

satisfy his desire to command and oppress” and subjects’ desires for personal security, rather than the requirements of an “illusory . . . common or higher good” (pp. 64, 65). This union of interests between great personages and the people is, according to Zuckert, identical with the formation of the modern democratic nation-state, in its multifarious forms.

Saxonhouse juxtaposes Machiavelli’s infamous treatments of women—including his presentation of *Fortuna* in Chapter 25 of *The Prince*—to his private writings in order to argue that Machiavelli conveys a teaching on “sexual ambiguity” that reveals a “radical and dangerous” legacy that shatters the “chain of being” (pp. 71, 72). Saxonhouse combines appraisals of Machiavelli’s colorful love life and the women of his major writings—including Caterina Sforza and Dido—to argue that “Machiavelli’s women with virtù escape gendered expectations and transcend gendered boundaries” (p. 79). While neither woman was an unqualified success, successful princes will learn this gender “fluidity” (p. 80)—a quality that Machiavelli’s virtuous women embody, and thus will learn to be both men and women, an argument Saxonhouse identifies as “emblematic” (p. 83) of his generalized rebellion against the hierarchical structures of the late classical and Christian worlds.

Orwin closes the volume by directing sustained attention to Machiavelli’s lengthy and detailed treatment of Cesare Borgia’s failed career in *The Prince*, which, according to Orwin, “most evokes [Machiavelli’s] own situation. His is the failure that casts the most doubt on the possibility of Machiavelli’s success” (p. 158). Orwin’s withering and penetrating treatment of Cesare is a significant contribution to the scholarship: After the death of his father, Cesare might hope, at best, to be an “abject flunky” to either a Spanish or French pope (p. 164). Orwin concludes that Cesare, “by deploying an unchristian bag of tricks however unwittingly on behalf of the Christian pontificate . . . had given it a new lease on life” (p. 166). Cesare’s new modes benefit the “ancient order” by which his soul remained captured and to which his fortune remained subject. Machiavelli underscores his dim view of Cesare by juxtaposing his dubious success with the unequivocal virtue of pagans, the “limited” success of Francesco Sforza, and the limitless possibility of his own writing, which promises him a legacy that will outstrip that of pagans and Christians (pp. 168–170).

Populism’s Power: Radical Grassroots Democracy in America. By Laura Grattan. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. 304pp. \$99.00.
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— Thea N. Riofrancos, *Providence College*

In this remarkably timely book, Laura Grattan recovers a heterogeneous American populist imaginary, cross-cut

with rebellious and reactionary aspirations, resonating across political institutions and popular culture and offering a new perspective on the nature of popular sovereignty. For its liberal critics, populism is the dark underbelly of democratic rule: riled up by demagogues, the tyrannical majority is seen as impatient with constitutional procedure and quick to trample the rights of individuals and minorities. But even theories of liberal democracy are haunted by the question of popular sovereignty: Whether they seek recourse in a nationally defined demos, a shared civic culture, or an overlapping consensus, an extraprocedural collective identity sneaks its way in. This is the paradoxical condition of democratic sovereignty: “The people” both constitute, and are constituted by, democratic institutions.

Populism’s Power compellingly argues that populist movements emerge at the heart of this paradox, and pose two key questions for democracy in theory and in practice: “Who are the people? And how should the people enact their power in politics?” (p. 10). Most scholars of populism have focused on the first question—the rhetorical construction of collective identity—and much less so on the second. But for Grattan, it is the complex relationship between populist movements and the practice of democratic rule that accounts for populism’s recurrent emergence in modern democracies: Populist movements contest constitutional limits on the exercise of democracy, and “experiment with alternative institutions and practices of popular power,” from referenda to community organizing (p. 10).

In a book that defies divisions between subfields and disciplines, yet remains firmly situated in concerns central to the study of politics, Grattan’s analysis moves among democratic theory, affect theory, American history, popular culture, and contemporary U.S. politics, channeling the diversity of populism in practice to enrich the author’s conceptual framework. Grattan adds substantial texture and variety to the theorization of populism without ever losing sight of the dual questions of collective identity and popular power. First, she addresses populism’s wide ideological range, distinguishing between “aspirational democratic populism” and “regulated populism” (pp. 39–48, 94–96). The former, which constitutes her primary interest, is motivated by “rebellious aspirations” to contest existing hierarchies and establish more egalitarian forms of sharing power. Regulated populism, in contrast, is characterized by exclusionary visions of the people (often in explicit contrast to internal or external marginalized others), and draws upon and stokes “reactionary” and “cruel” aspirations. Reactionary aspirations comprise “desires to dominate” and the definition of the demos within the parameters of a “white, masculine brand of nationalism” (pp. 40–41). Cruel aspirations, meanwhile, relate to the tendency to “displace the people’s aspirations to power” via either demagogic leadership or the

attachment to an impossible ideal of autonomous individualism (pp. 96, 154). While both of these aspirations prevail in, and are kindled by, “regulated” populist movements such as the Tea Party, aspirational democratic populisms are not immune to their seductions, and have themselves reinscribed forms of racial and gender exclusion.

