

Book Reviews

Brian J. Gareau. 2013. *From Precaution to Profit: Contemporary Challenges to Environmental Protection in the Montreal Protocol*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. 362 pages, ISBN 978-0300175264 Cloth (\$55.00).

Since the disastrous 2009 Copenhagen climate talks, global climate governance has roiled in crisis. Michael Grubb, a long-time influential advocate for a binding global climate treaty, has warned that the world could enter its “darkest hour” (Grubb 2011). Other scholars now argue that small clusters of countries should negotiate treaties amongst themselves, and expand their clubs over time (Victor 2011). Some have even suggested a “G-2” solution decided by the United States and China alone. On the left, climate justice and “system change” activists are more likely to reject talk of any carbon-trading settlement altogether, despite the occasional radical defense of a global cap-and-trade scheme (Hahnel 2012). Still, a universal treaty remains on the global agenda. And the Montreal Protocol is the precedent most often cited as a uniquely effective example of global environmental governance, thanks to the steep reductions in ozone depleting substances it has achieved since entering into force in 1989.

Yet as Brian J. Gareau shows in *From Precaution to Profit: Contemporary Challenges in the Montreal Protocol*, this ostensible success story is misunderstood, with important implications for global climate politics. Gareau argues, first, that the role of consensus science in the Protocol’s inception has been greatly overstated; second, that the treaty’s real successes are largely explained by a pre-neoliberal, precautionary political context that no longer prevails; third, that under neoliberalizing conditions, U.S. intransigence, and a newly challenging technological setting, the Protocol’s effectiveness has dwindled; and finally, that global civil society (including public science) so far lacks the tools to compel nation states to do better. Gareau musters impressive ethnographic and historical research, supplemented with careful readings of new radical geography, environmental sociology, Bourdieusian theories of social capital, and Foucauldian literatures on power/knowledge and governmentality. And his presentation is clear and cogent even as it navigates the proverbial alphabet soup and dull bureaucratic procedures of treaty governance. In terms of sweeping global developments, he narrates the extraordinary capacity of California’s commercial strawberry industry to enlist the United States government’s assistance in hijacking a vital environmental treaty, this despite “the rather inconsequential role that strawberries play in society” (Gareau 2013, p. 149). Readers of this journal may not be stunned to read about the ability of powerful corporations and the U.S. government to bring global environmental institutions and poorer countries’ aspirations to heel (see Park and Roberts 2007). But they will learn much about the concrete mechanisms whereby global inequalities are translated into legal victories for some core countries on the negotiating floor.

From Precaution to Profit is divided in two. The first section argues that over the course of the 1990s, global environmental governance neoliberalized, with devastating implications for governments’ ability – and willingness – to resolve the contradiction between markets and environment in the latter’s favor. The second explores in ethnographic depth the controversy over methyl bromide (MeBr), a toxic chemical gas used to pre-sterilize tomato and (most importantly) strawberry fields to prevent infestation by pests. MeBr, whose continued use the

American “polluter-industrial complex” has vehemently insisted on, also happens to be a significant ozone-depleting substance, and the most important target of regulation through the Montreal Protocol, now that it is successfully drawing down use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs).

Gareau’s book builds on a growing new literature showing that in the Montreal Protocol’s initial 1980s negotiation, the role of science was more mixed than the protocol’s champions – and climate science boosters – typically recognize. Research on ozone-depleting substances then was far less conclusive than research on anthropogenic climate change today. On the other hand, at that time replacing CFCs with alternative substances actually offered the world’s major chemical companies the prospects of significant profits. These companies had not yet worked out precise replacements, but they reasonably expected that slightly costlier solutions would allow them to squeeze smaller competitors out of the market. The problem for Gareau is that this economic argument undermines his second claim for the Montreal Protocol’s early success, namely that a “general interest” mood of precaution prevailed over neoliberal market logic in the 1980s. If the economic ramifications of regulation were not especially frightening, perhaps the discourse about prevention, and the willingness to use “command and control” regulatory methods, was just rhetorical residue from the 1970s. Gareau alludes to U.S.-based civil society pressure as a key force in the late 1980s, with reference to others’ scholarship. More detail is needed here. Other accounts of the shifting terrain of environmental governance in the 1980s suggest that a pro-market shift was already well underway at that time, particularly in the U.S., with business-friendly NGOs like the Environmental Defense Fund taking full advantage (see Meckling 2011, Oreskes and Conway 2010, Pooley 2011). Had Gareau briefly compared the politics surrounding the agreement of the Montreal Protocol with other high-profile environmental struggles of the time, he might have made his periodization more persuasive.

In any case, Gareau’s definition of neoliberalization, which draws on radical geography arguments about its processual and uneven character, powerfully illuminates two key dimensions of the 2000s’ MeBr controversy, where the United States insisted on special exemptions for California strawberry growers, thus undermining the phase-out of MeBr across the globe. The first is the hypocrisy of Northern governments, which, while promoting trade liberalization in general, nonetheless engaged in protectionism for favored industries. In the many meetings of the Montreal Protocol that Gareau attended, the United States refused to engage in debates about the overall global economic implications of the phase-out, instead insisting, in a marked shift from the tenor of earlier negotiations within the Protocol, that no regulation should impose costs on any *particular* industry. The second, linked dimension pertains to the role of scientific knowledge in governance and the ability of NGOs to meaningfully contest core countries’ claims on behalf of a general, global interest. In the 1980s and 1990s, global public science offered the only legitimate grounds for negotiating reductions in ozone-depleting substances. But once the MeBr controversy erupted, American negotiators insisted on the particular, private knowledge produced (or funded) by California growers. Gareau argues that neoliberalization was as much about the United States defending its favored science as defending any particular industry. When NGOs would appeal to the United States, EU, and other countries to resist this agenda, however, they usually had no effect. This leads Gareau, leaning on Bourdieu, to theorize that powerful actors were vertically penetrating the Protocol’s seemingly horizontal social networks. And in what Gareau reads as Foucauldian processes of power/knowledge and governmentality, the United States in particular was able to use its leverage to compel poorer countries to submit to the U.S.’s protectionist agenda, all while legitimizing its actions by clouding the scientific debate, and by compelling NGOs to adopt neoliberal discourses about avoiding “market

disruptions.” But if the United States is the clear villain in this story, the European Union (EU) plays a more ambivalent, even positive role. It remains unclear to what degree this reflects a fundamentally different approach to reconciling economic and ecological imperatives.

