

Third, the persuasion in parallel hypothesis suggests that persuasive information changes minds for *everyone* (p. 49). Coppock defends this claim by analyzing the effect of persuasive information among many different groups of people. He primarily focuses on separately analyzing groups of people likely to support or oppose the target policy, either using their pretreatment preferences or partisanship. This distinction is theoretically important because if policy proponents and opponents responded to persuasive information differently, then persuasion would not be “in parallel.” Coppock repeatedly finds that people update their preferences in the direction of information, regardless of their priors and regardless of the groups to which they belong. The robustness of his core finding is remarkable and should give readers confidence in the persuasion in parallel hypothesis and perhaps some skepticism about motivated reasoning.

Although analyzing subgroups based on prior attitudes is theoretically motivated, there is room for more theoretical development around the other demographic divisions analyzed in the book. It is noteworthy that the pattern is “more or less universal” (p. 49) among the groups analyzed along the lines of gender, race, ethnicity, and education. However, there are important literatures on gender, race, and ethnicity that could deepen our understanding of the reach of the persuasion in parallel hypothesis. Similarly, Coppock notes that his results are limited to English-speaking Americans who take surveys (like many studies in American politics) but posits that he would expect the pattern to hold among those who do not speak English (p. 50). Recent work on language and public opinion opens the door to reconsider this point more carefully (see Efrén Pérez’s and Margit Tavits’s 2022 book, *Voicing Politics*). As the United States continues to diversify, it will be important to develop theories about the conditions under which the persuasion in parallel hypothesis holds for *everyone*. Bridging the persuasion in parallel hypothesis with the racial and ethnic politics literature, with particular attention to language, socialization, and social networks, will push the field forward.

Finally, Coppock is clear throughout the book about what he means by persuasive information and acknowledges that it is limited to a narrow type of information that explicitly excludes group cues and the messenger. Isolating the causal effect of persuasive information on target attitudes requires stripping the information down to remove group cues and messengers, which sacrifices some external validity. This is a nontrivial external validity limitation because in the real world people are rarely exposed to persuasive information, as defined in the book. Until we know how much the persuasion in parallel hypothesis stands against group cues and messenger characteristics, both of which are usually available in reality, it is hard to consider how much we can expect the public to change their minds. Future research will need to dig deeper to

consider whether features of the person communicating the persuasive information disrupts the persuasion in parallel hypothesis.

Like many field-defining books, *Persuasion in Parallel* answers its own research question and raises more for the future. This bold, thought-provoking book will reignite research on persuasion and challenge us to reconsider voter competence.

How Policies Make Interest Groups: Governments, Unions, and American Education.

By Michael T. Hartney.
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For many years education was seen as an apolitical arena due to a belief that Americans shared a basic understanding of the value of education and its *ends*, with key questions relating to *means* delegated to education experts. This apolitical view began to erode at the end of the twentieth century and was replaced within the political science literature by a powerful argument that education was not just political, but was dominated politically by one particular interest group: teachers’ unions. Michael Hartney’s new book, *How Policies Make Interest Groups*, pushes this argument further, investigating *why* teachers’ unions continue to be such a dominant interest group in contemporary education politics.

Building upon Terry Moe’s contention that teachers’ unions are both vested and special interests, Hartney posits that these unions are also “subsidized interests” due to government support that enabled them to gain sway in American education policymaking. Hartney substantiates this theory with an extensive range of data sources, ultimately concluding that governmental policies promoting teacher unionization have had profound implications for power dynamics in education politics and the efficacy of American schools. This comprehensive investigation contributes significantly to our understanding of the sustained influence of teachers’ unions in education politics.

Hartney explicitly recognizes the political divisiveness associated with the study of teachers’ unions. Though he contends that his subsidized interest theory is not a normative argument about whether or not government policy *should* subsidize teachers’ unions, many readers may detect subtle normativity throughout the text. For example, in Chapter 1, Hartney likens collective bargaining expansion to the use of illegal steroids in baseball (p. 13) and calls teachers’ unions a “triple threat” (p. 14). Later in the text, Hartney supports the notion that teachers’ unions “are at the heart of the [nation’s education] problems” (p. 213). While some readers may take issue

with Hartney's apparent normative commitments, this comprehensive study nonetheless improves our understanding of the enduring role of teachers' unions in the politics of education.

