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The Future of the Welfare State

Francis G. Castles

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This book uses data from 21 OECD countries for the period 1980 to 1998 to test a variety of hypotheses suggesting that contemporary welfare states are in crisis and to establish the factors shaping the trajectory of welfare state development during these years. It assesses the validity of arguments that globalization leads to a 'race to the bottom' in social spending and that population ageing poses a threat to public budgets. It finds both of these arguments wanting and, instead, suggests that contemporary welfare states have been converging to a steady state over recent decades. The book also examines the extent to which welfare states across the OECD have been restructured in recent years and whether there are signs of the emergence of a distinctive European 'social model'. Again, it finds that accounts of substantial welfare state restructuring and of the Europeanization of the welfare state are much exaggerated. Finally, the book identifies a potential threat to the viability of existing societies in a trend to declining fertility throughout the advanced world, but argues that the welfare state in the form of family-friendly policy is actually our best protection against this trend.

Banking Regulation and Globalization

Andreas Busch

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Does globalization erode the nation state's capacity to act? Are nation states forced to change their policies even if this goes against the democratic will of their electorates? How does government action change under conditions of globalization? Questions like these have not only featured highly in political debates in recent years, but also in academic

discourse. This book contributes to that debate. The general question it addresses is whether globalization leads to policy convergence — a central, but contested topic in the debate, as theoretical arguments can be advanced both in favour of and against the likelihood of such a development. More specifically, the book contains detailed empirical case studies of four countries (the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Switzerland) in a policy area where state action has been particularly challenged by the emergence of world-wide, around-the-clock financial markets in the last few decades, namely that of the regulation and supervision of the banking industry. Based on careful analysis of historical developments, specific challenges, the character of policy networks and institutions, and their interaction in the political process, this book argues that nation states still possess considerable room for manoeuvre in pursuing their policies. Even if they choose supranational coordination and cooperation, their national institutional configurations still function as filters in the globalization process.

Elections, Parties, Democracy

Michael D. McDonald and Ian Budge

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The book proposes a unifying conception which shows that the differences between 'majoritarian', 'consensus' and other forms of representative democracy are superficial compared to what unites them. The common element is the empowerment of the median voter by making the party (s)he votes for the median party in the legislature. Comparative evidence covering 21 democracies from 1950-1995 is assembled to check out the descriptive credentials of this idea, in contrast to the government mandate which forms the normal description and justification of democracy as providing 'a necessary link between popular preferences and public policy'. Although, spontaneous majorities rarely emerge, median voter - median party correspondences do (72% of all governments, 82% under PR). Policy correspondence, distortion, long term bias, and responsiveness are examined in both static and dynamic terms. They reveal that underneath short-term fluctuations, the long-term equilibrium positions of governments and median voters map each other closely. Many other questions about democracy are also raised and investigated — economic and retrospective voting ('kicking the rascals out'): policy incrementalism, etc. — giving the book an appeal to different groups of specialists in political science. The comparative data on voting, on electoral party and government preferences, and on actual

policy outputs are unsurpassed with regards to comprehensiveness over nations and time.

Preservation Versus the People?

Mathew Humphrey

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Environmental political philosophy has generally been framed around the differing axiologies of ecocentrism (nature-centred) and anthropocentric (human-centred) forms of ethics. This book seeks to challenge the political relevance of this philosophical dispute with respect to the problem of nature preservation as public policy. A detailed analysis of the philosophical underpinnings of both ecocentric and 'ecological humanist' positions shows that the 'embedded humanism' within ecocentric arguments offers an opportunity to move beyond the ecocentric-anthropocentric divide. Furthermore, a principle of 'strong irreplaceability' with regard to natural goods can provide the basis for a political argument for nature preservation that is compatible with both human-centred and nature-centred concerns.

The Environment Between Theory and Practice

Avner de-Shalit

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When constructing environmental policies in democratic regimes, there is a need for a theory that can be used not only by academics but also by politicians and activists. So why has the major part of environmental ethics failed to penetrate environmental policy and serve as its rationale? Obviously, there is a gap between the questions that environmental philosophers discuss and the issues that motivate environmental activists. Avner de-Shalit attempts to bridge this gap by combining tools of political philosophy with questions of environmental ethics and environmental politics. He defends a radical position in relation to both environmental protection and social policies, in order to put forward a political theory, which is not only philosophically sound, but also relevant to the practice of environmental activism. The author argues that several directions in environmental ethics can be at odds with the contemporary political debates surrounding environmental politics. He then goes on to examine the environmental scope of

liberalism, communitarianism, participatory democracy, and socialism, and concludes that while elements of liberalism and communitarianism may support environmental protection, it is participatory democracy and a modified version of socialism that are crucial for protecting the environment.

