In recent years, two movements have emerged which should interest political theorists. First, “cosmopolitanism” has become the focus of much normative interest within political theory. Simultaneously, political theory has seen the emergence of a sub-field calling itself “comparative political theory,” seeking to introduce non-Western perspectives into familiar debates about human problems. This chapter suggests that each of the above movements, while generally welcome, is characterized by important gaps that deserve sustained attention: in one case, the lack of any reflection on what the recent development of cosmopolitan discourse mean for political theory and for the activity of political theorizing in particular, and in the other case, the relative scarcity of self-conscious methodological reflection within the emerging field calling itself comparative political theory. This chapter identifies the central aporiae in each of these literatures, and argues that they are not unrelated. Political theory itself can evolve toward cosmopolitanism only when explorations of “comparative” political thought occur at the center, rather than at the margins of, the discipline. The chapter articulates the necessity of this cosmopolitan intervention into the modes of political theorizing. It summarizes the various methodological claims and reflections that constitute this intervention, and follow throughout the book.
Introduction
Amy G. Mazur

in Theorizing Feminist Policy
Published in print: 2002 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: chapter

This chapter covers the aims, arguments, and approach of the book to analysing gender and policy issues in comparative perspective. It defines the new area of Feminist Comparative Policy in terms of its six major features, the four major areas of research, and the scientific community and research infrastructure. The six major features of FCP include (1) an applied feminist empirical approach; (2) operationalizing normative feminist theory on democracy; (3) bringing the patriarchal state back in as a question for research; (4) using ‘gender’ as a category of analysis; (5) comparative and qualitative theory-building in western post-industrial democracies; (6) one-way intersections with non-feminist Political Science. The four major areas covered by FCP policy research consist of the following: (1) feminist policy formation; (2) feminist movements and policy; (3) state feminism; and (4) gender and welfare states.

Theorizing Feminist Policy
Amy G. Mazur

Published in print: 2002 Published Online: November 2003
Item type: book

Theorizing Feminist Policy intersects empirical feminist policy analysis with non-feminist policy studies to define and contribute to the new field of Feminist Comparative Policy. The book first identifies this new area of study, showing how it dialogues with Gender and Politics, Comparative Public Policy, Comparative Politics, and Public Policy Studies. Next, the book seeks to strengthen one of the weakest links of this new area, the study of explicitly feminist government action. In the remaining nine chapters, feminist policy is mapped out as a relatively new public policy sector, with eight sub-sectors—blueprint, political representation, equal employment, reconciliation, family law, reproductive rights, sexuality and violence, and public service delivery. A qualitative and comparative framework is developed to analyse the profiles and styles of feminist policy in post-industrial democracies in 27 different cases of feminist policy formation across 13 different countries. The initial empirical study makes the case for feminist policy as a new sector of state action,
concluding tentatively that successful feminist policy formation is a subtle combination of feminist strategic partnerships, non-feminist allies, institutions, culture, and international influences. These tentative findings also shed new light on the perennial questions of Comparative Politics and Policy: do politics, institutions, national policy style, sector, institutions, or culture matter the most in determining policy processes and outcomes? The book finishes by suggesting the next steps in developing comparative theories of feminist policy formation. Theorizing Feminist Policy, therefore, goes beyond just describing the dimensions of feminist policy from existing literature, it seeks to systematically contribute to comparative theories of how the contemporary post-industrial state has taken on social change at the beginning of the twenty-first century.