In the first part of the book (Chapters 1–5), Hartney builds his subsidized interests hypothesis by examining how labor policies adopted in the 1960s and 1970s have helped teachers' unions gain and maintain members, money, and organizational maintenance. According to Hartney, the provision of exclusive bargaining rights in American labor law subsidizes union power by providing unions with a seat at the table and support in mobilizing their members in politics. Within collectively bargained contracts, school district policies, such as association rights and security provisions, then furthered union power. This occurred alongside other union efforts, such as national unification, which were also bolstered by favorable public-sector labor laws. Hartney argues that the varying subsidies continue to work together to maintain teachers' union power in self-reinforcing and cross-cutting ways.

The latter half of Hartney's book investigates the consequences of teachers' union power. In Chapters 6 and 7, he draws upon a comprehensive range of data sources to provide evidence that teachers and their unions wield considerable influence over education policymaking. Diverging from Terry Moe's perspective, Hartney contends that unions are dominant in the politics of education, but does not necessarily imply that they hold the same degree of sway over American politics in general. Although there are moments where Hartney suggests that government subsidies have catapulted teachers' unions to "the top of the political class" (p. 103), he generally maintains that their advantages are confined to state education politics and local school-board politics. Consequently, the subsidized interests theory could potentially be extended to other interest groups with government-granted protections, particularly other workers with collective bargaining rights. It is worth considering how the subsidized interests theory might be applied to police influence in criminal justice policy or to construction worker influence in development policy. If such applications are invalid, it's unclear what theoretical constraints would be preventing them.

In Chapter 8, Hartney considers the implications of union power for students. He rightfully challenges the stale debate between those who argue that teachers' unions are simply rent-seeking organizations and those who counter that they are productive agents of democratic voice. Hartney contends that scholars should conceptualize teachers' interests and students' interests as "convergent and mixed" rather than wholly congruent or wholly divergent (p. 197). He presents compelling evidence to substantiate this claim by showcasing two coexisting phenomena: first, many teachers believe that their unions are the best representatives of student interests; second,

teachers recognize that their unions better represent their own interests than student interests (p. 195). This "convergent and mixed" orientation represents an important evolution in literature on teachers' unions and provides the second main departure from Terry Moe's work.

Empirically, Hartney's main contribution is through his illustrative descriptive analyses that leverage an impressive array of data sources. He demonstrates, for example, that teachers are heavily involved in local elections (more so than in general politics or civic life), and union-endorsed candidates oftentimes win school board elections, even in the post-*Janus* (2018) era. In the context of these analyses, he often uses creative and intuitive placebo tests to demonstrate, for example, that teachers' union's power is associated with higher teacher salaries in Washington state, but not superintendent salaries. He also occasionally uses quasi-experimental methods to estimate policy effects more precisely. For example, he uses a differences-in-differences approach to estimate student achievement gains as a result of union retrenchment laws enacted in 2011 in five states (pp. 210–11). Though these quasi-experimental analyses are not the major contribution of the work, they leave open opportunities for future in-depth studies that allow for the space to conduct sensitivity checks and address embedded assumptions required for causal inference.

Theoretically, the book contributes a new perspective on the continued influence of teachers' unions in contemporary education politics. According to Hartney, teachers' union power has persisted because state governments subsidized it with collective bargaining rights, which allow for teachers' unions to have official status and security provisions. While this explains how teachers' unions have *maintained* their power, it does not shed light on why these subsidies were granted in the first place. Hartney provides some clues, ruling out union political mobilization at the state level (pp. 48, 63). Additionally, he suggests that district leaders may have granted association rights and security provisions as low-cost means of placating local teachers' unions, but—in contrast to claims of union dominance—this implies that they are subordinate to district leaders. The lack of attention to the origins of subsidies is noteworthy given that many teacher job protections came about to protect female teachers against sexist treatment by administrators. It also leaves open the possibility that union subsidies might have come about in part because others—such as parents or elected leaders—recognized that unions could be useful partners in supporting efforts to benefit children.

Overall, Hartney's subsidized interests hypothesis offers an insightful and nuanced explanation for the institutional factors that have maintained teachers' unions as dominant players in contemporary education politics. The book's impressive collection of data sources showcases the multifaceted and enduring implications of state labor policies

for American education politics. *How Policies Make Interest Groups* makes a valuable contribution to the research on education policy, organized interests, and institutional politics.

