

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Off Our Backs, Change. If anybody doubts there is something amiss with journals of political science, they need look no farther than *Change* magazine, a publication that covers issues in higher education. In discharging this mission, *Change* has undertaken to sponsor reviews of journals. Books, after all, get reviewed, why not journals?

One reason, we suspect, is that it is awfully hard for a single reviewer or team of reviewers to appraise with any competence the substantive contribution of a large and disparate collection of articles. In volume 68, for example, of our humble *Review*, we published 56 articles, 7 review essays, and one presidential address, not to mention a clutch of comments, rejoinders, communications and several hundred book reviews. That's a whole lot of reading, and only for one journal of political science, for one year.

Never mind. "Journals in political science," say our critics "... are badly written, jargonistic, and overly concerned with professional issues. ... [P]olitical science as a profession is an obstacle to the study—let alone the knowledge—of political things."¹

Decrying the tendency toward high-cost research technology, the critics proceed to offer nothing in the way of evidence to back up this sweeping indictment save—heaven help us—a table, classifying the contents, by subfield, of six journals of the profession. From this table, they deduce such dubious disclosures as "public law and international politics are clearly step-children in the discipline," and "we do not find it accidental that second-class status is accorded the two fields traditionally most involved in questions of policy." This pejorative language is used to describe the finding that by the lights of the critics disproportionately few articles in the indicated subfields appear in the six journals surveyed. No mention is made of the curious fact that both subfields are blessed with several unusually good and prestigious journals of their own. Why don't political scientists care more about policy? Not only are we too "scientific," say the critics, but we are too specialized, unwilling to risk prediction, too narrow, too slow on the draw.

And that about wraps up the political science journals, folks. Without actually looking inside any article, comment, rejoinder, communication, or review, it is possible to tell all these things about the output of several hundred scholars.

We were about to throw in the towel and sug-

¹ Wilson C. McWilliams and Alan M. Cohen, "The Private World of Political Science Journals," *Change*, September 1974, p. 53.

gest a bonfire at the Banta Company when a kind friend sent us a couple of other articles from *Change*, namely the reviews of the economics and sociology journals.² Amazing! Apparently, exactly the same things are wrong with our neighbors as afflict us: "This material is narrowly conceived and written in technical detail that makes it forbidding to outsiders. . . ." "For relevance to contemporary issues, you'd best do your own thinking."³

"Let not the unwary long be deceived about the direct applicability to life and living of scholarly ruminations."⁴ "If once in a while something interesting and accessible to a public wider than the specialists breaks the editorial barrier, it will be luck rather than design. Don't count on it. . . ."⁵

This marvelous uniformity of complaints across disciplines suggests any number of amusing possibilities. Of course one possibility is that all several thousand of us in economics, sociology and political science have somehow gotten off on the wrong foot and what we needed at an early age was more instruction from the likes of *Change* magazine. Another possibility is that there's something about a sampling of professional journals that tends to reflect the actual accomplishments of scholarly work and this work is, on average, just about average, and therefore couldn't possibly aspire to stimulate the jaded palate of a true connoisseur of scholarship.

Another possibility is that there's a *Change* line about these matters, and any journal review from those precincts will reflect a preference for musings of global import and a corresponding contempt for the grubby efforts of scholars. We have no idea what the correct explanation is. We are certain that had the critics at least of the political science journals stooped to do a little actual reading in connection with their task, they might not have filled their nostrils with heady nectar, but they might have learned quite a lot about such things as issue voting, social origins of liberal democracy, recent trends in trust in government, the consequences of party reform and other rules on the political nomination process, and, perhaps especially useful, the idea of civility.⁶

² Robert Lekachman, "The Economics Journals," *Change*, September 1972, pp. 59–61. Randall Collins, "Surveying the Sociology Journals," *Ibid.*, Winter 1972–73, pp. 70–74.

³ Collins, p. 74.