Purposes: The Place of Justificatory Comparative Political Theory

Andrew F. March

in Islam and Liberal Citizenship: The Search for an Overlapping Consensus

Published in print: 2009 Published Online: May 2009
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780195330960.003.0002
Item type: chapter

This chapter explains further the idea of an overlapping consensus and the interest in arguing for one across multiple ethical traditions, showing that this interest is primarily derived from the desire for social stability and solidarity, rather than first-order philosophical moral justification. The chapter surveys the justificatory theories of John Rawls’s political liberalism and Jürgen Habermas’s discourse ethics, as well as the relativist critiques of Rorty and Fish, arguing that there is a basic agreement that the justification of liberal norms from within a particular religious tradition is of primarily political interest, rather than philosophical. It closes with a defense of justificatory comparative political theory primarily aimed at refuting the charge of cultural hegemony and clarifying the nature of the “liberal bias” involved. The central argument is that this inquiry is ultimately deeply respectful of Islam as an autonomous source of ethical thought and motivation, which is compatible with criticism of specific doctrines or practices.
Introduction
Nader Hashemi

in Islam, Secularism, and Liberal Democracy: Toward a Democratic Theory for Muslim Societies

This chapter maps out the key arguments, theoretical approaches, analytical assumptions, and methodology that shape this study. The emerging sub-discipline of comparative political theory is discussed and an argument is advanced as to why this book should be viewed as a contribution to this new discipline of political science. Furthermore, the intellectual context that has informed the academic and intellectual debate both on the relationship between religion and democracy in general and Islam and liberal democracy in particular is discussed with special attention to the post-Cold War and post-September 11, 2001 context. A definition of terms such as religion and liberal democracy is provided along a discussion of the theoretical tensions between the two. A detailed chapter overview and summary appears along with a concluding discussion about the salience of this inquiry for our world today.

The instability of value
Nick Chater and Ivo Vlaev

Rational theories of decision making under risk typically assume that outcomes can be associated, either directly or implicitly, with utilities; and that decision makers choose options which exhibit the greatest utility. That is, the different choice options are assigned a value, independent of comparison with each other, and higher value options are chosen preferentially. This chapter argues for a local comparative theory of choice, and against value-based approaches (whether value or utility is interpreted psychologically or instrumentally), in the light of current psychological and neuroscientific data. Local comparison, not valuation, is a cognitively fundamental operation. Options can be compared with respect to each other, in the light of a specific local choice context; but
not valued individually, on an internal utility scale. Section 4.1 explores what can be learned from related debates in psychophysics: specifically, it considers the debate concerning the existence of internal scales for perceptual magnitudes. Section 4.2 outlines a specific theory of choice. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 briefly consider the behavioural and neuroscientific evidence for comparative vs. value-based accounts. Section 4.5 looks at the relevance of these issues for wider issues in neuroscience, psychology, economics, and ethics.

**Comparative Law’s Coming of Age? Twenty Years after Critical Comparisons†**

Peer C. Zumbansen

in Comparative Law as Transnational Law: A Decade of the German Law Journal

Published in print: 2011 Published Online: 2012
January 2012
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199795208.003.0024

This chapter reflects on the legacy of Günter Frankenberg's seminal critique of comparative law theory, “Critical Comparisons,” published in 1985, on the occasion of its twentieth anniversary. After a brief reconstruction of the article's main contentions, it is situated within a larger dialogue among comparativists and legal theorists, who are striving for a transnational legal science.

**Conclusion**

Jane Anna Gordon

in Creolizing Political Theory: Reading Rousseau through Fanon

Published in print: 2014 Published Online: 2014
September 2014
DOI: 10.5422/fordham/9780823254811.003.0007

This conclusion explains how creolizing political theory is different from the comparative political theory of Fred Dallmayr, Roxanne Euben, Michaeelle Browers, Leigh Jenco, Farah Godrej, and Andrew March, on the one hand, and work on processes of disavowal by Sibylle Fischer and on moments of universal history by Susan Buck-Morss, on the other. While creating professional space to study political thought beyond the U.S. and Western Europe, focus in comparative political theory has been monopolized by East Asia, East India, and Muslim worlds to the exclusion of African, Caribbean, Latin and Native American ones. Work on disavowal and universal history has illuminated the larger historical
patterns of such exclusions but often with some skepticism about the possibility of forging more viable, inclusive political collectivities. Creolization then draws on both academic developments while being far less reluctant about how we can forge new creolizing alternatives. Finally, creolized approaches are compared with problem-driven research within political science.

