous normative concerns that deserve a great deal of thought.

Reconsidering Race: Social Science Perspectives on Racial Categories in the Age of Genomics. Edited by Kazuko Suzuki and Diego von Vacano. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018. 328p. \$65.00 cloth.
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— Natalie Masuoka, *University of California, Los Angeles*

This edited volume explores the extent to which our understandings of race have shifted with the rise of genomic science. Each chapter covers a controversy that has resulted from a new genomic advance, and ultimately, the reader is reminded just how much powerful social and political conceptions of race continue to govern our interpretation of scientific findings. The substantive chapters are both interesting and informative. In

particular, they collectively serve as a good primer for how the hard sciences approach genomics, and they offer critical assessments of the new social practices that have spawned from these scientific developments, such as the popularity of genetic ancestry tests, transnational surrogacy, and strategies of disease prevention. Increasingly, in popular media there are claims that genomic science will fundamentally change our understandings of race, and so the studies in *Reconsidering Race* can be referenced as powerful counters to such claims.

Unfortunately, the most problematic piece is the editorial introduction by Kazuko Suzuki and Diego von Vacano, which frames the volume as a critique against more of the arguments posed in the subsequent chapters. The introduction criticizes the social constructivist view of race, arguing that the problem with the study of race today is the dominance of this paradigm in the social sciences. The editors argue that the problem with the social constructivist view is that, in the normative fight to challenge the belief that there exists a biological basis to race, scholars are falling behind in their ability to explain the social world because they fail to recognize the real-world use of racial categories. For the editors, the social constructivist stance paints racial categories as “social illusions” (p. 3), yet they argue that there are fields, such as medicine, which rely on racial categories to make consequential decisions. They emphasize that racial categories for many individuals are a “matter of life or death” (p. 3), yet due to the dogma of the social constructivist viewpoint, “the use of scientific data can be politically incorrect in the social sciences” (p. 5). The editors thus paint a tension between social constructivists and the hard sciences as a way of defending the notion that an edited volume on genomic science in the social sciences is necessary.

The introduction paints a rather simplified rendering of the race-as-a-social-construction argument. To argue that race is a social construction is to recognize how social, cultural, and political practices inform the meaning of race and racial categories. What we understand the categories of “white” or “black” to entail has no universal or objective definition; rather, racial meaning is constantly in a process of formation informed by both historical and contemporary contexts. In this way, how racial categories are deployed in public-health initiatives, genetic ancestry tests, and with respect to prescription drugs—as well as how they are used to challenge the existence of race itself—are precisely examples of the racial formation cycle. Moreover, the core insights we gain from the social construction argument is that we must continually question the assumptions one makes about race because ultimately, meanings attached to race involve the maintenance of power.

Each substantive chapter in fact problematizes the assumptions that scientists, practitioners, and the public make about race. So, rather than disputing the social

construction argument, the volume actually offers a number of exemplary case studies in the social construction of race. A more representative introduction could have, instead, outlined the shared themes that can be found across different chapters.

The first theme reveals the continued struggle to challenge essentialist definitions of race in the biological sciences and the degree to which this struggle continues even after the rise of genomic science. Chapters written by Joseph L. Graves, Jr., and Rogers Brubaker outline how scientists often make subjective judgments when they attempt to define criteria for identifying shared clusters of genes, a judgment that is then used to argue for a shared biological nature to racial groups. As we learn from these chapters, biological and genomic sciences are thus no more immune to researcher subjectivity than are other academic fields. Nevertheless, the chapter by Ann Morning demonstrates that academics in the hard sciences feel less of a responsibility to consider research on race conducted by social scientists, whereas social scientists feel a greater responsibility to cite work in the hard sciences.

A second informative theme covers a discussion of what Catherine Bliss labels “race-based medicine” (p. 109). The chapters by Bliss, Jay Kaufman, Dinela Rushani and Richard Cooper, and Brubaker point out the increasing number of assumptions being made about the relationship between racial background and disease (for example, the belief that sickle cell anemia is a “black” disease). Alongside this is the rise of racially targeted medicines to combat diseases. What the reader learns from these chapters is that the rise in making racial linkages to health was actually an unintentional result of what at the time was a progressive push to increase health studies on racial and ethnic minorities. By encouraging and funding scholars to study minority populations in the context of health, there was greater emphasis on studying correlations by race. Over time, the outcome of this focus was then to overemphasize racial differences in diseases, which has culminated in the marketing of certain drugs for specific racial groups, such as BiDil, a drug marketed for resolving cardiovascular disease among African Americans.

