

key. For example, police and firefighter union advocacy is positively related to city spending on compensation.

*Local Interests* is a resolutely statistical work, as Anzia harnesses the power of her large database to map out the interaction between lobbies and city governments. There are relatively few examples in her text and the pulse of city politics seems largely absent. The one extended example, a discussion of spending politics in West Covina, California, strengthens her discussion of municipal unions.

Anzia's careful statistical analysis demonstrates the value of her approach, measuring impact on policy across lobbying sectors and cities. At the same time, her criticism of extant interest group scholarship strikes me as a bit harsh. I believe we've learned much about interest group influence from a variety of methodological approaches. Some of this work is qualitative and some quantitative. And certainly not all of it falls under the time frame of a snapshot.

Anzia does not shy away from addressing the overriding normative question about interest groups and democracy. The breadth and depth of her empirical analyses give her a credible foundation for making such a judgment. Her point of comparison is nothing less than Robert Dahl's magisterial and endlessly controversial *Who Governs?* (1961). She does not say she has replicated *Who Governs?* but the intellectual roots of her work are evident. Dahl made his assessment of interest groups' influence in New Haven, Connecticut, on the basis of their advocacy in three areas: urban redevelopment, political nominations, and public education. Anzia also looks at business growth and elections, while swapping out public education for police and fire unions. (School districts do not necessarily have the same boundaries as their parent cities.)

At the end of her book, on the next to last page, Anzia directly addresses Dahl. Like Dahl, she finds that advocacy groups influenced the policy sectors they cared about but not others. Dahl says this dispersal of power is the central characteristic of pluralist democracy in America. Anzia firmly rejects this: "[U]nequal power in one issue area does not neutralize or counteract unequal power in another area. It simply means that power in both areas is unequal" (p. 276). What then can we say about "who or what has power in American society"? Her conclusion is, "[i]t depends" (p. 277). That might not be a terribly satisfying answer but I think it is the correct one.

**What Goes Without Saying: Navigating Political Discussion in America.** By Taylor N. Carlson and Jaime E. Settle. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2022. 300p. \$89.99 cloth, \$29.99 paper.

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Social scientists have long been concerned with political discussions, considering rates of political discussions, the

composition of discussion networks, the consequences of conversations about politics, and more. Recent research focuses on how political engagement—including political discussion—is a sharp cleavage among Americans and closely linked to polarization in the United States (see, for example, Yanna Krupnikov and John Barry Ryan's 2022 book *The Other Divide*). At the same time, the American public seems to struggle with political conversations. Research by the Pew Research Center, for example, finds that majorities of Republicans and Democrats feel stress and anxiety about political conversations with people who disagree with them; 45% of Americans have stopped talking about politics with someone they know; and most US social media users feel fatigued by the amount of political content they encounter on social media platforms.

*What Goes Without Saying* is firmly positioned within this academic and social context. The authors, Taylor N. Carlson and Jaime E. Settle, carefully explore how people experience and negotiate political discussions in the United States. In so doing, they draw directly on established work on discussion networks, the experience of disagreement in political conversation, personality and political talk, and more. The academic foundations of this book will therefore resonate with readers familiar with these long-standing areas of research.

Carlson and Settle also push beyond existing studies in this area. They begin with a crucial point of departure from many of the classic works on this topic, emphasizing political conversations primarily as a social, rather than political, process. They then articulate the motivational foundations behind this social experience, emphasizing accuracy, affirmation, and affiliative motivations. Building on these ideas, they propose and evaluate their 4D framework of political discussions. This model digs deeper into multiple parts of political conversations that have long been neglected, explicitly considering "detection," "decision," "discussion," and "determination" stages of political conversations. Their research leads to several crucial conclusions, such as that the social process of discussions begins before and continues after any words are spoken; that political conversations vary in their motivational foundations; and that individual differences in personality and disposition influence the experience and effects of political conversations. Carlson and Settle conclude with a word of caution to those who view more political discussion as a solution for the troubles facing American society, calling for others to build on their research to more carefully consider the benefits and costs of political conversations.