Confucius: How Non-Western Political Theory Contributes to Understanding the Environmental Crisis
Joel Jay Kassiola

in Engaging Nature: Environmentalism and the Political Theory Canon
Published in print: 2015 Published Online: January 2017
Item type: chapter

Focusing on the writings of Confucius and the Confucian tradition, Joel Jay Kassiola argues that looking beyond the Western political thought makes obvious sense in an era of globalization and planetary environmental crisis; moreover, such a move enables us to escape the narrow perspectives that have contributed to our ecological predicament. Confucius and Confucianism provide a particularly valuable understanding of our times: Confucius wrote in response to a society that, like our own, was confused and bewildered by a transformative moment in history and widespread sense of perceived crisis; Confucius valued past teachings and thus offered an intergenerational perspective; and the later Confucian tradition advanced a cosmology attuned to an ecological perspective. While Western religious cosmology envisions a discrete moment of creation by a divine creator, a view that fosters a dualism of humanity and nature, Neo-Confucian thought sees nature as always existing in an endless, ongoing process of creation. Furthermore, the Confucian tradition is non-anthropocentric, as it posits a fundamental continuity and unity among humanity, Heaven, and Earth, a view that, in turn, entails respect and care for nonhuman nature.

Introduction: Points of Departure
Susan Mcwilliams

in Traveling Back: Toward a Global Political Theory
Published in print: 2014 Published Online: April 2014
Item type: chapter
In this interconnected age, political theorists have joined other scholars in reconsidering whether their discipline speaks to contemporary problems—whether the discipline of political theory is appropriately global in scope. While some scholars have championed new schools of thinking—comparative, contemporary cosmopolitan, and postcolonial—substantial resources exist in the history of Western political thought for the cultivation of a global political theory. Those resources are to be found in a travel-story tradition that has long been neglected by political theorists but which is foundational to the development of Western political theory. This tradition dates back to the ancient Greek practice of theoria, which established a mode of engaging with the world that directly speaks to the present, when politics are inescapably global, hybrid, and multicultural in scope. Traveling back in the travel-story tradition gives us one of the strongest foundations for moving forward to a truly global political theory.

Creolizing Political Theory
Jane Anna Gordon

Asking whether one can develop an approach to studying political life that reflects its heterogeneity, Jane Anna Gordon offers the creolization of political theory as a viable response. Creolization, she argues, describes mixtures that were not supposed to have emerged in the plantation societies of the Caribbean but did through their capacity to exemplify living culture, thought, and political practice. In so doing, they provide a useful way of understanding similar processes that continue today, namely of one potential outcome when people who were previously strangers find themselves as unequal co-occupants of new political locations they seek to call “home.” In demonstrating a path that is different from the one usually associated with multiculturalism, in which different cultures are thought to co-exist relatively separately and the aim is for each to tolerate the other by letting it remain in relative isolation, creolization describes how people reinterpret themselves through interaction with one another to create forms of belonging that are familiar but also distinctive and new. These are useful models for reconsidering how contemporary political solidarities could be constructed and how relationships may be forged among what have become radically separate fields for studying a shared world. Gordon demonstrates the generative capacity of creolizing methodologies through bringing together the ideas of the 18th century revolutionary Swiss thinker Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the 20th century Martinician-
born Algerian liberationist Frantz Fanon. Fanon, she argues, outlined a vision of how to bring into being the decolonial methodologies and democratically legitimate alternatives that Rousseau mainly imagined.