On the whole, Gareau’s claims are persuasive and amply supported by his research. Their implications, unfortunately, are daunting. He ends on an ambivalent note, suggesting that a MeBr phase-out may well end up occurring because of very recent technological progress and expanded organic growing practices. Yet he insists that the controversies of the 2000s demonstrate a distressing neoliberal turn and the worrying fragility of the best global green treaty on offer. What is to be done? Gareau makes vague arguments about the need for greater civil society mobilization, especially in the U.S., and he argues that the relationship between science, civil society, and policy-makers needs to be re-aligned in favor of a precautionary approach. Is this enough to get the Montreal Protocol back on track? And even if so, does what worked for ozone politics in the 1980s really provide a helpful analog for contemporary climate politics? With climate change, actually implementing a “precautionary” approach likely means long-term, economy-wide planning. But the historical reference for such interventionist U.S. government planning extends much further back than the 1980s, to the New Deal and its immediate aftermath, and to the militant labor movements that fought for that era’s decommodifying welfare policies. Clearly, the context has changed. And is a global climate treaty the right goal? *From Precaution to Profit* makes it clear that nation-states are the decisive actors, and that global institutions have limited power to coerce the most powerful national governments. Gareau has helpfully specified the ways that neoliberalization is undermining global environmental governance. But it will fall to other scholars and activists to apply its lessons in work on what sorts of leverage particular civil society actors already have, and the sorts of leverage they will need to build, to keep the profit imperative from devastating efforts to slow climate change.

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[Daniel Aldana Cohen](#)

Department of Sociology and Institute for Public Knowledge, New York University
aldanacohen@nyu.edu

Nitsan Chorev. 2012. *The World Health Organization between North and South*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. 288 pages, ISBN 978-0801450655 Cloth (\$45.00)

In this fascinating book, Nitsan Chorev explores the evolution of the role of the World Health Organization (WHO) between 1970 and 2000, focusing in particular on its response to external pressures. So far, the WHO has mostly escaped the attention of scholars interested in international organizations, global governance and policy making. Chorev's book contributes to closing a gap that needed to be filled, not only because the WHO is one of the largest United Nations agencies in terms of its budget, scope of mandate, and programming, but also because it provides an ideal empirical setting to investigate the dynamics and effects of the interdependencies among different institutional actors in global governance. Over the three decades under analysis, the WHO has interacted with, and perhaps more importantly has provided the platform for interaction among, donor countries, recipient countries, the pharmaceutical industry and multinational corporations, consumers, health activists and NGOs.

After reviewing the classical positions on the degree of autonomy of international organizations vis-à-vis member states, the author opts for a constructivist perspective that acknowledges the importance of external pressures faced by an international organization (i.e. resource dependence, procedural dependence, and normative dependence). Chorev claims that the interplay between external pressures and the volitional conduct of WHO does not result what are often presented as two dichotomous options: either passive compliance or active resistance. Instead, the book extends the palette of available options for an international organization to include *strategic compliance*, when the organization alters the meaning of external demands before adhering to them, thus closing the gap between the required changes and its own goals; and, *strategic resistance*, when the organization reframes external demands in such a way that member states find it difficult to challenge its non-compliance, thus minimizing the risk of sanction. In other words, what makes a response active or passive is not whether the organization ultimately conforms to or resists exogenous pressures, but rather whether it attempts to alter the meaning of those pressures. The author shows that this kind of active 'strategic' posture has enabled the WHO to maintain a stable notion of its identity and goals, even in periods of turbulent ideological and economic transitions.

This interpretation is convincingly supported by a rich and detailed historical narrative based on thorough archival research, including the minutes of the World Health Assemblies and the correspondence between government officials and state representatives. The documentary analysis has been corroborated by a set of approximately 50 interviews of relevant experts.

The five empirical chapters (Chapters 3-7) offer a vivid account of the institutional dynamics behind the design of a specific intervention for development. Against a backdrop characterized by dramatic ideological turns, first the rise of the New International Economic Order and its eclipse by Neoliberalism, the book argues that the WHO has systematically attempted to strike a balance between conflicting pressures, as well as between its own agenda and these environmental changes.

Two longitudinal cases illustrate the intense negotiations and deliberations behind most global initiatives launched by the WHO. One case is the cyclical dispute between a holistic approach to basic health versus vertical disease control programs. For example the 'Primary Health Care' approach, officially launched during the Alma Ata conference (1978) as a strategic response to the expectations of developing countries, was soon challenged by 'Selective Primary Health Care' approach discussed during the Bellagio Conference (1979). Adding 'selective' was

allegedly a countermove aimed at re-establishing the vertical approach by a coalition that included the World Bank, the Ford Foundation, USAID and the Canadian International Development and Research Center, among others (Chapter 3). In the 1990s and 2000s the pressure to embrace the neoliberal agenda was exacerbated. A significant portion of the original WHO mandate was appropriated by the World Bank or attributed to the newly established UNAIDS (Chapter 5). In the attempt to revitalize its role, the WHO accepted to conceive health in economic terms (e.g. health as instrumental to growth) and to launch programs that had a clear cost-effectiveness rationale (Chapter 6).

The second case is the evolution of the relations between the WHO and the private sector from confrontation to co-operation (Chapter 4). In the 1970s and 1980s, the WHO had a clearly hostile attitude towards multinational corporations. The organization contrasted the health approach based on curative, urban-based, high-technology care in developing countries with what it labeled 'appropriate technology'. It promoted the notion of 'essential drugs', implicitly accusing corporations of dumping non-essential ones, especially in developing countries. It sponsored a code of conduct for infant formula that clearly signaled its willingness to hold companies accountable for their inappropriate marketing practices. In the following decades, however, the WHO shifted its attitude towards the private sector such that, during the the 1990s and 2000s, business became a regular partner of WHO initiatives, which industry actors supported with both monetary and in-kind donations (Chapter 7).

These historical narratives serve two interrelated analytical purposes. First, the initiatives and paradigms of international organizations are often perceived as reified, especially when they are injected with technocratic expertise, as in the case of the WHO. Chorev, instead, unveils the process through which these initiatives are socially, or better yet politically, constructed. Second, we come to appreciate the 'active' role played by an International Organization even when the policy outcome may be classified as a failure. Personally, I had, and I still have, reservations about the strategic ability of the WHO to systematically respond to external pressures in order to maintain its legitimacy. Yet, the book persuaded me that the strategic response should be factored in before enunciating any 'verdict of irrelevance' for an international organization.

Nevertheless, I would have expected a clear conceptualization of legitimacy throughout the book, perhaps building on the well-established scholarship that has differentiated between pragmatic, normative and moral legitimacy. Lumping together all these categories creates some ambiguity on what type of legitimacy the WHO is seeking in the cases under analysis, and from whom.

