

Introduction and Comments

James Johnson

We devote the bulk of this issue to papers in the field of International Relations. We start, however, as we do each March, with the Address delivered by the immediate past president of the APSA at the immediately prior Annual Meetings. This year our author is Dianne Pinderhughes who, tacking back and forth between personal reflection and academic observation, advances a forceful argument in which she identifies our failure to adequately address and understand racial politics in the United States and challenges us to remedy that failure. I am honored to publish her address. I urge you not simply to read it, but to engage the intellectual agenda Dianne Pinderhughes lays before us.

The first of our International Relations offerings is a symposium coordinated by Karen Alter and Sophie Meunier on the consequences of increasing institutional complexity of the environment in which various state and non-state actors operate. There is, in my estimation, real fresh thinking here. And because the contributors to this symposium are nearly all junior, this, I think, bodes well for the future of the subfield. Although I will not name them each here, I thank the authors for their contributions. And I especially thank Karen and Sophie for their hard work coordinating the symposium.

The contributors to the complexity symposium focus on quite particular institutional arrangements. Our next contribution, by John Ikenberry, adopts a “grand historical perspective” in his analysis of the background sources and vicissitudes of liberal internationalism and the role of the United States in that order. In that sense his essay, while focusing on related matters, affords nearly the converse perspective.

The next paper turn once again much more closely to the ground. Maijke Breuning and John Ishiyama examine

a particular policy in a particular region—intercountry adoption in Sub-Saharan Africa. They do so, however in a comparative perspective. Their findings are original, and trace the relative influence of international legal and economic relations in explaining differential policies that countries have adopted in this domain. Somewhat surprisingly, Breuning and Ishiyama find that, among the countries in their study, economic rather than legal interconnectedness more clearly accounts for the relative flexibility of policies. In that sense their study affords tentative support for advocates of globalization.

Our final two essays occupy a common intersection, that of language and politics. Neta Crawford retains our focus on the international sphere while Andrew Murphy narrows our focus to a peculiarly American form of rhetoric. Crawford makes a case for displacing power as a defining medium of interaction in world politics in favor of a “richer understanding” of such interaction as grounded in the medium of persuasion. She advances the provocative claim that talk—argument, debate, deliberation—is the “dominant activity of world politics” and she does so on the basis of substantive claims about human nature. In other words, Crawford offers an ambitious characterization of international affairs in terms of a quite specific philosophical anthropology. Andrew Murphy addresses a specific backward-looking form of rhetoric, the jeremiad, in hopes of wresting it from what he sees as a conservative politics of nostalgia and rehabilitating it as a instrument of progressive politics. He argues that progressives too ought to lay claim to the American past and the promise it holds. And he invokes figures such as Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass in order to ground his case. In the process, he offers a useful example of a specific form of the persuasive enterprise that Crawford advocates.

Notes from the Managing Editor

Forthcoming

The following articles and essays have been scheduled for publication in a forthcoming issue of *Perspectives on Politics*.

Leslie E. Anderson. "The Problem of Single-Party Predominance in an Unconsolidated Democracy: The Example of Argentina."

Michael Berkman and Eric Plutzer. "Scientific Expertise and the Culture War: Public Opinion and the Teaching of Evolution in the American States."

John M. Carey. "Palace Intrigue: Missiles, Treason, and the Rule of Law in Bolivia."

Linda L. Fowler and Jennifer Lawless. "Looking for Sex in All the Wrong Places: Press Coverage and the Electoral Fortunes of Gubernatorial Candidates."

Richard S. Katz and Peter Mair. "The Cartel Party Thesis: A Restatement."

Leslie McCall and Lane Kenworthy. "Americans' Social Policy Preferences in the Era of Rising Inequality."

David W. Rivera and Sharon W. Rivera. "Yeltsin, Putin, and Clinton: Presidential Leadership and Russian Democratization in Comparative Perspective."

Jessica Luce Trounstein. "All Politics Are Local: The Reemergence of the Study of City Politics."

Thomas C. Walker. "The Perils of Paradigm Mentalities: Revisiting Kuhn, Lakatos, and Popper."

Jeffrey A. Winters and Benjamin I. Page. "Oligarchy in the United States?"