European Defence Policy

Frédéric Mérand

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This book explains the creation of the European Union's Security and Defense Policy—to this day the most ambitious project of peacetime military integration. Whether hailed as a vital step in the integration of Europe or berated as a wasteful threat to US power, European citizens are increasingly interested in the common defense policy. Today, “European Defense” is more popular than the European Union itself, even in Great Britain. This book addresses the fundamental challenge posed by military integration to the way we think about the state in the 21st century. Looking back over the past fifty years, it shows how statesmen, diplomats, and soldiers have converged towards Brussels as a “natural” solution to their concerns but also as something worth fighting over. The actors most closely associated to the formation of nation-states are now shaping a transgovernmental security and defense arena. As a result, defense policy is being denationalized. Exploring the complex relations between the state, the military, and citizenship in today's Europe, the book argues that European Defense is a symptom, but not a cause, of the transformation of the state. This book is an original contribution to the theory of European integration. Drawing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, the book develops a political sociology of international relations which seeks to bridge institutionalism and constructivism. This careful study of practices, social representations, and power structures sheds new light on security and defense cooperation, but also on European cooperation more generally.

Fairness and Futurity

Andrew Dobson (ed.)

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Contributors to this edited book consider the normative issues at stake in the relationship between environmental sustainability and social justice. If future generations are owed justice, what should we bequeath them? Is 'sustainability' an appropriate medium for environmentalists to express their demands? Is environmental protection compatible with justice within generations? Is environmental sustainability a luxury when social peace has broken down? The contested nature of sustainable development is considered--is it a useful concept at all any longer? Is it reconcilable with capital accumulation? Liberal--particularly Rawlsian--and socialist notions of justice are tested against the demands of sustainability, and policy instruments for sustainability--such as environmental taxation--are examined for their distributive effects.

Parties and Democracy

Ian Budge and Hans Keman

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Parties are the central institution through which mass representative democracies now work. This book covers four aspects of their activities at governmental level--the actual formation and termination of governments; the distribution of ministries between parties forming the government; and policymaking. In each area, it proposes theories and models of how parties drive these processes, and checks them against comparative evidence for 20 States from 1946-85. Initial hypotheses are broadly upheld by this evidence, supporting a general theory of democratic functioning described in Chs. 3 and 7. This has considerable implications for the general theory of the State. The evidence used in the book has been updated and extended. It is now published as Jqap Woldendorp, hans E. Keman, and Ian Budge Party Government in 48 Democracies (1945-98): Composition, Duration, Personnel.

The Problems of Communitarian Politics

Elizabeth Frazer

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Offers a detailed critical analysis of the ideal of 'community' in politics. Traces elements of the idea of community in a number of social, philosophical, and political contexts over the last century, exploring how these have been and continue to be articulated in recent political

and public policy debates. 'Community' is invoked as a justification for reorganization of state institutions, as the source of care and support for individuals, and as an entity that is valuable in its own right and must therefore be sustained and defended. In community development, community action, community care and community politics, the tensions and contradictions within the concept are invariably felt. Community is both inclusive and exclusive, both organized and unstructured, both hierarchical and egalitarian. The book argues that analysis of the concept 'community' reveals the role of ideas and ideals in shaping political action, the barriers to the realization of community in practical contexts, and ultimately the untenability of the ideal itself.

The Government of Risk

Christopher Hood, Henry Rothstein, and Robert Baldwin

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Why does the regulation of risks to human health and safety vary so dramatically from one policy domain to another? Why are some risks regulated aggressively and others responded to only modestly? Is there any logic to the techniques we use in risk regulation? This book addresses these important questions by systematically examining variety amongst risk regulation regimes across policy domains, analysing the significant driving forces shaping those regimes, and identifying the causes of regulatory failure and success. In order to do so, the book develops a systems-based concept of a 'risk regulation regime', which enables comparative description and analysis of the rules, institutional arrangements, and cultures that are bound up with the handling of risk within and between regimes. Using that framework, the book analyses how regimes and their constituent components are differentially shaped by three major driving forces—namely, the pressures exerted by market failure, by public opinion, and by organized interests inside and outside the state apparatus—and blame-avoidance responses of regimes in the face of pressures for greater openness. The book applies the method to analyse a range of risk regulation regimes that cross the divide between 'natural' and 'socially created', state-created and market-created, 'voluntary' and 'involuntary', high-tech and low-tech, individually, and corporately produced risks. Those regimes include the release of paedophiles into the community, air pollution, local road safety, radon, pesticides, and dangerous dogs. The analysis reveals both variations and paradoxes that can neither be identified by single case studies, nor be easily explained by macro-oriented approaches to understanding risk

regulation. The Government of Risk shows how such an approach is of high policy relevance as well as of considerable theoretical importance.