Introduction
Stuart Gray

in A Defense of Rule: Origins of Political Thought in Greece and India
Published in print: 2017 Published Online: March 2017
Publisher: Oxford University Press DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190636319.003.0001
Item type: chapter

The Introduction lays out the book’s historical-comparative approach, explaining how combining the history of political ideas and comparative political theory (CPT) enhances the rigor of both areas of study. It outlines the major analytic challenges facing this approach, including cultural reductionism, authorial intention, and chronological precision. To address these challenges, it then explains how one must locate inter-cultural categories and concepts as well as specific intra-cultural concepts and terminology to reconstruct and compare differences and similarities of meaning across cultural boundaries. Subsequently, the chapter explains how such historical-comparative analysis builds upon existing positions in comparative and environmental political theory by attending to premodern traditions, including a concept (rule) that has been generally neglected. Finally, it explains how poetry and kingship supply important hinges for comparing Greek and Indian thought, further addressing conceptual and terminological issues that follow from this analytic pairing.

Engaging Nature
Peter F. Cannavò and Joseph H. Lane Jr. (eds)

Published in print: 2015 Published Online: January 2017
Publisher: The MIT Press DOI: 10.7551/mitpress/9780262028059.001.0001
Item type: book

Engaging Nature is an edited collection that explores how past political theorists conceptualized the natural world and humanity’s relationship with it. The theorists profiled are largely from the Western canon, but other influential theorists have been included in order to bring in insights related to race, gender, and non-Western perspectives. The theorists covered in the book are: Plato, Aristotle, Niccolò Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, David Hume, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmund Burke, Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, W. E. B. Du
Bois, Martin Heidegger, Hannah Arendt, and Confucius. The essays also draw insights from these theorists into how we might address our contemporary environmental crisis. In many cases, the authors present unorthodox readings of particular theorists who have been pigeonholed as ‘anti-environmentalist’ or not recognized for their insights into nature and environmental issues. The essays also highlight the complexity of Western political thought in its approach to nature, as many individual theorists present perspectives that transcend anthropocentrism. In pursuing a chronological review of Western thinkers but then ending with Confucius, the editors also wish to highlight the importance of expanding the discussion beyond the Western canon. This book is intended for a fairly broad audience, from advanced undergraduates to mature scholars in both political theory and environmental studies.

Introduction: How We Got Here
Peter F. Cannavò and Joseph H. Lane

in Engaging Nature: Environmentalism and the Political Theory Canon

This is an introduction to the volume as a whole. The editors, Peter F. Cannavò and Joseph H. Lane Jr., summarize the origins and history of environmental political theory and discuss the need for a volume like Engaging Nature and how this book goes beyond past studies of environmental perspectives in the political theory canon. The editors present their scholarly approach in choosing the particular theorists to profile, discuss the intended audience for the book, and summarize the individual essays. They also highlight the need for academics to go beyond the Western political theory tradition and develop more scholarship in comparative environmental political theory.

Toward the Creative Engagement of Chinese Thought
Leigh Jenco

in Changing Referents: Learning Across Space and Time in China and the West

Both Chinese thinkers of a century ago and contemporary scholars struggle with the realization that their received modes of viewing the
world derive not from universally accessible and transparent foundations but from local, historically situated traditions of thought. These parallels suggest that the Western Learning conversations examined in this book can be read as more than simply the instrumental rhetoric of self-colonization or the mark of the inevitable demise of “Confucian China” in the face of Western modernity. Rather, these conversations offer more general methodological lessons about how individuals and societies might confront their own ethnocentrism by learning from cultural others in radically self-transformative ways, contributing to debates in comparative political theory and postcolonial studies.

School Is Out
John Hull Mollenkopf
in The City, Revisited: Urban Theory from Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York
Published in print: 2011 Published Online: August 2015
DOI: 10.5749/minnesota/9780816665754.003.0008

This chapter argues that we don’t really need a Chicago, Los Angeles, or New York School that privileges the distinctive characteristics of one city in our understanding of comparative urban theory. We do, however, need a nuanced comparative analysis across metropolitan areas that draws on characteristics that are more or less prominent across them, or even absent in some. The Los Angeles School certainly draws attention to the ways in which the various parts of the metropolis relate to one another far differently in Los Angeles today than in Chicago eighty years ago. But New York, Chicago, and many other big, important, nodal cities also have distinctive features that provide equally valid bases for generating theory. The city of New York reflects four such features: a large urban political economy, a vital neighborhood life, group succession driven by immigration, and close ties to other key nodes in the global urban system. The time has come to shift our attention from whose model is better to how and why these important dimensions vary across places.

