in public school. Jervis therefore directs analysts to look for "large-scale improvements [that] can only come through the impact of the possibilities of choice on the bulk of the public school system."

Yet research on student performance in public and private schools, begun by sociologist James Coleman (1982) and carried forward by political scientists John Chubb and Terry Moe (1990), broke important theoretical ground, making the studies contemporary classics. Recently conducted randomized field trials have estimated private-school effects more precisely. These and other lines of inquiry have informed public debate and shaped courtroom thinking—judging by the opinions expressed in *Zelman v. Simmons-Harris* (2002), the Cleveland voucher case.

We agree that studies should explore the impacts of competition and choice on public schools. Indeed, political scientists and economists have already initiated the process (Greene 2001; Hess 2002; Hoxby 2002). Yet that hardly negates the need for evaluations of small-scale interventions. In medicine, most interventions are first carefully examined by means of small randomized field trials. When possible, political scientists should do the same.

If they do so, they may stumble across a new finding that has the capacity to alter public debate. In our research, we found that African Americans have the most to benefit from greater school choice. We think the fact not irrelevant.

William G. Howell
Paul E. Peterson
Harvard University

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Political Science: Hard Science, Soft Science, Primitive Science

The interesting symposium, "Shaking Things Up? Thoughts about the Future of Political Science," that appeared in the June 2002 issue shows a division among political scientists regarding the extent to which political science should be considered a "hard" or "soft" science. Those who believe that political science can and/or must become a hard science insist that we attempt to quantify political words, separate independent from dependent variables, isolate variables, develop testable hypotheses, and make predictions that can be verified. In dismissing the possibility of political science ever being a hard science, Welden (l953) long ago showed that political words are by their nature imprecise, subjective, and appraisive (ascriptive as well as descriptive). For example, we can describe President Clinton as being "tall" and "liberal." While his tallness can be easily quantified, his liberalness, much less so. Therefore, as we attempt to quantify how liberal he was as president, we inevitable end up trivializing the subject (see Werlin 2001).

Ask a political scientist what he or she understands by "politics." The reaction is likely to be a combination of annoyance and confusion, indicating just how primitive political science remains. The same reaction will be encountered in dealing with such fundamental concepts in political science as "democracy," "corruption," and "decentralization." My effort (as presented in Werlin 1998 and summarized in the September 2000 issue of PS) has been to clarify these and other concepts, introducing and using political elasticity theory.

My methodology relies upon comparative case studies, using largely World Bank sources. This methodology comes up against the criticism that it is "anecdotal" and, as such, not "methodologically rigorous" (taking for granted that such a manifestation of "hard science" is really appropriate for political science). I encountered this criticism from APSR reviewers in response to an essay sent having to do with understanding political power. While this essay is now with a journal specializing in comparative politics, I am saddened by the fact, even if published, it will not find a large readership. Consequently, political scientists generally will continue to be as confused about the concept of political power as they are regarding the other concepts earlier mentioned unless they read my 1998 book.

Herbert Werlin

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A Response to Bennett

I was distressed by the factual distortion and ad hominem attacks by Stephen Bennett on my scholarship and the professional competence of David Brunori and Gregory Kasza in the June 2002 issue of *PS*. In Bennett's eagerness to discredit the "Perestroika movement" he made inaccurate and personally disparaging comments about particular scholars and writers. There are several examples of this. The first is his remark that "(Ronald) Libby and "many midcareer political scientists have given up on research and writing" (204)"

My research and publishing record clearly shows that I have never "given up on research and writing." Indeed, In addition to numerous articles in national, refereed journals, I have published five books by major university presses including Princeton, Columbia, Cornell, Penn State and University of California. My last book was published in mid-1999 and I am currently writing

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