Editor's Note

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No clear theme runs through all of the articles in this issue, so I thought I'd take this opportunity to introduce another theme that encompasses these articles as well as, we hope, everything published in *Perspectives on Politics.* That is the issue of good writing. *Perspectives* aims to present articles that are accessible to all social scientists and political actors, regardless of their training or background. More ambitiously, *Perspectives* aspires to stylistic excellence—all articles should be written clearly, concisely, and with logical development and elegant, even passionate, phrasing. The managing editor is a professional editor (not a professional manager), and the editor and associate editors spend probably more time than we should in working with each manuscript to ensure that it is not only excellent substantively, but also well written. Our immodest goal is to set an example for all other academic journals so that there are no excuses for dull, turgid, or unclear publications. Good writing is not easy. As Roger Angell (one of the best current writers) wrote of the efforts of E. B. White (one of the best writers of the past), "writing almost killed you, and the hard part was making it look easy" (*New Yorker,* February 14 and February 21, 2005).

The first article in this issue of *Perspectives* is by someone who almost makes thinking, never mind writing, look easy. Robert Dahl has been a preeminent analyst of democratic politics for half a century, and in "James Madison, Republican or Democrat?" he revisits some of his early seminal work. Madison is best known for his mistrust of democratic majorities while designing a democratic polity. But Dahl shows how Madison shifted from fearing majority tyranny while writing the Constitution to fearing minority tyranny while implementing it. Dahl clearly admires Madison's ability to change his strategies in order to maintain his deepest convictions, but he castigates him, as one democratic theorist to another, for ignoring or relegating to permanent subjugation two-thirds of the members of the new polity. Madison has had few peers; Robert Dahl is one of them.

Lane Kenworthy and Jonas Pontusson, in "Rising Inequality and the Politics of Redistribution in Affluent Countries" address an issue that Madison, and Dahl, pondered over much of their careers. Why don't the many poor divest the few wealthy of their riches in majoritarian democracies—or, more to the point at present, why are the many poor becoming even poorer in affluent Western nations? Kenworthy and Pontusson demonstrate that family market inequality has indeed been rising in OECD nations for several decades and then analyze why that is the case. They argue that the key to rising income inequality is sluggish performance of labor markets; poor families gained more in nations where they could attain low-wage jobs than in nations where they could not. Redistribution persisted at high rates throughout this period, but the evidence seems to support those who endorse strong market economies more than those who endorse strong social democratic policies as a way to redistribute wealth.

In "Wars and American Politics," David Mayhew asks why scholars of American political development attend so little to the causes and consequences of war, especially given that the United States has been on a war footing for a large fraction of its history. Perhaps scholars are not inclined to study what they don't like or don't understand, or perhaps wars have seemed too episodic, exogenous, or inchoate to be understood with the tools of systematic social science. Mayhew argues that, nevertheless, wars have had significant consequences for the political development of the United States, and those consequences should be classified, compared, and analyzed. Wars generate major policy changes, new issue regimes, electoral realignments, and ideological shifts in political parties. As he has done many times before, Mayhew opens up a new arena for research; he also challenges us to incorporate contingent events into modes of analysis that more easily engage with rules, institutions, aggregated data, or structured events such as elections.

William Callahan, in "Social Capital and Corruption," takes on the apparently strong claims of a widely accepted paradigm and concludes that "it depends." The paradigm is social capital theory, and the issue is whether more and deeper networks are always to be preferred to shallower networks or fewer of them. Callahan shows how bonding and bridging social capital mutually constitute one another and how too much of the former can overwhelm or corrupt the latter. His case for making this argument is the problem of vote-buying in Thailand. He analyzes three

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distinct narratives of reform—fix the constitutional structure, fix the leaders, or fix the peasantry—and shows how they contradict one another in diagnosis of the problem and prescription for solving it. Furthermore, each gets tangled up, albeit in different ways, in the dispute between "good" and "bad" forms of social capital. The upshot is a multisided portrayal of a complex political conundrum, as well as the salutary reminder that even the best political developments come with attendant costs.

William Wohlforth and Stephen Brooks return the focus to military conflict, but they shift the context away from American domestic politics. In "International Relations Theory and the Case against Unilateralism," they take up the always urgent question of when and how the United States should seek allies for international engagements. Wohlforth and Brooks refute various claims, roughly associated with the three dominant theories of international relations, purporting to show that multilateral action is, ceteris paribus, always preferable to the United States' striking out on its own. In their view, for some issues or in some contexts unilateral policies might be preferable. That apparently innocuous conclusion—also, "it depends"—has powerful implications, the chief of which is that scholars of international relations need to give up their increasingly outmoded paradigms and develop new arguments for the newly unipolar world.

Amy Gershoff and Shana Kushner probe a crucial political puzzle, also connected with war, in "Shaping Public Opinion: The 9/11-Iraq Connection in the Bush Administration's Rhetoric." They analyze President George W. Bush's speeches to show how tightly he sought to connect the war in Iraq to the earlier terrorist attack of September 11, 2001. They also show that the news media did not challenge this tight link, so the public had no alternative frameworks from the mainstream press with which to comprehend the facts differently. Thus the set of considerations that, according to John Zaller, often lie behind expressed opinions on a policy issue barely existed. The successful connection of terrorism with the United States' intervention in Iraq would prove to be highly consequential in the presidential election of November 2004, and Gershoff and Kushner lay out plainly for us just how it began.