Introduction
Juliet Hooker
in Theorizing Race in the Americas: Douglass, Sarmiento, Du Bois, and Vasconcelos
Published in print: 2017 Published Online: April 2017
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190633691.003.0001

The introduction explains the hemispheric geographic and conceptual frame developed in the book in order to map the intellectual connections and political genealogies of two subaltern traditions of racial thought: Latin American and US African American political thought. It lays out the book’s methodological approach, which is one of juxtaposition, in order to avoid some of the pitfalls of comparison. It also traces the common discursive field within which Frederick Douglass, Domingo Faustino Sarmiento, W. E. B. Du Bois, and José Vasconcelos were operating, which was the scientific racism that dominated US and European intellectual circles from the second half of the nineteenth through the first half of the twentieth century.

Introduction
Matthew J. Moore

in Buddhism and Political Theory
Published in print: 2016 Published Online: June 2016
Publisher: Oxford University Press
DOI: 10.1093/acprof:oso/9780190465513.003.0001
Item type: chapter

The introduction argues that Western political theory has overlooked the political philosophy of Buddhism, and that it would benefit from engaging with Buddhism as a political theory. The Buddhist political philosophy rests on three ideas, which are both similar to and different from the concerns of Western scholars: that human beings are not selves; that politics is necessary but not very important; and that moral norms are advice for wise living rather than categorical obligations. The introduction summarizes the author’s understandings of political theory and Buddhism generally, and argues that Western political theorists stand to benefit from learning more about Buddhism.

A Defense of Rule
Stuart Gray

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Item type: book

This book establishes a new analytic approach to understanding fundamental political ideas of other cultures and time periods, applying the approach to a study of ancient Greek and Indian conceptions of rule. This cross-cultural study provides a defense for the importance of rule in contemporary political life, arguing that anthropocentric and instrumentalist conceptions of rule have led to destructive consequences.
for the welfare of both human and nonhuman life. Therefore, this book seeks to rethink the meaning of rule by critically retrieving and examining premodern ideas in both the West and South Asia. Conflicting cosmological and anthropocentric origins for rule in the history of Western political thought can be located in ancient Greece, particularly in the influential works of Homer and Hesiod. In contrast to a more human-centered and strongly individualistic conception of rule as “distinction” in Greece is an alternative understanding of rule as “stewardship” that appears in early Indian thought. A critical assessment of these two traditions not only provides a novel interpretation of each but also supplies a new framework for theorizing the meaning of rule that better accounts for relations between humans and nonhuman nature. The book thus outlines a new conception of rule as “panocracy,” which expands the ethical horizon for understanding humans’ political effect and responsibilities in an increasingly interconnected, fragile world. This culturally hybrid vision of ruling entails duties of stewardship toward nonhuman nature and involvement in processes of world-building on a global scale.

Introduction
William J. Long
in Tantric State: A Buddhist Approach to Democracy and Development in Bhutan
Published in print: 2019 Published Online: January 2019
Item type: chapter

This study asks, “How does democratic governance and economic development differ when founded on Eastern, Buddhist principles, rather than dominant Western, liberal, and Enlightenment values and beliefs?” The small, remote country of Bhutan, the only democratic, market-based state in the world rooted constitutionally and culturally in Mahayana Buddhist principles and ethics, provides a heuristic case study for comparing two distinct approaches to democracy and development. Because the two approaches—Eastern and Western—are based on distinctive philosophical traditions that differ on important, first-order principles, comparison can bring to light new questions, frames of inquiry, and alternative approaches to contemporary democratic theory and practice and broaden our conceptualization of, and policies directed toward, human development.