⁴ Lekachman, p. 59.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

⁶ See Glenn Tinder, "Transcending Tragedy: The Idea of Civility," *American Political Science Review*, 68 (June 1974), pp. 547–560.

Thanks, Folks. For the first time, the memory of person runneth not to the contrary, hard evidence exists that political scientists believe in the *APSR*. How do we know this? In a sample survey of *APSA* members, over two-thirds (70 per cent) said that the *APSR* was "excellent" or "good."¹ Yet only 21 per cent said they read the greater part of the journal, and a mere five per cent claimed to swallow each issue whole.

As we have often said, selective reading of the *APSR* makes the most sense to us, given the enormous range of concerns that animate the various members of our discipline. But it is heartening, all the same, to see that members of the profession are willing to extend good wishes to those whose interests differ from their own in the form of an endorsement of a journal that conscientiously publishes some material they personally do not read.

Articles Accepted For Future Publication

Joel D. Aberbach, University of Michigan and Bert A. Rockman, University of Pittsburgh, "Clashing Beliefs Within the Executive Branch: The Nixon Administration Bureaucracy"
 Paul R. Abramson, Michigan State University, "Generational Change and the Decline of Party Identification"
 Christopher H. Achen, Yale University, "Mass Political Attitudes and the Survey Response"
 C. Arnold Anderson, University of Chicago, "Conceptual Framework for Political Socialization in Developing Societies"
 Francisco Arcelus and Allan H. Meltzer, Carnegie-Mellon University, "The Effect of Aggregate Economic Variables on Congressional Elections"
 John A. Armstrong, University of Wisconsin, "Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas"
 John M. Bacheller, Kirkland College, "Lobbyists and the Legislative Process: The Impact of Environmental Constraints"
 Richard M. Bank, University of California, Santa Barbara and Steven R. McCarl, University of Denver, "Virtue, Obligation and Politics: Revisited"
 Charles D. Cary, University of Iowa, "A Technique of Computer Content Analysis of Transliterated Russian Language Textual Materials: A Research Note"
 Jonathan D. Casper, Stanford University, "The Supreme Court and National Policy Making"
 Roger Cobb, Brown University, Jennie-Keith Ross, Swarthmore College, and Marc Howard

Ross, Bryn Mawr College, "Agenda Building as a Comparative Political Process"
 David Collier, Indiana University, and Richard E. Messick, Office of U.S. Senate, "Prerequisites Versus Diffusion: Testing Alternative Explanations of Social Security Adoption"
 Richard K. Dagger, University of Minnesota, "What is Political Obligation?"
 Fred R. Dallmayr, Purdue University, "Beyond Dogma and Despair: Toward a Critical Theory of Politics"
 John P. Diggins, University of California, Irvine, "Four Theories in Search of a Reality: James Burnham, Soviet Communism, and the Cold War"
 George Edwards, Tulane University, "Presidential Influence in the House: Presidential Prestige as a Source of Presidential Power"
 Norman I. Fainstein, Columbia University and Susan S. Fainstein, Rutgers University, "The Future of Community Control"
 Robert C. Fried, University of California, Los Angeles, "Party and Policy in West German Cities"
 Benjamin Ginsberg, Cornell University, "Elections and Public Policy"
 R. Kenneth Godwin and W. Bruce Shepard, Oregon State University, "Political Processes and Public Expenditures: A Re-examination Based on Theories of Representative Government"
 Fred I. Greenstein, Princeton University, "The Benevolent Leader Revisited: Children's Images of Political Leaders in Three Democracies"
 Susan Blackall Hansen, University of Illinois, Urbana, "Participation, Political Structure, and Concurrence"
 Russell Hardin, University of Pennsylvania, "Hollow Victory: The Minimum Winning Coalition"
 Fred M. Hayward, University of Wisconsin, Madison, "A Reassessment of Conventional Wisdom About the Informed Public: National Political Information in Ghana"
 Douglas A. Hibbs, Jr., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, "Industrial Conflict in Advanced Industrial Societies"
 David K. Hildebrand, University of Pennsylvania, James D. Laing and Howard Rosenthal, Carnegie-Mellon University, "Prediction Analysis in Political Research"
 Robert W. Jackman, Michigan State University, "Politicians in Uniform: Military Governments and Social Change in the Third World"
 M. Kent Jennings and Gregory B. Markus, University of Michigan, "The Effect of Military Service on Political Attitudes: A Panel Study"
 M. Kent Jennings, University of Michigan and

