doi:10.1017/S0003055412000044

Notes from the Editors

We welcome the Editorial Statement from the incoming University of North Texas (UNT) team and express our gratitude for their kind words about our tenure and policies. We are coordinating regularly with them to insure a smooth handoff, and we want to explain to our readers (and potential contributors) how—following the precedent of Lee Sigelman's handoff to us—the transition will work.

Any new paper submitted on or after 1 July of this year will go to the UNT team (and will be so routed automatically by Editorial Manager). Papers that have a received a "conditional accept" from us, and that should therefore require few changes, will continue to be handled by the UCLA editors, so long as final copy is received within two months of the handoff, i.e., by 1 September 2012. We will also continue to handle papers on which we have invited a "revise and resubmit," so long as revisions are back to us before 1 October 2012; but any further revisions that may be required thereafter will be supervised by the UNT team. New papers submitted before 1 July will be handled by us, up until near the end of the transition period (late September). As we found in the first months of our tenure, new editors have plenty to do just in assigning referees for the inevitable flood of new submissions, without also dealing with the "leftovers" from the previous regime.

Finally, as the UNT team notes, the masthead will change with the first issue of Volume 107 (February 2013). The UCLA team remains responsible for the remainder of Volume 106, so "our" last issue will be the one for November 2012, which will (we trust) include almost all articles that we already had in the "pipeline."

IN THIS ISSUE

This issue focuses on the links (or lack thereof) between policy performance (chiefly, but not solely, in the economic realm) and government survival. Six of our full articles address some variant of that topic. Of the remainder, two consider issues of causal inference and research design, and one examines (in the particular context of the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, but with more general implications) how rhetoric—and not just material conditions—can affect politics. Finally, a forum revisits a recent article in these pages on the European Court of Justice.

Causal Inference and Research Design

Findings, often reported in our leading journals, that genes determine our political behaviors (participation, voting, rebellion, etc.) have multiplied in recent years and have drawn much attention in the popular press. A headline like "Single Gene Predicts Conservatism," inevitably appeals to a folk belief in simple, deterministic explanations, and perhaps even to a neo-Calvinism that absolves us of responsibility for our choices. Many in the field have expressed skepticism. In our lead article, "Candidate Genes and Political Behavior," Evan Charney and William English pose a more fundamental difficulty: Do these studies even grasp correctly the genetics that are allegedly involved? Their answer, lucidly argued and doubtless controversial, is "no." They offer some remedial instruction in modern genetics, denigrate the by-now routine search among "candidate genes," and also question the results of many twin studies. Charney and English illustrate their arguments with reference to a single recent article (whose authors may wish to respond in a future issue), but their argument extends much farther. One expert geneticist, who kindly reviewed this submission for us, responded that it should "dampen enthusiasm for gene association studies" generally in political science.

Another increasingly popular line of inquiry is the "natural experiment," where the planets allegedly align to produce an assignment to "treatment" that seems almost random. In "When Natural Assignments Are Neither Natural nor Experiments," Jasjeet S. Sekhon and Rocío Titiunik question the validity of many such efforts and note that, for causal inference, much stronger assumptions are often required (and often not met). Sekhon and Titiunik illustrate their argument by reexamining four recent major works (including one article that appeared in this *Review*) that invoke either a "natural experiment" or a regression discontinuity design. In none of these cases, they argue, is assignment to the "treated" and the "untreated" groups really so random as it seems, and in one instance—a landmark article on the "personal vote"—they use new data to show that when the randomness condition is fully met, some of the reported results go away. As with the Charney and English article, Sekhon and Titiunik's critique will (we believe) spark a fruitful debate on the strengths and weaknesses of a vibrant area of research, and on the validity of our inferences in research that purports to employ natural experiments.

Policy Performance and Government Survival

Whether democracy requires equality, or equality leads inevitably to democracy, is one of the longest-running debates among students of politics: Aristotle, Tocqueville, Jefferson, and Marx (to name only a few) expressed clear—if not always empirically well-tested—views; more recently: Engerman and Sokoloff; Boix, Acemoglu and Robinson; Bartels; and Hacker and Pierson, have weighed in, and the topic has even entered electoral campaigns. Does equality lead to democracy (Tocqueville, Boix), does growing inequality hasten the revolutionary achievement of democracy (Marx) or undermine a democratic government already achieved (Jefferson), do we expect an "inverted U" relationship between inequality and democracy

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(Acemoglu and Robinson), or is democracy unaffected by the level of inequality among its citizens?