The concluding chapter presents an interesting synthesis of the evolution of global health regimes in the 1970s-1980s and in the 1990s-2000s. I found, however, that the author could have drawn more compelling insights from the comparative analysis of the cases presented in the empirical section, especially by comparing more explicitly across the cases the three conditions that enable strategic responses, namely independent goals and preferences, scope of supervision and leadership.

These relatively minor reservations aside, *The World Health Organization between North and South* is a remarkable work which speaks to different academic communities. Scholars of sociology, international relations, global health, public policy and administration will find it instructive and engaging. The book will also be valuable for graduate seminars. For example, it could be used in a graduate course on international governance or to provide an overview of the evolution of global health over the last decades.

Valentina Mele
Department of Policy Analysis and Public Management, Università Bocconi
valentina.mele@unibocconi.it

Ian Morris. 2013. *The Measure of Civilization: How Social Development Decides the Fate of Nations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. 381 Pages, ISBN 978-0691155685 Cloth (\$29.95)

The Measure of Civilization is a compendium of data on the leading edge of the emergence of sociocultural complexity and hierarchy over the past 14,000 years. It is very useful for those who do research on long-run, large-scale social change. But for the general reader *The Measure* needs to be discussed in conjunction with Ian Morris's 2010 book, *Why the West Rules – For Now*. Most of *The Measure* was originally written as a data appendix to support the story told in *Why the West Rules*.

The big idea is that complex human systems, like other complex systems, need to capture free energy in order to support greater scale and complexity, and that the ability to capture free energy is the main variable that accounts for the growth of cities and empires in human history. Morris traces the increasing size of human settlements since the origins of sedentism in the Levant about 12,000 years ago. And he uses estimates of the sizes of the largest settlements in world regions as a main indicator of system complexity. Using this method he notes that there was parallel evolution of sociocultural complexity in Western Asia and Northern Africa, South Asia, East Asia, the Andes and Mesoamerica, and that the leading edge of the development of complexity diffused also from its points of origin. And sometimes the original centers of complexity lost pride of place because new centers emerged out on the edge. The old Mesopotamian heartland of cities now has none of the world's largest cities. Development is spatially uneven in some regions, with the center moving to new areas.

In the introductory chapter of *The Measure of Civilization* Morris provides a useful overview of earlier efforts to measure social development, and he also provides a helpful and insightful discussion of the social science literature on sociocultural evolution since Herbert Spencer.

Morris's research is unusual for an historian because he carefully defines his concepts, specifies his assumptions and operationalizes his measures, and then uses the best quantitative estimates of settlement sizes as the main basis of the story he is telling. His estimates of the sizes of the largest cities utilize and improve upon earlier compendia of city sizes.

The main focus of the earlier book (*Why the West Rules*) is the comparison of what happened in Western Asia, the Mediterranean and Europe with what happened in East Asia. Morris is careful to trace the histories of the diffusion of complexity in both areas. He also makes contemporaneous comparisons of the two regions which allows us to see that there has been a see-saw pattern back and forth regarding which region was ahead or behind in the development of sociocultural complexity. The West (Western Asia) had an original head-start, but the East caught up and passed, and then the West (Europe and North America) passed the East again. The focus on energy capture is a valuable materialist angle that cuts through a lot of the nonsense one finds in most other East-West comparisons. And the focus on cities rather than polities or civilizations allows us to see the big patterns more clearly.

While *The Measure of Civilization* is about the quantitative basis of Morris's analysis, *Why the West Rules* adds a lot of detail beyond the basic focus on energy capture. It is a fascinating story told well. The energy capture idea misses some of the patterns that are of interest to those who want to study whole world-systems over long historical time. The story tends to be rather core-centric with little attention paid to the transformative roles played by peripheral and semiperipheral marcher states in the construction of large empires. Not much is made of the transformation of systemic logics of development over the long period studied, and how differences in the development of capitalism may have been an important aspect of the East/West trajectories. But the foregrounding of energy and cities is a valuable strategy for comprehending both the patterns of history and for considering the present and the future of human development. Morris's books are insightful contributions to our efforts to penetrate the fogs of sociocultural evolution.

[Christopher Chase-Dunn](#)

Institute for Research on World-Systems, University of California-Riverside
chriscd@ucr.edu

David Jacobson. 2013. *Of Virgins and Martyrs: Women and Sexuality in Global Conflict*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press. 254 pages, ISBN 978-1421407548 Paper (\$24.95)

Of Virgins and Martyrs is the sexy title for a book that takes the reader on three "journeys": a tour of "honor societies" in the Middle East and North Africa that are based on a form of tribal patriarchy; the beginning of modernity, notions of the self, and the emergence of woman's ownership of her body, in 16th century Europe and especially Protestant Holland; and the benefits of globalization to the world's women. In the process we are introduced to the "tribal patriarchy index", which Jacobsen designed to help explain and predict religious-based violence, and the results of a survey of British and French Muslims on legal and gender matters. The book is a fascinating and engrossing *tour d'horizon*. But it does have its limitations.

An admirer of modernity, Jacobsen associates it with self-hood as well as with notions of women's autonomy and control over fertility. He is also partial to the grand narratives of modern social theory, including that of Max Weber and Norbert Elias' "civilizing process." He contrasts liberal and modern notions of the self and the individual with the primacy of the community in tribal patriarchy. His starting trope is Biblical, with King David's sin of helping himself to another man's wife (Bathsheba), and his son Amnon's rape of his own sister Tamar. The objective is to underscore not only pre-modern royal privilege but also male entitlement, female subordination, and the place of women's premarital virginity in the honor-shame complex of tribal patriarchies. He then moves – perhaps a bit too seamlessly – to contemporary Oman, Iraq, and other sites in the Middle East, where virginity is still emphasized and "honor crimes" committed. There, the female body is the site of cultural and political contestation, taking in part the form of an Islamist backlash against the encroachments of Western modernity and globalization. Jacobson is cognizant of the symbolic uses of the body, and especially the female body, but his is a more materialist approach. (In this respect, he has an interesting reference to the notion of the body as a social/cultural construction, which prompted Martha Nussbaum's 1999 trenchant critique of Judith Butler and Foucauldian approaches.)