Who Cares: The Social Safety Net in America. By Christopher Howard. New York, New York: Oxford University, 2023. 352p. \$99.00 cloth. \$27.95 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592723001172

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Christopher Howard has written several excellent books on the welfare state. In this new book, written largely just before the pandemic, he widens his lens to analyze the social safety net in terms of what it says about the extent to which the United States is a caring society. His analysis is framed by relying very explicitly on feminist theorists of care, most especially Joan Tronto (*Moral Boundaries*, 1993) but others as well, including in particular Sandra Levisky (*Caring for Our Own*, 2014) and still others to a lesser extent such as Deborah Stone (*The Samaritan's Dilemma*, 2008). This is to say that the book is thoroughly grounded in the relevant literature on the ethics of care. Howard shares with these theorists the perspective that caring is an important, if neglected, dimension of what holds any society together. Yet this is not a book about whether we should care and how. Instead, it is a book about the extent to which we do in practice, especially when it comes to our collective efforts to aid the most disadvantaged. Neither, does Howard want to argue about the theoretical issues concerning collective caring for the downtrodden. He wants instead to empirically document our collective caring efforts or lack thereof in society today. Inevitably, this documenting involves discussing in detail what the government does, since, as Howard correctly notes, most of the financing and spending comes from the government via its social welfare policies. But charitable institutions, including the churches are extensively analyzed as well. By the end we have read a book that is a compendium on the status of collective caring efforts in the United States today, one that demonstrates a yawning gap between our commitments to care for the disadvantaged and the extent to which we have fulfilled those commitments.

Howard uses Tronto's four-part framing of care to organize the chapters about our actually existing caring beliefs, institutions, practices, and policies across the sectors of society, private as well as public, and those in-between. Tronto's four-part approach distinguishes: 1) *Caring About*—as in how much attention we pay to caring about something; 2) *Taking Care*—focusing on who is responsible for the caring in question; 3) *Caregiving*—who is delivering the care; and 4) *Care-receiving*—as in who is serviced and how well, but also who is not. After

this framing Howard examines in detail in the two main parts of the book first the evidence on the extent to which we indicate we care for others, but then in the second part also what we do to live up to those commitments. The first main section, on the extent to which we say we care about those among us who are needing assistance, Howard examines evidence regarding the public, business and labor, the churches and other charities, and public officials not just in terms of expressed opinion but also financing and related indicators of their commitment to caring for others. The chapters in the second main part of the book examine what we actually do to care for others regarding income, food, housing, medical care, and daily care. No stone seems unturned in the quest to offer what Howard calls a “bird’s-eye view” of our caring commitments to those in need and the extent to which we do or do not live up to them.

There is a ton of evidence in this book and it is impossible to fact-check it all. Even Howard says at the outset that if we find mistakes hopefully we will let him know in a “care-ful” way. Well, I would be hard put to say there are any errors at all regarding basic facts. The book is meticulously composed and documented and that in itself makes it compelling. *Who Cares* provides particularly important detailed evidence regarding who benefits from particular programs, especially those provided by the government for the poorest of the poor. It is most laudable that it is especially compelling in highlighting racial and ethnic disparities in accessing assistance.

Yet the assessments of our caring commitments to those in need and the extent to which we fulfill them is more open to debate regarding what we should make of these factual presentations. *Who Cares* is a work of empirical documentation and it should not be evaluated for its failure to engage in normative analysis. I get that. Yet, for people like me, the line between facts and norms is always fuzzy and the separation of understanding what is from what ought to be is never complete. Even Howard himself is at pains to not just highlight the extent to which the United States fails to fulfill its espoused commitments to care but that it should do better. In other words, it is no trifling fact that Howard shows that as much as we say we are committed to help the less fortunate in practice, we fall short of those aspirations and sometimes, in some areas more than others, to a devastating extent. Howard himself recognizes this and lets on his feelings about our failures especially regarding such matters as health care and nutrition assistance.

To take one example, among many, Howard's discussion of various religious charities such as the Salvation Army struck me as somewhat circumspect. The Army has a long history of aiding the disadvantaged but also of deciding who it will serve and how. Homophobia has influenced its practices at various points, and its proselytizing to those it served has also been a flashpoint especially