Any contemporary test of the link, argue John R. Freeman and Dennis P. Quinn in "The Economic Origins of Democracy Reconsidered," must take into account a factor first emphasized by Bates and Lien and re-emphasized by Boix, namely the mobility of capital. Where capital can exit easily, democracy threatens the wealthy less and hence is more easily achieved. Global financial integration, Freeman and Quinn contend, has eased the path to democracy by making more exit options available: e.g., even large landowners can securitize their holdings on international markets and so diversify their portfolios that expropriation of land would barely threaten their wealth. Thus, they reason, democratization will be increasing in inequality among financially open autocracies but ultimately decreasing in inequality among closed autocracies, where elites feel their backs to the wall. Freeman and Quinn's empirical work, covering a panel of countries since 1945, sustains this conjecture and, paradoxically, offers support both for Boix and for Acemoglu and Robinson. In financially open autocracies, democratization becomes likelier with increasing inequality; in financially closed autocracies, we find an inverted-U relationship between inequality and democracy.

In "Democracy, War, and Wealth: Lessons from Two Centuries of Inheritance Taxation," Kenneth Scheve and David Stasavage address a narrower but highly informative aspect of the same broad question: Do extensions of the franchise lead to more confiscatory inheritance taxes? The answer, they conclude, is pretty clearly "no." Drawing on evidence from a large set of countries over the whole period 1816–2000, Scheve and Stasavage find almost no link between franchise extensions and inheritance taxes, but a very significant effect of mass warfare. Both autocracies and democracies often enact steep increases in inheritance taxes during, or soon after, major wars; not just to raise revenue—although inheritance taxes are easy to enforce—but apparently to achieve equality of sacrifice, when young men go into combat (often under duress) but old men do not. On the other hand, even big extensions of the suffrage show almost no link to increased inheritance taxes. Their argument seems also to hold in reverse: While not all governments lowered inheritance taxes in the half-century after World War II, most have; and they have done so only long after 1945, as the memory of "shared sacrifice" faded. If Scheve and Stasavage are correct, governments both democratic and autocratic can survive major wars only by equalizing, or credibly promising to equalize, the burdens of conflict.

In more peaceful times, elections in democracies amount to "referenda on the economy." Poor economic performance, especially weak or negative growth in disposable income, makes incumbents' re-election less likely. That implies the existence of "electoral business cycles," in which incumbents take care to stimulate the economy in the run-up to an election. Yet decades of research on the economically advanced democracies have found, at best. tenuous evidence of pre-election economic expansion. In "Electoral Business Cycles in OECD Countries," Brandice Canes-Wrone and Jee-Kwang Park suggest an innovative answer to this riddle: Policy uncertainty before an election—especially when the race looks close and parties are polarized—discourages private investment in new capital and produces a "reverse business cycle," the effects of which can attenuate or negate governments' efforts at pre-election stimulus. Examining quarterly data on ten OECD countries between 1975 and 2006, Canes-Wrone and Park find that: (a) the evidence for reverse business cycles is strong, and (b) once reverse business cycles are factored out, political ("opportunistic") business cycles show up clearly. Thus it appears that governments try, but often fail, to stimulate their economies before elections.

While bad economic performance can undercut incumbents' chances, we also see that governments sometimes self-destruct, either making a bad situation worse or nullifying an otherwise passable performance: The governments of John Major, Gordon Brown, Jimmy Carter, and Gerhard Schröder come readily to mind. Such "death spirals" make sense, argue Torun Dewan and David P. Myatt in "Dynamic Government Performance: Honeymoons and Crises of Confidence," if we simply note that a government's collective performance depends in large measure on the effort that individual ministers exert. When those ministers believe that their tenure will be long (unless terminated only by their own bad performance), they have strong incentives to exert maximum effort. Once ministers come to believe, however, that their government's days are numbered—it will be defeated in a coming election or on a vote of confidence—they exert less effort, thus worsening the government's performance and hastening its demise. While such a situation has, as might be expected, multiple equilibria, Dewan and Myatt show that random shocks to the government's popularity suffice to identify a unique equilibrium; and then a sequence of negative shocks can easily set off the downward spiral.

If a government's survival depends largely on whether the economy flourishes, do "unearned" inflows (foreign aid and remittances) make rulers more popular? More especially, can such inflows sustain autocratic governments that otherwise would be swept aside? Given the parallel to abundant natural resources, we might suspect this to be the case; but in "The Perils of Unearned Foreign Income: Aid, Remittances, and Government Survival," Faisal Z. Ahmed shows—both by panel analysis and a natural experiment—that the greater the unearned foreign income an autocracy receives, the lower is its likelihood of experiencing violent protest, turnover, or regime collapse. Ahmed goes on to advance evidence that the causal mechanism is indeed the one we would suspect, namely aid- and remittance-financed governmental outlays for patronage.