The symposium in this issue of *Perspectives* is our most recent attempt to enliven the discipline of political science and connect it to the Real World. The introduction to the symposium explains its logic in a bit more detail; suffice it to say here that we invited thirteen intrepid scholars to predict the state of the world, from the vantage point that they know best, a decade from now. Actually we invited fifteen, but regretfully two could not make room in their impossibly busy schedules; I report this by way of noting that this invitation had by far the highest acceptance rate of all the solicitations I have made as editor of *Perspectives.* I interpret that result to mean that political scientists are eager to test their theories and are very good sports about laying themselves open to be proved wrong (or right!) as the future unfolds. I urge whoever is editor of this journal a decade from now to invite these scholars back to reflect on how well their predictions held up, or to invite others to comment on the predictions and venture their own for the coming decade.

An innovation in this issue of *Perspectives* is a section of letters to the editor, entitled "Counterpoint." We have long envisioned such a section, and earlier issues of *Perspectives* encouraged readers to respond to published articles. We simply did not receive enough responses to start the section until now. These letters are not reviewed, of course, but they are lightly edited for clarity and *Perspectives* retains the right not to publish letters that have too high a ratio of invective (or praise) to substantive content. We very much hope that this new section flourishes, both in order to get new ideas into public discussion quickly, and to give readers even more of a sense that this really is your journal.

I introduced "Counterpoint" at this juncture in order to set the stage for our "Perspectives" essay. Jeremy Pressman sent a detailed letter in response to an article by Jonathan Isacoff and commentary by Sari Nusseibeh in the March 2005 issue of *Perspectives.* Professor Pressman's response was too long for the letters section, so we had it lightly reviewed and, after revision, it now appears as an essay, entitled "Historical Schools and Political Science: An Arab-Israeli History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict." Pressman challenges four features of Isacoff's article—its inattention to Arab sources, its risk of reifying schools of thought, its lack of nuance in using realist theory to explain Israeli actions, and its conflation of scholars and activists among writers of history. Pressman carefully explicates each criticism, and in so doing continues the example set by Isacoff and Nusseibeh of discussing this intensely difficult issue with evidence, analytic coolness, and civility.

This issue of *Perspectives* contains two review essays. Karen Beckwith develops a syllabi review essay around the intersection of three major topics—gender studies, the study of social movements, and the study of comparative politics. In "The Comparative Politics of Women's Movements," Beckwith shows how this intersection not only illuminates each of the three topics, but also creates a subfield of its own. Studying women's movements comparatively enables scholars and students to consider the relationship between feminism and political activity guided by or focused on the concerns of women; it encourages us to develop various ways of studying an issue comparatively; and it links the sociological study of movements to the political realm of state activity. In the end, the comparative study of women's movements expands our understanding of what democracy is, or at least could be if all issues and all people were taken seriously in the political arena.

Finally, David Dessler and John Owen examine four books that move constructivism far from its origins as a reaction against other theories of international relations into a fully developed strategy for empirical investigation in its own right. These four books, by Martha Finnemore, Neta Crawford, Mlada Bukovansky, and Ted Hopf, all are "constructivist," although each means something slightly different by the term and uses the concept to do different kinds of work. Dessler and Owen focus particularly on the ways in which constructivism does, and does not, permit causal or other kinds of explanation. They conclude that rationalists start with structures and then explain how agents act in the context of those structures, whereas constructivists start with actors and their perceptions and then show how institutions and structures are built up around those perceptions. The two modes of analysis are in some senses opposite—the remaining question is whether and how they can be made complementary.

As always, this issue of *Perspectives* has almost 100 pages of book reviews. And as always, the collection of reviews bring us together as a discipline while each individual review permits specialists to delve deeply into writings of particular and idiosyncratic interest. We are grateful to the authors for the books, the reviewers for their perspicuous comments, and the book review editor for his dedication to the good of us all. Here is a case, *pace* William Callahan, in which bridging and bonding social capital not only constitute each other but also provide many benefits with almost no discernable costs.

As of June 1, 2005, *Perspectives on Politics* has a new editor, James Johnson of the University of Rochester. The new book review editor is Jeffrey Isaac of Indiana University. They are gathering a new team of associate editors, which will be in place when you read this note. Professor Johnson is dealing with all new submissions and manuscripts in the pipeline, and his team is developing new solicitations; in due course he will shape *Perspectives* according to his own vision. I and the associate editors and current managing editor will continue to have full responsibility for the rest of volume 3 (that is, this issue and that of December 2005), and much of the responsibility for the first issue of volume 4 (March 2006). I have enjoyed my term as editor enormously and will tell you some of what I have learned in my final introduction, for the issue of December 2005. I look forward to continuing involvement with the journal, even as I turn gratefully to the prospect of a few free days in which to finally draft the book manuscript that has been floating in my head for the past three and a half years. So keep those proposals, ideas, and manuscripts coming—but no longer to me!

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