Jacobson is of course correct to point to the achievements of modernity. As the author of a book entitled *Modernizing Women*, I can only concur. However, he is too quick to contrast tribal patriarchal communities with modern Western states, neglecting the crimes of modern empires, colonial agendas, imperialism, and capitalist globalization. The persistence of patriarchy is a matter of continued scholarly debate, especially among those of us writing from within Middle East women's studies, but it cannot be divorced from aspects of international relations. Patriarchal structures have remained in Afghanistan, for example, because the United States and its proxies deliberately undermined a left-wing modernizing regime after its emergence in 1978 and especially during the 1980s. This was a state that had, at the center of its social reform program, the compulsory schooling of girls as well as boys. In Iraq, patriarchal structures re-emerged because of the international sanctions regime of the 1990s and especially after the United States and the UK invaded a sovereign state, dismantled an entire state apparatus, and produced such chaos and decentralized power that violence – including violence against women – persists more than a decade after that invasion. The hyper-masculinity that is associated with the honor/shame complex may have existed prior to the invasion, and especially in certain isolated communities outside the state's purview, but it was intensified by the breakdown of a strong, centralized state.

The book's subtitle is "women and sexuality in global conflict", which is a reference to the conflict between violent tribal patriarchy and Western modernity. But here I would raise two related issues that should have received some attention. First, one can see Western modernity at war with itself – with its ideals of women's equality and rights versus the persistence of violence against women in Western societies. True, such forms of violence are illegal and subject to prosecution, but their persistence is more anomalous than is the case in "pre-modern" communities. Hardcore pornography, sexual assaults in the military, the persistence of rape, sexual harassment by mayors or other officials – these examples would seem to transcend religiosity or tribalism, especially as they occur in advanced and highly developed societies. Misguided foreign policies based on perceived (national) self-interest similarly perpetuate violence against women, as with the male entitlement of U.S. soldiers (and those of other countries) that generates strip bars, brothels, and so on, not to mention sexual abuse.

Secondly, Jacobsen is correct to call Wahhabism – the strict Islam of Saudi Arabia and its proxies – a "colonizing force" (p. 59) that seeks, among other things, to "cleanse" and "purify" society of Western or modern ills, or even what it perceives as illegitimate Muslim practices. He attributes such purification rituals to religious-based zeal – from Catherine of Siena to Ayatollah Khomeini and Osama Bin Laden – but also to the ideological zealotry of the Red Guards. I would add the atrocious Khmer Rouge – but then why stop there? Why not extend the analysis to the awful bombings of Vietnam by the U.S. military, and similar acts to "purify" the world of communism, such as the Indonesia of 1965 and Pinochet's Chile?

For Jacobson, violence is an organizing principle of the pre-modern society (p. 114). In contrast, Sylvia Walby's recent book on the contemporary social system in the global era situates multiple sites of inequality (e.g., class, gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality) within four main institutional domains: economy, polity, civil society, and violence. Walby is cognizant of the pervasive presence of violence in the modern, globalized world.

As one who has long written about structured gender inequality in countries of the Middle East and North Africa, I certainly cannot object to Jacobsen's discussion of patriarchy, honor crimes, low female labor force participation, and so on. But the achievements of the women's rights movements, legal and policy changes, and secular advances such as fertility

declines, educational attainment, and growing employment in the public sector should be noted as well. And while it is broadly true – as empirically shown by Jacobsen’s tribal patriarchy index – that areas with strong patriarchal tribes are more likely to produce violent extremists, it is also the case that in many countries such as Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia, states as well as civil society groups such as associations of feminists and secularists have staunchly opposed Islamist extremism. Islamist extremists everywhere are doubtlessly enraged by the fact that Algeria today has a 31 percent female share of parliamentary seats.

As noted, Jacobson is a proponent of globalization, but he fails to acknowledge its dark side. Globalization may favor those women with considerable human capital as well as other assets and skills, but it has left behind working-class women, creating new categories of the poor. In some countries, the “feminization of poverty” is a reality, while in other countries the highest rates of unemployment are found among women. In the United States, the absence of job security, paid maternity leaves, and quality and affordable childcare centers underscores the pervasive disadvantages faced by working class women in the rather ruthless environment of neoliberal capitalism. In this regard, the otherwise interesting discussion of fashion and “erotic capital”, which Jacobson ties to the self and subjectivity, lacks analysis of the link between fashion and market relations.

The chapters on the challenges of immigration in Britain and France – especially from the Muslim world – are among the best I’ve read on the subject. I tend to agree with Jacobson’s discussion of multiculturalism and its failings in the UK (and the Netherlands), and I share his preference for the French republican model, with its injunction against the *niqab* and other overt expressions of cultural or religious difference and separation. Jacobson provides some intelligent policy advice and I hope the French authorities are paying attention.

Obviously I have some differences with Jacobson’s analysis, but the book is rich and engrossing, and Jacobson has read widely and well. As such, the book is likely to appeal to a diverse audience. For those interested in the Middle East and North Africa, the book is best read in conjunction with studies by experts from within Middle East Studies. There, one would read not only about the persistence of tribalism, religiosity, and backlashes against Western modernity, but also about the emergence of social movements for change, including those led by feminists, socialists, and genuine democrats.

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Val Moghadam
 Sociology and International Affairs, Northeastern University
v.moghadam@neu.edu

Kathi Weeks. 2011. *The Problem with Work: Feminism, Marxism, Antiwork Politics, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 287 pages, ISBN 978-0822351122 Paper (\$23.95)

In this provocative and energizing book, Kathi Weeks makes extremely smart arguments aimed at unmaking the valorization of work, and demanding a postwork politic. Weeks' book serves both to critique Marxist (especially state socialist) and feminist (particularly liberal and socialist feminist) strategies, and to advance a utopian vision of a society no longer defined around work and productivity. After reading her book, I find myself enthusiastic about the potential for a movement aimed at repositioning work's placement in society. Central to Weeks' argument is how much Marxist and feminist scholarship has problematically focused critiques on the organization and distribution of work, rather than the values underlying work. As a political theorist, Weeks considers and historicizes the work of a wide range of scholars – from Weber to Negri to Dalla Costa and James to Hochschild to Halberstam – marshaling evidence for her own argument “that seeks to pose work as a political problem of freedom.”

Weeks begins by critiquing the work ethic, while also indicating its vulnerability. First, Weeks sets out a strong argument for how the work ethic has emphasized the place of work and consumption as central to society, while movements to address, for example, gender, race, and sexual discrimination have expanded “the scope of the work ethic to new groups and new forms of labor, and to reaffirm its power” (p. 68). Yet as she convincingly points out, there are contradictions and instabilities where contestations become visible. Weeks next explores how central work remained to a socialist vision, whether a model of socialist modernization or socialist humanism. Here, autonomist Marxism emerges as Weeks' potential solution, claiming a broader political movement and a greater focus on agency and resistance. Autonomism makes the goal to not simply see work more justly distributed or made more meaningful, but to see work play a different, less central role in society. The aim is “to reduce the time spent at work, thereby offering the possibility to pursue opportunities for pleasure and creativity that are outside the economic realm of possibility” (p. 103).