There is too much to praise about this book for a single review. Carlson and Settle provide an exceptional example of research that draws from different parts of political science, including work on personality, discussion networks, and theories about democracy, and other

disciplines, such as psychology and communications. By so doing, they enrich existing discussions of what motivates and shapes political discussions. In addition, the authors expertly use a wide range of methodological tools, including survey experiments, open-ended text responses, physiological measures of arousal, and more. They also provide a model of political discussions that constructively offers significant benefits over an older and widely used approach: the model proposed by Michael MacKuen's book chapter entitled "Speaking of Politics" (in John A. Ferejohn and James H. Kuklinski, eds., *Information and Democratic Processes*, 1990). In all of these ways, the book is both an impressive study of political discussions and an example of thorough research.

In a few places, the book may leave the reader with questions or wanting more. At the core of many of the analyses are questions where respondents indicate what they think they would do, what motivates them, and other related perceptions (see, for example, pp. 83, 115, and 157). These kinds of perceptions—and perceptions generally—are crucially important in social and political life, as others have already documented. Additionally, Carlson and Settle add nonperceptual data to go along with these measures at several key points. At the same time, the authors do not spend much time discussing what their focus on self-reported perceptions implies about their framework. Are there parts of the processes in each of the 4Ds that people are not aware of and cannot report? How might more unconscious, implicit, or unrecognized processes influence those reported in the research presented here? Given the direct focus of the book on discussions as a social process, this seems to be a fruitful avenue worth pursuing.

The discussion of motivations in the book (laid out most completely on pp. 24–31) emphasize three motivations—"accuracy," "affirmation," and "affiliation." With this emphasis, Carlson and Settle move us forward past more simplistic notions of motivation that have plagued other political science research. However, more could be said about motivations to round out this element of the authors' framework. When do individuals come to pursue one of these motivations more than the others? Some of the motivational research in psychology explores how some motivations come to overwhelm others and the stark consequences this can have for interpersonal behavior and politics, which seems relevant here. Even if people continue to value all of these goals, a discussion of how they juggle all three and the situational factors that disrupt that balancing would likely be a productive addition to the approach described in this book.

Within political science and computational social science, there is growing interest in the analysis of open-ended texts and textual analyses. These tools seem directly relevant to the authors' objectives, especially in chapters 6 and 7, which focus on the discussion portion of the 4D

framework. Surprisingly, though, these chapters contain little analysis of the content of political discussions. To be clear, the authors do provide an impressive analysis of different physiological experiences before and during political conversations along with survey responses to a vignette experiment that includes open-ended data. However, there is no direct analysis of what people actually discuss (or leave unsaid) in political conversations. Collecting and analyzing this kind of data certainly comes with high obstacles and barriers but seems like it could be used to explore the discussion component of the framework in greater detail.

As a final point, more could be said about the role of institutions and structures in how people navigate political discussions. This does not undermine the book's central focus—to propose a framework for understanding how people steer through political conversations and considerably expand the perspective of researchers working in this area. On the other hand, one of the ways that political science contributes to this kind of psychologically oriented work is through explorations of how institutions, power, and structures shape psychological phenomena. Examples of this kind of work can be found in research on deliberation and discussions in politics (see, for example, Karpowitz and Mendelberg's 2014 book *The Silent Sex*); a section on these types of factors would further strengthen this already impressive book and research agenda.

*What Goes Without Saying* is an excellent example of innovative, careful research that both pushes theories in political science and provides an example of impressive empirical research. Beyond that, it gives an important perspective to those looking to study and improve political discussions in the United States. It will doubtlessly lead to many fruitful academic conversations and insights in this critical area of research.

**Before Bostock: The Accidental LGBTQ Precedent of *Price Waterhouse v. Hopkins*.** By Jason A. Pierceson. Lawrence:

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On June 15, 2020, the US Supreme Court decided *Bostock v. Clayton County*, declaring that the 1964 Civil Rights Act's Title VII prohibitions on discrimination on the basis of sex in the workplace must be understood to protect individuals from discrimination on the basis of one's sexual orientation or gender identity. This decision is a significant victory for LGBTQ rights and extends much-needed substantive legal protections to LGBTQ individuals in the workplace. Notably, the majority was comprised of an unexpected coalition of six justices that crossed ideological lines with Justice Gorsuch writing the