

Ronald M. Peters, Jr., *The American Speakership: The Office in Historical Perspective*. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990) pp. 352. \$45.00 ISBN 0-8018-3955-6

The American Speakership: The Office in Historical Perspective is the most thorough book to date on the office of the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives. University of Oklahoma Political Scientist Ronald M. Peters' solidly empirical research develops the role of the House as an institutional mirror of national politics from Speaker Muhlenberg in 1789 to Speaker Foley in 1989.

Heavily documented with what must be every significant aspect of House activity, past and present, the core of this work is a detailed analysis of the emergent leadership role of the Speaker reflected in the dynamics of policy formation and institutional change in the House. Peters' goal is to place the American Speakership in a general political and specific institutional context over time. The book, however, goes beyond this achievement so intelligently and thoroughly that it serves also as a primer of American factional politics from the Constitutional period forward.

While this analysis does not dwell on abstraction it does accomplish a much needed categorization of epochs in the development of the Speakership. Peters traces the "external" and "internal" factors which have affected and defined the Speakership in four principal political epochs. Beginning with the "Parliamentary" Speakership of the early Constitutional period the book identifies the Partisan, Feudal, and Democratic speakership periods. Significant procedural and substantive developments are identified and analyzed in terms of their impact on the office of Speaker and the House as an institutional body within the separation of powers system.

Peters does not set out to create a streamlined intellectual edifice with all the bells and whistles of avant garde political science. He has conspicuously avoided the cutting edge of terminologically overladen models with straightforward, patient, thorough research. In so doing he has created a singular resource necessary for any scholar researching the Speakership and the House.

The book, as a result, identifies leadership style and impact, the process of policy formation, the political context of the House with respect to the Senate and Executive branch, and finally the role of the Speaker and House in the historic panorama of American political conflict.

Peters' scholarship is based first and foremost on empiricism. He covers the "Who, What, When, and How" for practically each of the 199 years included in the analysis.

This book is not intended for the casual reader. Peters' work is so filled with detail and information that close attention is required to master the material contained therein. Rewards, however, await the diligent reader. After digesting 199 years of Speakership politics, one emerges with a comprehensive understanding of House rules, the circumstances and significance of their development, the role of each Speaker, the significance of internal organizational changes and the dynamic relationship between American political issues and House politics.

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R. Darcy, Susan Welch, and Janet Clark, *Women, Elections, & Representation, Second Edition*. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994) pp. 276. \$35.00 (hardcover), \$12.95 (paperback) ISBN 0-8032-6597-2

'Talking 'Bout a Revolution.' Four new female senators and 24 new female House members were elected to the U.S. Congress in 1992. So noteworthy were these numbers that 1992 became known as the "Year of the Woman." But as a percentage of the total, these gains appear less than momentous. Women today make up to about 11 percent of the total membership in Congress. It is this "dramatic underrepresentation of women" that political scientists Robert Darcy, Susan Welch, and Janet Clark address in the second edition of their book, *Women, Elections & Representation*.

Since their enfranchisement, American women have made steady but snail-like progress in gaining political office. Women have been the most successful in penetrating the lowest-level (local) and mid-level (state) elected positions, while the highest and most prestigious posts have remained elusive. Previous studies have sought to explain the underrepresentation of women by looking for party leadership bias and voter prejudice against women candidates, as well as the impact of sexrole norms and political incumbency. In their reexamination of each factor, Darcy, Welch and Clark find that while the latter two factors remain important barriers to increasing female representation, prejudice against women, either at the elite or mass level, no longer can explain the low numbers of women serving as elected officials. The authors also rule out political culture as a barrier, finding that although Arizona has one of the highest percentages of women serving in its state legislature (38 percent), no state's political culture seemed less receptive to women political officeholding. The problem remains one of numbers: few American women run for public office. Thus, even if all of the women running for the U.S. Senate happened to be independently wealthy lawyers competing for open seats, the proportion of women senators would continue to remain extremely far from gender parity. The authors estimate that if the ratio of male-to-female candidates remained the same and if most incumbents continue to win their reelection bids, women should still be expected to represent only 10 percent of House representatives into the next century.