It seems safe to say that the Chinese Communist autocracy is not maintained by foreign remittances, but rather by stellar economic performance. We might therefore expect, or even assume, that the party aligns

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incentives appropriately, advancing local leaders according to the economic success of their regions and stimulating a virtuous competition among local bosses. But a careful analysis of cadres' ranks within the post-reform Central Committee, Victor Shih and his co-authors[1] show in "Getting Ahead in the Communist Party: Explaining the Advancement of Central Committee Members in China," reveals that ascent in the party hierarchy bears little connection to local economic success. As traditional Kremlinology might have had it, advancement depends more on factional loyalty, educational achievement, and supply of revenue to the central government.[2] Thus the secret of Chinese economic growth, and of successful pro-growth policies, remains obscure. What incentives, if any, do local officials have, to spur (or, at least, not to inhibit) regional economic growth?

Rhetoric and Judgment

Leaders and followers might of course be motivated, in many of the cases just discussed, by powerful rhetoric: in favor of equality, growth, or the incumbent government, or opposed to wartime shirking. We too readily dismiss rhetoric as "cheap talk," yet we sense viscerally that it can seize emotions, stiffen morale, and inspire action: Try to imagine the U.S. Civil War without the rhetoric of Lincoln, the New Deal without that of Roosevelt, the Battle of Britain without Churchill's.[3] A less familiar but supremely important example, argues Melvin L. Rogers in "The People, Rhetoric, and Affect: On the Political Force of Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*," is the rhetoric of W.E.B. Du Bois in his most influential work. Indeed, as Rogers shows, we can learn much about how rhetoric works from studying closely how Du Bois wields it—eliciting emotions such as sympathy and shame to shift what Rogers calls the "cognitive-affective dimension of judgment." Du Bois's rhetorical goal in doing so was the crucial one of redefining "the people" in the American context, and more specifically to enlarge its meaning, previously defined almost unthinkingly along racial lines, to encompass African-Americans. Rogers therefore offers both an account of what Du Bois meant by "the people" (and why political theory should re-engage with that concept) and a critical understanding of Du Bois's rhetorical virtuosity.

Forum

Finally, this issue's forum revisits an article in this *Review* by Clifford J. Carruba, Matthew Gabel, and Charles Hankla (CGH; 2008), on the European Court of Justice (ECJ). CGH had argued, with evidence from a large dataset of the court's decisions, that the ECJ was effectively constrained less by its own reasoning and precedents than by credible threats, either of defiance by individual member states or of override by a coalition of states. Alec Stone Sweet and Thomas L. Brunell, in "The European Court of Justice, State Noncompliance, and the Politics of Override," respectfully, but vigorously, disagree. Re-analyzing the same evidence deployed by CGH, they find neither threat credible and note that actual efforts to nullify controversial ECJ rulings came to naught.

Responding, in "Understanding the Role of the European Court of Justice in European Integration," Carruba, Gabel, and Hankla clarify both their own argument and their points of disagreement with Stone Sweet and Brunell. Performing their own rigorous re-evaluation of the evidence, they stand by their conclusions and find little support for the other authors' interpretations.

Readers will note—indeed, both parties emphasize—that this disagreement is another skirmish in the Thirty Years' War between "intergovernmentalist" and "neofunctionalist" readings of how the European Union works. While cynics may venture to suggest that it is time for a "Peace of Westphalia" that embraces the rule of *cuius regio, eius religio* and leaves to local judgment the issue of the Real Presence of European Union autonomy, current events offer a new front in the conflict. As the "terrain of combat" moves from the ECJ to the European Central Bank, will the logic of neo-functionalism sustain the Euro and Greece's membership in it; or will the tug-of-war implicit in intergovernmentalism permit a Greek default and exit, causing what Haas and Schmitter called a "spill back" in the integration process? The unfolding of the present crisis will help to illuminate the unique federal, or confederal, experiment that the European Union has become.

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[1] Christopher Adolph and Mingxing Liu.

[2] For parallel findings on career incentives during the Great Leap Forward (where advancement depended chiefly on overfulfillment of regional grain quotas), see Kung and Chen, "The Tragedy of the *Nomenklatura*," this *Review* (2011) 105: 27–45.

[3] Note that "rhetoric" encompasses something quite distinct from "oratory." Few can have heard Lincoln's speeches, and indeed some of his most powerful rhetoric took the form of open letters. Churchill's rhetoric was embodied mostly in speeches, yet usually only the House of Commons heard them; the British public read, rather than heard, his vivid rhetoric. Even Roosevelt's addresses, although often preserved in recordings, lose little of their power on the printed page.

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[4] See http://www.aapor.org/standards.asp

[5] One widely accepted guide to such norms is given by the American Anthropological Association's Code of Ethics, particularly Section III. http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/upload/AAA-Ethics-Code-2009.pdf

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