Feminist conceptualizations of how important the household and its reproduction of labor are to the economy centered the 1970s wages for housework movement, which Weeks analyzes in some depth. She traces how demands for wages for housework were not meant to valorize domestic work, but came out of an autonomist critique of both liberal and socialist feminist arguments for market or public childcare, for example, which simply support existing capitalist and gendered arrangements. As Weeks argues, wages for housework “was a means by which to constitute a feminist and anticapitalist political collectivity whose ultimate aim was the radical transformation of the institutions of work and family” (p. 136).

From here, Weeks argues for a basic unconditional income, which would give individuals the freedom to opt out of work. Basic income not only recognizes inextricable links between productive and reproductive work, but also helps solve crises of unemployment, underemployment, and contingent employment. Weeks further argues for shorter working hours, contrasting such an approach with models that argue for more and better work for women. Unsatisfied with existing accounts of how to address conflicts between work and family, Weeks insists upon a shorter working day as the best solution. Rather than privatizing or socializing reproductive labor or reinforcing a gender division of labor, shorter work hours – along with basic income – can transform our systems of employment and family into more democratic forms that promote freedom. Weeks ends her book with an analysis of utopianism, recognizing

that her proposals may be read as utopian, yet arguing that utopian hope is crucial to allow us to imagine the future as both connected to and radically different from the present. Weeks argues that while demands for shorter work hours and basic income may not, in fact, lead to revolution, they “are potentially effective mechanisms by which to advance critical thinking, inspire political imagination, and incite collective action.”

Weeks makes an exciting and compelling argument. While my own research is precisely aimed at feminist claims for work supports such as public childcare, what my research finds also fits with Weeks’ central contention: societies are healthier when workweeks are shorter. To maximize gender equality and minimize risk of poverty, we need both basic incomes and shorter workweeks for all workers. Yet, how these ideals are implemented matters. While the Dutch system of part-time hours is much touted as a better model for work-life balance than the long hours required for many U.S. workers, the fact that many women work very few hours, while most men work full-time, entrenches gender inequalities in ways particularly damaging for single mothers. Yet faced with long hours and few supports, U.S. mothers are more likely to leave the labor market for long periods than, for example, Swedish mothers – reinforcing gendered divisions of labor. Ideally, I would like to see 30-hour workweeks for both men and women, along with employment supports, and basic income. Where both men and women work shorter hours and rely on basic income, care no longer need be divided by gender, while work no longer need crowd out life.

I might quibble a bit with the book. I wished for more discussion of the labor movement, and its attempts to limit working hours. Unions played a key role in establishing the 40-hour workweek, although that victory has been sadly eroded (including recent attempts to undermine the idea of overtime pay in the name of “flexibility”). What role may a broader labor movement play in fighting for fewer working hours? I also wished for more attention to renegade social scientists, such as economists who argue for shortened workweeks for both the good of the economy *and* the environment. I was further surprised that Weeks, in discussing the need for basic income, did not refer to “decommodification” – or the degree to which individuals and families can live independently of market participation. Given the very interesting debates between Esping-Andersen and feminist interlocutors over the commodification and decommodification of women’s labor, this was a missed opportunity. Finally, the flow of the book’s argument – from political theorizing to pragmatic demands – was broken by the penultimate chapter on utopian visions.

Yet, I ultimately found Weeks’ book engaging, moving, and important. If there is a movement worth fighting for, it includes an emphasis on fewer working hours and basic guaranteed income. Many of the policies I support – higher taxes, higher spending on education and training, publicly funded childcare and paid care leaves – help address the needs generated by an economic system that valorizes work – and consumption – above all others. These policies may also make labor more expensive in ways that challenge capitalism. Yet Weeks has convinced me that basic guaranteed income and fewer working hours may begin to unmake the central place work has in our lives, and give us entirely new opportunities to dream, create, play, and love.

[Joya Misra](#)

Department of Sociology and Center for Public Policy and Administration

University of Massachusetts

misra@soc.umass.edu

Peter Knapp and Alan J. Spector. 2011. *Crisis and Change Today: Basic questions of Marxist Sociology, Second Edition*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. 371 Pages, ISBN 978-0742520448 Paper (\$23.30)

Writing a comprehensive text on Marxist sociology is a daunting task, and I most sincerely congratulate anyone with the courage, determination, and knowledge required to undertake this formidable labor. *Crisis and Change Today* by Peter Knapp and Alan Spector, now in its second edition, is just such a text. The authors are professors at Villanova and Purdue-Calumet universities respectively, and it seems apparent from the content of the book that one or both of them have experience in movements for social change as well as in academic scholarship.

The central idea of Marxist sociology, the authors say, is that the elimination of social classes and of nation states is both possible and desirable (p.1), and every part of their book tries to sustain this basic thesis. *Crisis and Change Today* is divided into four long chapters corresponding to what the authors regard as the four main roads into Marxist social theory. Each chapter develops six major propositions about one of these approaches to Marxist theory. These six propositions are used to answer ten important questions about human societies and their history. Although this degree of numerical symmetry seems a bit artificial, the 24 propositions are indubitably Marxist and most of the 40 questions are of compelling interest.

The first chapter concerns historical ideas and is entitled “Base and Superstructure: Marx’s Theory of History.” It identifies seven main stages in human history respectively characterized by these seven modes of production: primitive communism, Asiatic, ancient, feudal, capitalist, socialist, communist (pp. 26-8). All but the first and last of these production modes are class divided systems, and at this moment in history the communist mode is just a conjecture about the future. Perhaps the most important proposition developed in this chapter is the claim that “class struggle has been the motor of history” (pp. 104-5). Also discussed (approvingly) in chapter one is the Marxist model of base and superstructure. According to this formulation, the political and legal institutions of society plus the prevailing forms of social consciousness (the superstructure) are largely caused by the existing mode of production (the economic base). The power of the ruling class is rooted in the economic base, but the superstructure protects the interests of this class and reproduces its political and cultural hegemony.

A particularly interesting part of the first chapter is its critique of classical liberalism (pp. 54-58). Knapp and Spector consider five realms of liberal policy: economics, politics, philosophy, ethics, and aesthetics. In each realm the actual results of liberal policies are more damaging than liberals ever acknowledge. The practical outcomes of liberal economic policy (*laissez-faire*) are inequality, waste, and stagnation rather than a benign moving equilibrium. Liberal political policy (pluralism) generates plutocratic domination and sometimes fascism rather than true democracy or responsive government. Libertarianism, the application of liberal principles in the sphere of philosophy, produces exploitative capitalist ideology and ideas congenial to the wealthy rather than anything that resembles unvarnished truth. Selfishness and predatory behavior, not individual self-development, are the upshot of liberal individualism in the field of ethics. And art-for art’s sake, the narcissistic liberal aesthetic, devolves into commercially driven homogeneity and sexploitation rather than creative innovation and rich cultural variety.