They then reexamine the impact of electoral arrangements and other structural features of American politics to ascertain any bias against women. Here, there was some evidence that the state's electoral system mattered. Multi-member legislative districts were more likely to elect women than single-member districts. In fact, states that changed from multi-member districts or some com-

bination of multi- and single-member districts invariably saw a decrease in the number of women elected or fell below the national rate. Ironically, this trend favoring single-member districts was engineered by the organized efforts of African Americans and their allies to advance Black representation. They also find that proportional representation electoral arrangements tend to elect more women than single-member district systems. Although women are only 11 percent of Congress, in Western European countries, with PR systems, such as Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden, women represent one-third of their national legislatures. PR systems do not always elect more women, however. Greece and Portugal, for example, employ PR systems, and yet women represent less than 10 percent of their national legislatures. In addition to the paucity of candidates, by far the biggest obstacle to increasing the political representation of women appears to be the stability of the electoral order, characterized by the low rates of political turnover.

Overall, the book represents an impressive example of social science research, its strongest feature by far being its comparative focus. Indeed, it is through this approach that the authors are able to establish through empirical means that it is the electoral stability of the U.S. political system that accounts for the continued underrepresentation of women. Moreover, the clear presentation of both the issues and of their empirically-based findings makes the book still very appropriate for use in undergraduate courses.

The book falters in the limited, if not tepid, conclusions that the authors draw. Darcy, Welch, and Clark favor incremental reforms, such as limiting elected officials to two, consecutive terms, rejecting more radical changes that they suppose would involve a substantial change in the social and economic position of women. Neither of these changes might actually promote higher levels of female political officeholding, since the problem remains of getting more women to run. Raising the political consciousness of women may be the only sure means for increasing the rate of female officeholding over the next few decades. Until more women become conscious of themselves as a *political minority*, a consciousness that many gender scholars assume already exists among American women, they may not engage in the necessary political activities, such as pressuring the political parties, raising funds and fielding candidates, to increase their representation in government. More women were elected in 1992 precisely because more became conscious, as a result of the Clarence Thomas/Anita Hill hearings and general voter disgust with political incumbents, of the need for increasing representation of women and their interests in Congress. The broadening and deepening of a gender consciousness surely would entail a radical change, a change that the authors should have discussed.

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Jace Weaver and Robert H. Henry, *Then to the Rock Let Me Fly: Luther Bohanon and Judicial Activism*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1993) pp. 212. \$27.95 ISBN 0-8061-2554-3

Then to the Rock Let Me Fly is a valuable contribution to the political, legal and social history of Oklahoma. The role of the judiciary has received too little attention in most recent histories of the state. Jace Weaver, an attorney, and student at Union Theological Seminary, states that his purpose is: "...to sketch the life and career of one trial court judge, Luther Bohanon..." In a poetic metaphor Weaver observed: "The actions of federal trial courts form lasting threads in the invisible tapestry of social control that we call law". Weaver selects four major cases from Bohanon's 180 published opinions to demonstrate Bohanon's courage and persistence.

The book's title, "*Then to the Rock...*" is taken from an old Methodist hymn which, according to Weaver, is "an appropriate metaphor for the struggle of African-Americans for civil rights."

It also reflects the consistently strong religious beliefs evidenced in some of Judge Bohanon's judicial decisions by his use of Biblical quotations.

Luther L. Bohanon was appointed to the federal bench in 1961 by President John F. Kennedy, at the insistence of U.S. Senator Robert S. Kerr and over the objections of U.S. Attorney General Robert Kennedy and the American Bar Association's Standing Committee on the Federal Judiciary. Robert Kennedy, years later, did write a letter to Bohanon commending him for his eminent career as a judge. Throughout his career Bohanon maintained a reputation for strict judicial procedural dignity.

