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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my 6th book, "The Police State of Medicine."

Bennett also refers to David Brunori, a contributing editor to "State Tax Notes," as a "graduate school dropout." This implies that Brunori was a failed graduate student rather than choosing not to undertake the statistical training that is required in political science graduate programs.

Mr. Bennett also questioned Gregory Kasza's professional competence by saying "If Kasza were a better political scientist, he would know enough not to blame quantitative research for young people's declining interest in public affairs."

These comments are uncalled for, unprofessional and verge on libel. I think that Mr. Bennett owes the scholars and writer that he impugned and the readers of *PS* a written apology. I also hope that in the future, the editors of PS will ensure that contributors follow the accepted norms of professionalism and avoid making personal attacks on colleagues.

Ronald T. Libby
University of North Florida

Self-Justification by Numbers

Stephen Earl Bennett, a self-described empiricist and "quantoid," has stepped out from behind the numbers to speak, not as a measuring stick, but as a human being engaged in defending the worth of his studies to the human mind. His article has an element of the personal as is fitting for someone making a case for his own self-respect and educating others about what does and does not deserve admiration and esteem. Loyal to the empirical study of politics, Bennett argues that the attempt to make political philosophy the core of the discipline "should fail."

In order to justify himself and the scientific study of politics, Bennett harkens back to Almond and Verba who put out the "call" to which Bennett answered, 'here I am'. The higher calling was to test "classic themes in political science with empirical data" and the "inspired" Bennett has been dutifully and respectfully verifying ever since. There is nothing beyond Bennett's critical powers of truth telling; he has all the confidence in the world in declaiming on the proper place of the entire unempirical tradition of political philosophy which includes Plato, Cicero, Machiavelli, Burke, Tocqueville and all the rest of the philosophers of the Dark Ages who did not have the benefit of the higher calling. But perhaps the pursuit of knowledge requires a little less inspiration and a bit more philosophy.

One would think that a hardheaded verifier of truth like Bennett would be able to zero in on the criticisms of empiricism to see if it can be verified. But loyal to his empiricism he sidesteps the whole question of empiricism, which of course cannot be empirically verified or empirically known and is therefore incorrect according to its own criteria of knowledge. Bennett's duty to verify (as distinct from understanding) has only one self-imposed restriction: not to call into question the truth of the call itself. Has he been following and spreading the message of false prophets?

Bennett fails to defend empiricism against the arguments that it narrows the mind, is unsuited for the study of politics, is self-contradictory, and dogmatically supports values that it hides and does not make open to questioning and examination. In addition, he fails to confront the argument made by both Kasza and myself for the necessity of evaluating the meaning of the just society and of human ends. True to his belief in the irrelevance of philosophic inquiry, Bennett tries to confront the argument for the necessity of political philosophy by treating it as part of a survey of opinions; and true to the superficiality of surveys he tells us what every half informed member of the profession already knows. The habit of mind to verify is not easily overcome in the case of Bennett. I offer as verification 52 references for a 2 page discussion, his caveat to the reader that he has referred to articles which they can easily verify, and the self-satisfaction of a man who believes he has mastered his material and has served it up to enlighten his uninformed audience with facts from the front lines (Bennett 2002). He even invites his readers to check the report for themselves if they like, which would no doubt help verify Bennett to himself. He is proud of his competence but competence in citing and summarizing is very different from understanding.

Competence at surveys of opinions is not enough when one's own religion is under attack, and so Bennett finds himself on unfamiliar terrain where he must take a stab at philosophy. He is in need of depth and so he must become reflective. He must engage in self-justification. Could it be that the natural and human way of confronting an opinion including one's own opinion is to think about it? Bennett's first steps in the world of reflection are shaky. The trustworthy reporter and verifier of facts begins his evaluation of the claim that political philosophy should be the core of political science by completely misunderstanding that claim. The claim is that the study of politics requires thought about the ends of government. For example, the ends of a liberal democracy are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness whereas the end of a theocracy is piety. A political science that cannot understand how these beliefs form and inform their respective social orders does not understand the nature of those social orders. Furthermore, a political science that does not judge between orders and try to discover the best order is both perverse and dishonest because there is no such thing as a non-evaluative science. The mere use of social science to study society is already a claim against piety.

How then does Bennett treat the claim that political philosophy is the core of political science? He treats the claim as if it was a campaign ploy to get power and that the claim is therefore properly judged by whether it has a constituency who will support it. Following on the heels of this perverse understanding of the claim is his refutation of his own imaginings. He argues that political philosophy does not have a chance to make it to the academic White House because it lacks the necessary constituency. Feminists do not want to read books written by dead white males and "quantoids" don't like to be called names. Yes, this passes for refutation and analysis in Bennett's world of political science. He replaces reflection and argument with an opinion poll of the favorable and the unfavorable. And thus sits Bennett triumphant over his own straw man thinking he has tangled with philosophy. Verify his reasons for yourselves folks (178).

Bennett comes from a school and a generation that thinks they invented political science. They flatter themselves as tough guys who look at behavior and facts rather than cheap talk about justice, but they are really domestic cats. They are believers in democracy to a man and Bennett makes it clear that he himself is a man of the people (178). He will

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