Two other themes consider how increased knowledge about genetics might influence public understandings of race. One theme examines individual reactions to genetic ancestry tests (chapters by Jennifer Hochschild and Maya Sen and by Wendy Roth and Katherine Lyon, respectively) and transnational surrogacy (in a chapter by Sharmila Rudrappa). What is probably not surprising is that while increased knowledge about one’s genetic background is integrated into one’s personal narrative, people continue to make subjective and racially motivated choices concerning how they choose to describe their background. The other theme discusses the use of genomic science in deliberations about social groups and hierarchies

in countries outside the United States (in chapters by Ruha Benjamin, Carolyn Rouse, Michael Keevak, and Shirley Sun). Through these chapters, the reader can consider whether we are witnessing a convergence in the ways that countries and governments deploy findings from genomic science in their approaches to defining their populations.

What becomes clear from reading the chapters in this volume is just how important it is to employ a social constructivist lens to view the new narratives surrounding genomic science. So while the editors of *Reconsidering Race* maintain that the social sciences would do better to adapt their frameworks to encompass knowledge learned from genomics, the many rich contributions to this volume actually show that the hard sciences could stand to learn something from the social sciences.

Unsurpassed: The Popular Appeal of Franklin Roosevelt. By Helmut Norpoth. New York: Oxford University Press, 2018.

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— Matthew J. Dickinson, *Middlebury College*

What made Franklin Delano Roosevelt such a popular president? To answer that question, Helmut Norpoth undertakes a fascinating analysis of the pioneering public opinion surveys conducted by George Gallup and Hadley Cantril during Roosevelt's presidency. Conventional wisdom, Norpoth suggests, attributes FDR's popularity to his New Deal policies and successful effort to combat the Great Depression. While not completely discounting this viewpoint, Norpoth argues convincingly that "the key to FDR's popularity was foreign policy" (p. 2), particularly his two-year effort to prepare the United States for war before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. By shifting his focus to foreign policy in response to world events, Roosevelt primed the nation for military intervention overseas, and saw his popularity jump by 20%. That boost was cemented by his subsequent actions as wartime commander in chief. Lacking this leadership opportunity, the author suggests, FDR would have left office much less popular, and probably best known for failing to end the Great Depression.

To support this claim, Norpoth analyzes more than 200 surveys conducted by Gallup and Cantril that, with a couple of exceptions, have been mostly ignored by scholars. The polls cover topics ranging from FDR's popularity to partisan identification among voters to the public's views regarding the major issues of the day. One reason these polls have not been more deeply scrutinized is that they were conducted using quota—as opposed to probability—sampling, an approach that fell out of favor in part after being incorrectly blamed for well-known forecasting errors. However, Norpoth shows that these early polls do provide accurate snapshots of public opinion even without subsequent weighting designed to correct for

their potential lack of representation of the underlying population.

Drawing on the polling data, the author shows that, much like his modern successors, FDR's approval in peacetime did move in approximate tandem with economic indicators, such as unemployment; when the jobless rate fell, he became more popular. However, because of the sluggish recovery, Norpoth suggests that without the boost in his popularity caused by preparations for a possible military conflict, FDR would have lost a bid for a third term to Wendell Wilkie. This assumes, of course, that FDR decided to run for a third term—something Norpoth deems unlikely absent the war.

Beyond his findings regarding the source of FDR's enduring popularity, Norpoth's plumbing of the survey data provides a number of other illuminating insights. Two of the most interesting concern FDR's economic approach to ending the Great Depression, and his efforts to prepare the country militarily for entering World War II. Regarding the former, the author suggests that FDR's commitment to a balanced budget as late as 1938 was consistent with prevailing public sentiment against deficit spending in peacetime, but that it also slowed the economic recovery effort. While there is no evidence that the public would have supported massive peacetime deficit spending, had FDR justified deficit spending as early as 1937 in terms of military preparedness, surveys indicate that the public would have backed him. If so, this suggests that FDR might have ended the Great Depression two years earlier.

As it turned out, Roosevelt capitalized on the shift in public focus during 1939–40 from economic to national defense issues, despite a lingering, strong streak of isolationism, to make the case for a third term in office. The key turning point in public opinion, as indicated by Gallup's polls, occurs in the period between May and October 1940, when an increasing number of Americans express a willingness to help England and France even if it means risking going to war. Norpoth shows that it was this change in sentiment toward greater support for interventionist policies, and not the U.S. involvement in the war itself, that boosted FDR's approval. It is interesting to note that in contrast to the fate of later wartime presidents, Norpoth finds little evidence that subsequent military events, including rising casualties, had much impact on FDR's popular approval. The reason, he suggests, is that Americans never lost their belief that FDR's policies would produce victory.

One of the most fascinating segments in *Unsurpassed* explores Gallup's decision in 1937 to poll individuals regarding their partisan identification—the first pollster to ask what has become a staple of survey research and a much-cited statistic for political scientists. Using contemporaneous polling by Gallup, Norpoth shows that the Democratic "realignment" owes much to the cohort of