Weaver emphasizes Bohanon's legal and jurist career. The biographical sections briefly but adequately paint a portrait of Bohanon surviving a rigorous childhood on the family farms in eastern Oklahoma and becoming self-supported at an early age. At the University of Oklahoma School of Law, his mentor, Dean Julien Monnet, instilled in Bohanon deep reverence for the United States Constitution.

Bohanon, because of his friendship with several political leaders could have easily become one of the "good ole boys" of Oklahoma politics, but his deep moral and religious foundations evidently directed him to a more noble path, and sustained him through the backlash which followed his controversial decisions.

All four cases selected by Weaver illustrate Bohanon's devotions to equality, justice and concern for human rights. Weaver presents succinct summaries and brief historical background information for each of the four cases. He does not resort to "legalese" but uses uncluttered prose throughout.

In the chapter, "The School Board Case," (*Dowell v. Board of Education*, 219 F.Supp 427), Weaver presents a review of the history of "Jim Crow" in Oklahoma and the civil rights struggles of African-Americans and describes the recalcitrance of the urban school boards to comply with federal desegregation mandates. This protracted legal battle continues today. Weaver does not, however, address the changes in housing patterns which resulted from the proposed integration of schools and subsequent "white flight."

In "The Prison Case" (*Battle v. Anderson*, 447 F.Supp 516), Weaver briefly describes the archaic, abusive and corrupt conditions which were prevalent in state correctional institutions at the time that Bobby Battle brought suit against Warden Park J. Anderson and the Oklahoma Department of Corrections. This case resulted in a complete reorganization of the Department and continued oversight to prevent continuation of the overcrowding and other conditions.

"The American Indian Land Case" (*The Choctaw Nation v. Cherokee*, 393 F Supp.224) and earlier related cases trace the sad history of the treatment of American Indians by white settlers and the violation of treaties by the government. Bohanon determined the title to the Arkansas River Navigation Project riverbed section by section and divided the land between the involved tribal entities.

In "The Laetrile Case" (*Rutherford v. United States*, 429 F Supp. 513), Judge Bohanon expressed his support of an individual's freedom to select medical care in face of the Federal Food and Drug Administration's restricting laetrile without previous standard testing procedures. Bohanon's decision was ultimately reversed.

This compact book (159 pages of text) will interest students of political science, social history, Oklahoma history and legal history. Because of its easy flowing style the book will appeal to a general audience as well. It is well researched, and includes copious notes, an extensive bibliography and an appendix which gives the complete citations for the published opinions of Judge Bohanon in chronological order from 1962 through 1992. If there is a shortcoming, it is the limited biographical section, which serves to whet one's appetite for the Bohanon autobiography to be published in the near future. This is not intended to be a critical judicial study and Weaver does not compare Bohanon's opinions with those of other federal jurists. Enough background material is provided for

additional study by legal scholars if desired.

Readers of *Then to the Rock Let Me Fly* from any background will gain an informed and more sympathetic understanding of the contributions of one federal judge to some of the forces of change which have molded Oklahoma culture over the past three decades.

Hannah Atkins O'Neal

Edwin G. Corr and Stephen Sloan, ed., *Low Intensity Conflict: Old Threats in a New World*. (Boulder: Westview Press, 1992) pp. 317. \$63.50 (hardcover), \$19.85 (paperback) ISBN 0-8133-8593-8

Two international relations specialists have edited a timely work that should be most useful to academics and policy makers alike. As the leaders of industrial democracies seek the best ways to function internationally in a still dangerous and predominantly undemocratic world, they should consider the words of Senator David Boren (D-OK) in the book's preface: "We live in a time which our basic assumptions about geopolitics and military power have been rendered obsolete. Perhaps the greatest threat to...security is the danger we will not change our thinking to coincide with the changes in the world around us."

Ed Corr (Henry Bellmon Chair in Public Service at the University of Oklahoma) and Steve Sloan (Professor of Political Science at the University of Oklahoma) have long been concerned with low intensity conflict — Corr as U.S. Ambassador to Bolivia, El Salvador, and Peru, and Sloan through many years studying of international terrorism.