After mapping out the distinct ideological forms taken by populism, Grattan delves into the specific challenges faced by aspirational democratic populist movements. Each of the book’s three examples—the late nineteenth-century People’s Party, Occupy Wall Street, and the UndocuQueer movement—wrestles with a three-pronged dynamic: “the tensional relationships between outrageous resistance, everyday politics, and structural revolution” (p. 39). Grattan first explores this dynamic, and the disparate directions in which it pulls populist movements, in relation to the years leading up to the founding of the People’s Party in 1892. With its origins in the prior decades of agrarian and labor mobilization, the Populist movement forged an unlikely, and often uneasy, coalition between farmers indebted by the crop-lien system and workers subjected to workplace intimidation—or, if they committed the crime of not having employment, imprisonment and forced labor.

Regarding the first prong, Populists’ rhetorical practices invoked a collective subject of “the plain people” in resistance to “the money power,” pitting the producers of wealth against its appropriators, and calling for “co-operative commonwealth” as a political-economic alternative (pp. 57–59). Engaging with Jason Frank’s 2009 *Constituent Moments*, Grattan shows how Populist discourse became affectively charged reality during “dramas of popular enactment at mass rallies, parades, and conventions” (p. 65). At their most radical, these “practices of peopling” inverted hierarchies and disrupted routines. At the same time, such encounters also frequently reinscribed the exclusion of blacks, women, and immigrants, whether relegating them to tightly scripted roles or promoting revanchist visions of “the people” that valorized white masculinity. Alongside these more spectacular events, Populists engaged in the everyday work of building trans-local institutions to enact horizontal power relations and “democratic aspiration” (p. 71). These institutions included agrarian producer and consumer cooperatives; popular assemblies, boycotts, and strikes organized by the Knights of Labor; and the work of black populists, shut out by the Farmer’s Alliance “whites only” policy until 1889, who built popular power through the Colored Farmers’ Alliance, the Knights, and Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal (AME) churches, beneficial societies, insurance societies, and cooperative enterprises.

The third and most challenging element of any aspirational democratic populism is transforming the broader political and economic structures that reinforce

inequality. As Grattan argues, such a structural orientation is “crucial not only to level concentrations of income, wealth, and status, but also to open spaces for people to cultivate aspirations to popular power where they do not yet exist” (p. 170). Attempting to scale up from “everyday institutions” to structural transformation has its pitfalls: In the case of the People’s Party, the turn to electoral politics and the co-option of their movement by the Democratic Party serves as an important warning (p. 82). For Grattan, however, the demobilization of the Populist movement should not reinforce radical democrats’ tendency to see politics as a zero-sum choice between localized experiments in horizontalism and “long-term strategies to revolutionize institutions”—a trap Occupy Wall Street, though it did channel energy into other social justice campaigns, ultimately fell into (p. 170). Instead, populist movements can harness their transformative potential when they “acknowledge the paradoxical condition of cultivating rebellious aspirations to power: the need to develop visions, practices, and longer-term strategies to engage the world both as it is and as it is not yet” (p. 88).

Grattan’s analysis of this “paradoxical condition” helps clarify the structural asymmetry between aspirational democratic populism and regulated populism. Since World War II, American populisms that appeal to reactionary and cruel aspirations have repeatedly mobilized, “[linking] economic conservatism to racism and . . . both to antigovernment populism” (p. 88). This “conservative capture” of populism, which ultimately “set the stage” for Richard Nixon’s Southern strategy and Ronald Reagan’s neoliberal populism, severed populism’s potential for economic radicalism from “cultural contests over the people and democracy”—and aligned the latter with capitalist ideology (pp. 88–89).

The consolidation of right-wing populism has a self-reinforcing dynamic. First of all, there is a powerful, densely networked institutional and media infrastructure—think tanks, Fox News, right-wing talk radio, evangelical churches—poised to amplify reactionary messages and xenophobic visions of “the people” (Grattan, quoting William Connolly, refers to this complex as the “evangelical-capitalist resonance machine” p. 42). Second of all, the very political success of regulated populism has generated an “air of inevitability surrounding the de-democratizing trends of today’s ‘second Gilded Age’” (p. 90). This “air of inevitability” is not just psychological resignation. The Tea Party has substantively contributed to recent antidemocratic trends: “narrowing citizenship rights, restricting access to social programs, and supporting austerity and tax measures that enhance the ultrarich” (p. 157). Third, and perhaps more troubling (and timely), Grattan demonstrates how regulated populism shores up the very conditions under which it flourishes. Worsening inequality, exacerbated in part by policies for which the Tea Party has lobbied (due to their “cruel optimism” in

free-market individualism), is fertile ground for “reactionary aspirations to dominate marginalized groups” (p. 154). As a corollary, “Grassroots regulated populisms,” such as the Tea Party, “will continue to be pivotal for the success of the neoliberal project” (p. 158). Either dismissing the Tea Party as pure “Astroturf” or glorifying it as a “grassroots” movement results in failure to see how it was the resonant dynamic *between* these two registers of politics that enabled its political success.