The second chapter of *Crisis and Change Today* is about economic ideas and bears the title “Surplus Value: Marx’s Economics.” This chapter defends the labor theory of value, argues

that wealth is based upon the exploitation of labor, asserts that a falling rate of profit is inherent in capitalism and causes periodic crises, and argues that both Keynesian economics and foreign investment are ultimately ineffective remedies to inevitable capitalist crises. Among the questions considered in the second chapter are why unemployment exists (pp. 135-143), who benefits from racism and sexism (pp. 143-154), does the USA have unusually high levels of social mobility (pp. 162-169), and why economic depressions occur (pp. 169-180). The answers that Knapp and Spector provide for these questions are plausible (at least to Marxists), if unsurprising.

Chapter 3, which is named "Class Struggle: Class, Party, and Political Theory", focuses on the political ideas of Marxist sociology. This chapter maintains that the state in a capitalist society essentially serves the capitalist class (which is therefore a ruling class); that fascism is a perpetual danger in capitalist societies and, faced with a severe economic crisis, the capitalist class sometimes embraces fascism; that the USSR, after initially vanquishing capitalism, moved towards a version of state capitalism; and that opportunism (i.e. abandoning Marxist principles to take advantage of immediate circumstances (p. 268) has severely weakened working class movements. The questions considered in this chapter include why the capitalist class has political power in a capitalist society (pp. 203-212), how the politics of a capitalist society change over time (pp. 219-226), what is fascism (pp. 226-243), what is the dictatorship of the proletariat (pp. 243-251), and why socialism collapsed in the USSR and China (pp. 256-267).

The final chapter of *Crisis and Change Today*, entitled "Applying Dialectics: Some Issues in the Philosophy of Science," deals with philosophical ideas in general and dialectical ways of looking at the world in particular. In this fourth chapter the authors defend a scientific (as opposed to a humanist or critical theory) interpretation of Marxism. They claim that history and social structure can be studied scientifically; that change is ubiquitous and human nature is historically variable; that all components of the real world are interrelated; that contradictory forces exist within all phenomenon; that understanding these contradictory forces is key to scientific explanation; and that the existence of contradictory forces is the basic reason for the ubiquity of change within human societies and the natural world. Among the questions addressed in chapter four are whether a science of society is possible (yes) (pp. 284-292), can and should social science be value neutral (no on both counts) (pp. 317-324), do laws of history exist (yes if one focuses on change and looks widely enough) (pp. 344-350), and what is the value of dialectics (comprehending contradiction and avoiding false dichotomies among other things) (p.350-363).

One can learn a great deal about Marxist sociology from *Crisis and Change Today*. The text is particularly strong when comparing Marxist and non-Marxist sociologies and when describing the differences between various forms of Marxism and the political consequences of these differences. The discussion of why mature capitalism generates extreme wealth inequality is very good (pp. 46-52), and the analysis of why socialism collapsed in the Soviet Union and China is both insightful and heartfelt (pp. 256-275). I do not think this book would work well as an introductory text to Marxist sociology. It assumes too much prior knowledge about Marxism as well as a certain commitment to the Marxist approach. However, it functions quite well as a reference and refresher for sociologists and other social scientists who have already cast their lot with Marxism.

The least satisfactory part of *Crisis and Change Today* is its overall organization. Structuring a text around the answers to 40 questions does not yield a systematic presentation of Marxist sociology. The questions themselves do not fall into a natural sequence, and the answers

provided are often rambling, repetitive, and only occasionally incisive. The upshot is a jerky and somewhat discontinuous exposition of Marxist social science as if the text, by its very composition, intends to model the irregular nature of a dialectical process. The book would benefit from a broader variety of historical examples and from a wider range of empirical evidence. The authors repeatedly fall back upon jaded metaphors, such as the game Monopoly, when more historical examples and more empirical evidence are needed.

Each of the 40 questions in this book is accompanied by an exercise presumably designed to deepen understanding of both the query and the answer provided. Such exercises are, in principle, an excellent idea, but I found many to be both frustrating and unhelpful. The relationship between the question posed and the accompanying exercise is often obscure. Some of the exercises involve fairly abstract tasks for which the authors provide scant or inadequate guidance. Doing an exercise often requires subtle insights or complex judgments not readily available to even an experienced sociologist, let alone to a novice student. For example Exercise 4.4 (pp. 312-6), which deals with testing theories, requires the reader to choose an observed multivariate relationship, invent at least three theories addressing this relationship, derive at least three different empirical consequences from each theory, choose appropriate indicators for each empirical consequence, and finally construct Marxist and non-Marxist explanations for the observed relationship.

Each of the 40 questions is also accompanied by a brief annotated bibliography suggesting further reading on the subject. The annotations are generally interesting and informative, but the choice of literature to annotate frequently seems eccentric if not arbitrary. Some of the books and articles discussed are marginally relevant to the subject and/or seriously outdated, and some important Marxist scholarship of recent vintage is entirely ignored. A second edition should take pains to update its bibliography and make its annotations of maximum contemporary relevance.

Crisis and Change Today intends to portray Marxist sociology as an ongoing scientific project. This intention is partially undermined by Knapp and Spector's reverential attitude towards Karl Marx. They treat Marx not simply as the founder of the Marxist intellectual enterprise, but as a source of almost infallible wisdom. Divergent theoretical or empirical claims are sometimes adjudicated by referencing a classical Marxist text. Seldom do the authors dispute anything written by Marx, and even more rarely do they treat a standard Marxist interpretation as superseded by recent scholarship. A.N. Whitehead says that "a science that hesitates to forget its founders is lost," and I tend to agree.

One cannot expect a text on Marxist sociology to address every aspect of this fascinating but capacious subject. Nevertheless a state-of-the-art treatment of the field should certainly give more attention to environmental concerns than does this book. Environmental analysis and critique have been at the forefront of Marxist sociology for at least the past decade. Disregarding environmental topics makes the book seem unnecessarily passé. Similarly *Crisis and Change Today* makes no mention of financialization, a process that, since the 1970's, has restructured the capitalist class, reorganized world capitalism, and become deeply implicated in recent capitalist crises. A compelling text on Marxist sociology cannot remain mute on financialization or on the abundant Marxist literature about this vital development.

One of the tributes on the back cover of the paperback edition claims that *Crisis and Change Today* merits an A+. This is an egregiously hyperbolic evaluation. I credit Peter Knapp and Alan Spector with having produced a flawed but still useful review of Marxist sociology. I do not think this book will convert many aspiring social scientists to Marxism. It can, however,

refresh the knowledge of those already committed to historical materialism, and it does effectively reveal the differences between Marxist and non-Marxist approaches to social science.