In his introduction Sloan asserts that nations now find themselves in a period when "uncertainty, unpredictability, and conflict have replaced the enforced outward stability of what was once a bipolar world." With the decline of Communism and the demise of the Soviet Union, nations (especially transitional ones) are no longer seen "as either pawns or surrogates of superpower machinations." These factors, coupled with often previously unrecognized regional and local ones, must be taken into account by policy makers who should also realize that the "line between peace and war will increasingly be blurred and ambiguous..."

The editors, noting that specialists in the field do not agree on a definition of low intensity conflict, accept the U.S. military's lengthy definition:

"Low-intensity conflict is a politico-military confrontation between competing states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means, employing political, economic, informational, and military instruments. Low-intensity conflicts are often localized, generally in the Third World, but contain regional and global security implications."

The book is separated into three sections: The Challenge, the Concepts,

and the Context; Selected Cases of Low Intensity Conflict; and Implications and Conclusions. Included among the authors are U.S. Ambassador to Sudan, James Cheek; former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral William Crowe; Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, General John R. Galvin; and director of the Center for National Security Law at the University of Virginia Law School, John Norton Moore. These and the other contributors have been involved in the "bureaucratic, policy, legal and academic trenches of low intensity conflict" and share many "lessons they are still learning" while the world's "security situation undergoes reassessment in a new international order."

Among the case studies that should be of special interest to political scientists is one on Peru's Shining Path (Sendero Luminoso) terrorists by David Scott Palmer, director of the Latin American Studies Program at Boston University.

Shining Path founder and leader, Abimael Guzman (captured by government forces after this book went to press), and key followers were trained in guerrilla strategy and tactics in China (1966 to 1976) and, of course, observed the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution first hand. Shining Path's ideology reflects Guzman's approach. Guzman, who holds a Ph.D., has always considered himself an ideological purist and the world's foremost interpreter of the thoughts of Mao. Indeed, Palmer characterizes the group's ideological commitment as "a secular religion, a guide for all aspects of life, and a vow in which advancing the revolution through deeds is far more important than life itself." Palmer further avers that this total submission to a higher cause by Sendero members has enabled them to "wreak havoc" in Peru despite their relatively small numbers. Such a commitment "redefines objective reality in ideological terms... then acts as if the ideological interpretation was reality itself." This observation doubtless applies to many (perhaps most) highly ideological groups that employ force or violence in pursuit of social control or social change.

Ambassador James Cheek's case study of Eritrean and Tigrayan insurgents in Ethiopia delineates reasons for their eventual success after decades of fighting against Emperor Haile Selassie's rightist government and then against the Soviet-backed Marxist-Leninist dictatorship of Mengistu Haile Mariam.

Because these insurgents had little contact with anyone outside Ethiopia, not much was written about them and their situation except in occasional news reports dealing mostly with their civil and military activities. Cheek relied on insights he acquired from "an active involvement with Ethiopia since 1985 and extensive discussions with insurgents since 1989." Although Eritrean and Tigrayan insurgencies were Marxist in orientation, ethnicity was the main factor motivating them. Eritreans and Tigrayans shared a strong antipathy toward the Amhara ruling group, but they interpreted the problem differently. Eritreans always have considered themselves an independent nation. They saw the Amhara not only as

a foreign power, but one with much less to offer than their former occupier, Italy. Tigrayans, who once were in charge of Ethiopia, saw the Amhara not as colonizers from outside, but as oppressors of their fellow citizens, especially the larger ethnic groups such as Oromos and, of course, Tigrayans themselves. Even though the two insurgencies gained legitimacy, it seems quite likely that they would not have succeeded had not the Mengistu government lost its principal supporter, the Soviet Union.

This is a versatile book most useful for those teaching courses as international relations, low intensity conflict, political violence and terrorism, revolutionary movements, and national security policy.

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