Populism’s Power situates both democratic aspirational and regulated populisms in the cultural terrain that Grattan calls “America’s populist imaginary.” As she writes, “populist actors who aim to contest the identity of the people and reconstitute popular power do so not only in the narrow field of liberal institutions and procedures but in a larger cultural context that shapes people’s ideas and aspirations related to democracy” (p. 93). To this end, Grattan presents creative readings of cultural texts ranging from Chevrolet advertisements to Leonard Cohen’s song “Democracy” to the rebellious hip-hop of Chuck D. and Public Enemy. At times the author slides into making claims about the political effects of these cultural texts. For example, a Chevy ad “taps into anxieties,” “incapacitates politics itself,” and “neutralizes and feeds off the rebellious aspirations” (pp. 107, 111). In contrast, Cohen’s messianic “Democracy,” which invokes a democracy-to-come from the “wreckage” and “disrepair” of capitalist America, “offers . . . listeners the opportunity to play an active role in cocreating his song’s meaning and its promise of democracy” (pp. 115, 123). The song “unsettles its listeners” and, ultimately, “exemplifies practices of radical democratic peopling” (pp. 125, 127). While Grattan does provide one example of audiences coproducing texts (user-generated satirical and rebellious spoofs of Chevy’s “Anthem” ad), in general her analysis of the populist imaginary presumes political and cultural effects in the world without adequately attending to circulation, reception, and emic interpretation—a notable absence in a book otherwise sensitive to such social practices.

Despite this one shortcoming, *Populism’s Power* provides much needed historical context and theoretical clarity to contemporary debates over populism. Grattan constructs an innovative conceptual apparatus and uses it to analyze populism in all of its ideological variety—and firmly situates these diverse populisms in the paradoxical condition of democracy.

Right-Wing Critics of American Conservatism. By George Hawley. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2016. 366p. \$34.95.
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— Richard Boyd, *Georgetown University*

Donald J. Trump’s upset victory took professional observers of American politics by surprise. Irrespective of the

results of the 2016 elections, however, Trump’s ascendancy already signaled a power shift within the right-wing of American politics. After spurning a series of presumptive Republican favorites such as Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio, and John Kasich in the primaries, voters flatly ignored “Never Trump” spoiler efforts by party leaders. Not only did Trump’s campaign serve to crystalize nagging dissatisfactions with mainstream conservative politicians and opinion makers; it also tapped into illiberal undercurrents of right-wing politics long suppressed by the respectable GOP establishment.

Many have dismissed Trump as *sui generis*—a charismatic figure whose authoritarian predilections and penchant for nativist, xenophobic, and misogynistic rhetoric are unprecedented. But is his brand of conservatism really so new? As George Hawley reveals in a fascinating and timely study, *Right-Wing Critics of American Conservatism*, there are historical antecedents to Trumpism. Although the name Trump does not appear in this book, which went to press sometime in early 2015, it is impossible to make sense of the past year and a half of electoral politics without considering the history of extremist challenges to reigning postwar neoconservative orthodoxy.

As Hawley points out, the right wing of American politics has been a hotchpotch for the last 50 years or so. In contrast to the “Old Right” that dominated in the 1930s, the postwar right of “organized conservatism” is “fusionist” in nature (pp. 30–37). Before Trump came along, the GOP operated as an uneasy coalition of free-market-touting libertarians; hawkish advocates of U.S. foreign policy; evangelical Christians and other traditionalists dedicated to family values and opposing abortion, gay marriage, and women’s reproductive rights; as well as sundry figures loosely tolerated at its fringes. What then, if anything, defines conservatism in America? While “there is not a single ideological principle that unifies the right,” Hawley contends, what keeps these groups together, and allows us to speak about “the Right” in some meaningful sense, is that they “hold some other social value in greater esteem than equality” (p. 268). If the Left is broadly defined by its unqualified acceptance of the value of equality, then the Right necessarily opposes the Left “in all cases where the push for equality threatens some other value held in higher esteem,” as for, example, economic liberty, national security, or traditional forms of morality (p. 12).

Like any political ideology fraught with centrifugal tendencies, conservatism needs to be able to determine what passes—or rather *does not* pass—as legitimate. Hawley’s narrative is focused on efforts by mainstream conservatives and their institutional organs to suppress unorthodox factions of the Far Right. We are reminded that “Never Trump” is but the latest in a long series of establishment struggles against such figures as Robert Welch and the John Birch Society, David Duke and his white supremacist opposition to Civil Rights, Ayn Rand