Tom Mayer

Department of Sociology, University of Colorado at Boulder (emeritus)

thomas.mayer@colorado.edu

Morten Jerven. (2013). *Poor Numbers: How We Are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do about It*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. 187 pages, ISBN 978-0801478601 Paper (\$22.95)

Nearly everyone who is engaged in quantitative macro-comparative research in the field of international development routinely uses data on gross domestic product (GDP) per capita. It has long been recognized in the literature that GDP per capita is not an adequate proxy for “development,” whatever that heavily laden term may mean. We also know that it is difficult to deflate GDP per capita statistics from different time periods into a common base year, and that it is even more difficult to translate GDP per capita statistics from different currencies into a common base currency. All of these problems are compounded when we try to calculate what we're usually most interested in: GDP growth.

Despite these shortcomings, GDP per capita is reported and its growth is calculated every year, year after year, for an ever-widening array of countries. By far the continent with the most countries (and thus data points) is Africa. Since the 54 countries of Africa include some two-thirds of the world's poorest countries, regression analyses involving African countries often amount to little more than comparisons of Africa versus the rest of the world. Similarly, analyses that focus only on poor countries often amount to little more than analyses of Africa. In short, due to the preponderance of African countries in international datasets, African GDP statistics are central to nearly all quantitative macro-comparative research on development.

Consequently, no quantitative macro-comparative development scholar can afford to ignore Morten Jerven's new book, *Poor Numbers: How We Are Misled by African Development Statistics and What to Do about It*. Forget the “what to do about it”: there's nothing academics can do about it, and it is very unlikely that the World Bank and other intergovernmental organizations will bother to do anything about it. As for “how we are misled,” this book is essential reading.

Jerven shines a light on the previously obscure processes through which GDP and other statistics come to be reported in international datasets like the World Development Indicators. He conducted fieldwork in national statistical offices in Ghana, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Zambia. He also collected e-mail surveys from representatives of statistical offices in a further 15 African countries. His work thus includes new primary source insights on 22 African countries, plus secondary source analyses from others as well.

The sausage-making he reveals is not pretty. For example, in Zambia there is almost no record of how the national accounts for 1973-1994 were compiled. The Zambian statistics for those years are there in the international datasets; take them or leave them. In Ghana the “annual” economic survey has only been published once (2005) in the last 25 years. In all countries, heroic assumptions abound.

Unsurprisingly, baseline surveys are out of date or nonexistent, the IMF and World Bank are generally non-cooperative, and national leaders often attempt to manipulate data for political advantage. Expert staff have been pulled out of routine economic measurement to work instead on compiling statistics related to the Millennium Development Goals and other IGO and NGO priorities. National statistical offices languish in ancient premises with no internet access while national central banks occupy class A space in new glass-and-steel office towers. In some cases national statistical offices are simply left unstaffed for substantial periods of time.

As with much of the larger African story, tragic ironies abound. The success (or lack thereof) of the structural adjustment programs foisted upon African countries in the second half of the 1980s cannot be evaluated because the severe government cutbacks demanded by these very programs resulted in the suspension of the systematic compilation of national accounts. Similarly, the supposed failure (or lack thereof) of state economic planning in Tanzania cannot be evaluated because international donors insisted on promoting economic growth outside the established parastatal enterprises and state marketing boards, which were the agencies responsible for tracking economic activity. And of course much of the recent “reduction” in poverty in African countries has been accomplished through the simple restatement of national accounts, not through real economic growth driven by trade, investment, or neoliberal globalization.

Regular users of international datasets will not be surprised to hear that nationally reported figures, World Bank figures, and Penn World Table figures often disagree—sometimes spectacularly (Chapter 1). Nor will they be surprised to learn that African development statistics are of generally poor quality (Chapter 2). The really important parts of the book are Chapter 3, which includes case studies of Nigerian and Tanzanian data collection, and Chapter 4, which reports the results of Jerven’s interviews. Two illustrative findings, both from Chapter 3, serve to underscore the embarrassment that can result from taking African development statistics at face value and the damage that could be caused if anyone actually formulated real-world policies on the basis of the results of our statistical analyses.

First, an entire economic literature has grown up around the phenomenon of “output shocks,” events in which countries suffer sudden, massive economic declines. Output shocks are reputed to be a feature of less-developed economies, and enormous econometric firepower has been trained on their analysis. Some output shocks are doubtless real, such as the one that accompanied the mass privatization of Russia’s state assets beginning in 1992. Most, however, seem to be epiphenomenal: they are statistical artifacts resulting from the rebasing of economic data series. Jerven studies one such shock in detail, the 33% (!) decline in Tanzanian GDP per capita recorded for 1988 in the Penn World Table. The PWT records a matching 20% rise in 1987, which some economists have attributed to a successful structural adjustment program. Both extreme figures are the result of the bungled international handling of a rebasing exercise that was correctly reported by the Tanzanian statistical office in its own official reports.

Second, a very hot new area in development econometrics is the use of sophisticated instrumental variable models to estimate “true” levels of economic growth uninfected by the kinds of problems detailed by Jerven in this book. Since most African countries are highly dependent on agriculture, one popular approach is to use rainfall as an instrumental variable for estimating GDP per capita. Leaving aside the substantive criticisms that in many African countries agriculture is not rain-fed and that the main agricultural challenge in some places is too much rainfall rather than too little, it is in fact true that rainfall is strongly associated with reported economic output in Africa.

It should be. As Jerven explains, many African countries base their GDP estimates on estimates of agricultural production. They do not, however, directly measure agricultural output, but instead estimate it based on rainfall. Worse, some countries do not have accurate rainfall statistics, so they estimate agricultural output based on rainfall forecasts from international meteorological offices. That is to say, rainfall estimates (or forecasts) are used to estimate agricultural output, and agricultural output is used to estimate total output via a multiplier. Then, a highly-respected university econometrician comes along and finds that the resulting GDP data are correlated with rainfall. The econometrician uses this fact to construct an “error-free” GDP figure based on rainfall levels. It's all mind-bogglingly pointless—and just might win you the Nobel Prize.

At 187 numbered pages, this is a short book. Taking out the notes, references, appendices, index, and fluffy introduction leaves just 114 pages: a day's reading. One wonders whether such a short book really required a six-page preface and six pages of acknowledgements. The book grew (or shrunk?) out of a Ph.D. dissertation, and it shows. It is not the well-mulled work of a mature scholar. It is the rushed output of a very talented graduate student who must have been under quite a bit of pressure to wrap up. This is reflected in (among other minor shortcomings) very poor copy-editing: for example, the World Development Indicators dataset is rendered as the "World Development Institute" (Tables 1.1 and 1.2). Other, smaller copy-editing errors abound. For these, Cornell University Press should share much of the blame.