¹Now we will reveal our favorite reading matter: *P.S. VII*, Fall, 1974, pp. 382-384, an article by Thomas E. Mann titled "Report on a Survey of the Membership of the American Political Science Association."

- Richard G. Niemi, University of Rochester, "Continuity and Change in Political Orientations: A Longitudinal Study of Two Generations"
- Sam Kernell, University of Minnesota, "Presidential Popularity and Negative Voting: An Alternative Explanation of the Mid-Term Congressional Decline of the President's Party"
- James I. Lingle, University of California, Berkeley and Byron Shafer, Russell Sage Foundation, "Primary Rules, Political Power and Social Change"
- Michael Margolis, University of Pittsburgh, "From Confusion to Confusion—Issues and the American Voter (1956–1972)"
- Richard D. McKelvey, Carnegie-Mellon University, and John H. Aldrich, Michigan State University, "A Method of Scaling, With Applications to the 1968 and 1972 Presidential Elections"
- Richard D. McKelvey and Peter C. Ordeshook, Carnegie-Mellon University, "Symmetric Spatial Games Without Majority Rule Equilibria"
- R. D. McKinlay and A. S. Cohan, University of Lancaster, "The Political, Military, and Economic Performance of Military and Non-military Regime Systems: A Cross-National Aggregate Study"
- Arthur H. Miller, Warren E. Miller, Alden S. Raine and Thad A. Brown, University of Michigan, "A Majority Party in Disarray: Policy Polarization in the 1972 Election"
- Helmut Norpoth, University of Cologne, "Explaining Party Cohesion in Congress: The Case of Shared Policy Attitudes"
- Fritz Nova, Villanova University, "Political Innovation of the West German Federal Constitutional Court: The State of Discussion on Judicial Review"
- Karen Orren, University of California, Los Angeles, "Standing to Sue: Interest Group Conflict in the Federal Courts"
- Benjamin I. Page, University of Chicago, "The Theory of Political Ambiguity"
- Thomas L. Pangle, Yale University, "The Political Psychology of Religion in Plato's *Laws*"
- James L. Perry, University of California, Irvine and Charles H. Levine, Syracuse University, "An Interorganizational Analysis of Power, Conflict, and Settlements in Public Sector Collective Bargaining"
- Douglas Rae, Yale University, "The Limits of Consensual Decision"
- David Resnick, Cornell University, "Crude Communism and Revolution"
- Neil R. Richardson, University of Texas, Austin, "Political Compliance and U. S. Trade Dominance"
- Michael J. Robinson, The Catholic University of America, "Public Affairs Television and the Growth of Political Malaise: The Case of *The Selling of the Pentagon*"
- Austin Sarat, Yale Law School and Joel B. Grossman, University of Wisconsin, Madison, "Courts and Conflict Resolution: Problems in the Mobilization of Adjudication"
- Paul R. Schulman, University of Tennessee, "Non-Incremental Policy Making: Notes Toward an Alternative Paradigm"
- Peter J. Steinberger, University of California, Riverside, "Hegel as a Social Scientist"
- J. Weinberger, Michigan State University, "Hobbes's Doctrine of Method"
- Lynn T. White, III, Princeton University, "Local Autonomy in China During the Cultural Revolution: The Theoretical Uses of an Atypical Case"
- Fred H. Willhoite, Jr., Coe College, "Primates and Political Authority: A Biobehavioral Perspective"