Nonetheless, this is an important book, and it is a book that must be read to be appreciated. The glory of the book is in the gory details. Jerven deserves all the credit he will surely receive for researching, writing, and publishing a Ph.D. dissertation as a book that will be widely disseminated and discussed. No one can really understand the meanings of the figures reported in the international data infrastructure without having read this book. By implication, no one has really understood the meanings of the figures reported in the international data infrastructure before.

[Salvatore Babones](#)

Department of Sociology and Social Policy, The University of Sydney
 sbabones@sydney.edu.au

Leslie C Gates. 2010. *Electing Chavez: The Business of Anti-Neoliberal Politics in Venezuela*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press. 195 Pages, ISBN 978-0822960645 Paper (\$24.95)

The election to the Venezuelan presidency of the late Hugo Chavez in 1998 with a resounding 57 percent of the popular vote marked the first in a string of electoral victories by anti-neoliberal candidates in Latin America. What accounts for this turn of the Left has been a topic of ongoing scholarly and popular debate. Focusing on the role of the business sector in Venezuela's watershed 1998 elections, Leslie Gates argues that examining state-business relations in the region may hold the key to understanding the new anti-neoliberal politics. In Venezuela, according to Gates, Chavez managed to overcome business opposition to his candidacy and to actually win the backing of a “small coterie” among the powerful business community. In her view, this goes a long way in explaining his triumph at the polls. In turn, “[i]nterpreting this

recent trend in Latin American politics,” she says, “depends on explaining why this tsunami [the left turn] first came ashore in Venezuela” (p. 4).

Gates sets out to resolve “two puzzles.” One is how did Chavez manage to overcome the fierce opposition of the business community to his candidacy? The second is how did he manage to win the support of a small but important group of business leaders? With regard to the first, she finds that voters held anti-business views and were thus not negatively influenced by business hostility to Chavez. In turn, she explains this widespread anti-business sentiment by the highly visible involvement that the business community had in a series of public corruption scandals in the 1980s and 1990s as well as its close association with highly discredited public institutions and political parties. This latter association involves a new group of politically engaged business executives, which she terms “bismocrats” to distinguish executives appointed to ministerial and cabinet posts in successive Venezuelan governments in the latter decades of the 20th century from more traditional technocrats and bureaucrats.

With regard to the second, she finds that there was an “elite outlier calculus” to assist Chavez. These outliers among the business sector “had economic interests that predisposed them to pursue access to the state even if it meant overlooking the policies Chavez advocated” (p. 86). Specifically, state dependent businesses, meaning those businesses that are dependent on the state for contracts, licensing, services, financing, and so forth, have “access based” rather than “policy based” interests and therefore seek to assure that winning candidates will not threaten their access to the state. They exhibit a structural predisposition to pursue and secure this access over making sure that governments adopt certain economic policies. She finds that in 1998 a full 75 percent of elite outliers who backed Chavez had primary business interests in state-dependent sectors of the economy.

Gates concludes from these findings that the success of anti-neoliberal presidential candidates may not be structurally determined by neoliberal globalization as much as by the organization and agency of business elites. “The structural underpinnings of anti-neoliberal politics exist not so much in the structure of social inequality as in the structure of business elites” (p. 144). Research into anti-neoliberal politics would do well to focus more systematically on state-business relations, especially on the degree of business dependence on the state and on the extent to which the nature of these relations generate public anti-business antipathy – all this in the context of historically contingent circumstances in each case.

Gates’ case study makes an important contribution to our understanding of the politicization of class in recent electoral outcomes in Latin America, and in particular, to the analytical purchase of focusing on the mediating element of state-business relations in these outcomes. However, she seems to assess those relations not as merely an important and overlooked factor in the 1998 Venezuelan vote, and by extension, in other electoral processes in Latin America; she claims that they were *the* determining factor. “The role of strategy (or agency) in bringing Chavez to power lies not so much in the candidate’s rhetorical strategy but rather in the choice of some business elites to assist Chavez,” she claims. Certainly these electoral processes are overdetermined in that there are multiple factors and no one single causal agent. Yet in her account the behavior of other actors are determined by that of the business elite. In place of the dialectic of the interaction of multiple agencies there is an inflation of the singular agency of business elites.

These elites, for instance, are said to determine the popular vote by engaging in corruption and associating with discredited political institutions, thus generating anti-business sentiment among the popular classes. By way of comparison, she claims that in Mexico –

another petrostate with structural parallels to Venezuela – these elites were less involved in politics until the election of Ernesto Zedillo to the presidency in 1994, and hence their conduct did not generate enough anti-business sentiment for an anti-neoliberal candidate to win an election. Here the popular classes are left without their own collective agency; there is no role for ideological and political struggles over hegemony in times of structural and legitimacy crises. To suggest that anti-business sentiment is the singular consequence of the business elite’s fowl play or opportunism is to deny agency to the popular classes and their organic intellectuals in the development of their own political engagement and class consciousness.

Gates’ study in this regard could be enriched by a more expansive discussion of hegemony, counterhegemony, and structural crisis in Latin America – if not the world-systemic context – as the region moved into an era of anti-neoliberalism at the turn of the century, as well with a more extensive engagement with the political sociology literature on the state, class, power, hegemony and crisis. She locates her study within “a broader intellectual agenda of re-invigorating theories of the state that are structurally rooted but historically contingent” (p. 142) as initially articulated by Nicos Poulantzas. Yet the study does not specify underlying structural roots that ground the matter of the historical contingency in patterns of state-business relations; it lacks analysis of class and power or of the *capitalist state*. Nor does it address analytically or theoretically the significance of crises within the dominant groups and their systems of ideological control for state-business relations or for openings from below.

Finally, it would be interesting if Gates could have included some comparative discussion, such as comparing Venezuela to the two other closest cases in Latin America, that of elections and the rise of anti-neoliberal presidents in Bolivia and Ecuador. In the Bolivian case, we would expect to find that the business community did not have anywhere near as causal a role as in Venezuela, whether directly or mediated in accordance with Gates’ model, in the election of Evo Morales and that the role of this community was dwarfed by the causal agency of the mass indigenous movement. Despite these critical observations, this work provides valuable new insight into anti-neoliberal politics and to the study of capital and the state in Latin America.

[William I. Robinson](#)

Department of Sociology, University of California Santa Barbara
 wirobins@soc.ucsb.edu