

populism can be useful tools that allow rulers to manufacture citizens' demands for exactly those policies that the rulers prefer. Evidence that, in fact, elites regularly manipulate public opinion—and many believe that they certainly do—would cast serious doubts on the idea of using “listening to the public” as an indicator of QoD. Or, if the public is xenophobic, QoD would go up as rulers implement laws that discriminate against minorities or foreigners. Putting so much emphasis on following the will of the majority obviously raises the question of what one is supposed to do with the legitimate and often high-intensity, nonnegotiable policy preferences of structural minorities. Treating the “people” as a uniform group of citizens with simple preference structures is a particularly strong assumption, especially in Eastern Europe, a region riddled with severe and highly politicized minority issues, but probably also for any democracy.

Declaring majority rule as the only principle of democracy might allow for an elegant and analytically more useful definition of QoD. It comes at the cost, however, of leaving out long-standing debates on what else democracy can and should be by definition. As the author argues, not all extensions of the notion of QoD necessarily commit the fallacy of including either causes or consequences of democracy in the concept of QoD. According to democratic theorists, some of them, such as the rule of law, belong to the very essence of democracy just the same as majority rule does. The trick of achieving high QoD, it seems, is to find the right balances (plural) between these conflicting principles of democracy, rather than giving prevalence to one over the others.

It might thus seem that we are back to square one where QoD is unavoidably a complex multidimensional concept that, because of its nature, is intractable in comparative research. After reading *The Quality of Democracy in Eastern Europe*, however, we are not. The author deserves applause for pushing the debate on QoD forward and for being motivated to think about this topic in new and fruitful ways. His fine book is a must-read for everybody concerned about the present state of democracies—young and old alike.

States Without Nations: Citizenship for Mortals.

By Jacqueline Stevens. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009.

384 p. \$35.00.

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— Elizabeth F. Cohen, *Syracuse University*

Jacqueline Stevens sets a dramatic stage for her new book by pointing out that state-sponsored violence is, in statistical terms, a public health crisis. By framing her argument in terms of public health, she asserts that people's ethnic, national, racial, or religious identity predisposes them to state-sponsored violence in much the same way as childhood obesity predisposes a person to adult diabetes. The goal of this book is to identify the sources of nation-

state violence and argue strenuously for their elimination. As the public health analogy illustrates, Stevens challenges assumptions about citizenship so deeply held that it is difficult to keep oneself from reverting to them. Because of this, *States Without Nations* advances discussions about citizenship and political power much more so than the average monograph in political science.

Stevens prefaces her proposition for transcending nation-state sponsored violence with the conclusion of her preceding book, *Reproducing the State* (1999), which argued that the legal family is a fiction instantiated by nation-states in order to allow them to make equally artificial claims to naturalness. As the legal family is naturalized, its hereditary relationships work in concert with rules of birthright citizenship (either *jus sanguinis* or *jus soli*) to automatically ensure nation-states of perpetually stable “natural-born” populations. The quality of naturalness also justifies demanding individuals' loyalty to the nation even when such loyalty requires that they give their lives over to it.

In addition to its false claims of naturalness, the specific form of family that nation-states have invented embodies gender biases. Following Freud, Stevens argues that these biases exist to assuage male pregnancy and birth envy. Pregnancy and birth guarantee women a connection to life beyond the boundaries of their own mortality that men lack. Stevens asserts that men have used gendered family law and violence, both of which are integral to the history of the nation-state, to compensate for their fears of mortality. In making these arguments she draws directly on Freud and Simone de Beauvoir and, indirectly, on Carole Pateman. Her contemporary fellow travelers include Joseph Carens and Ayelet Shachar, the latter of whom also argues against birthright citizenship, though not the abolition of the nation-state, as Stevens notes.

Stevens supports the disempowerment of groups whose anxieties about their own mortality prompt them to preempt one vision of death (their own) with nationalist politics that cause other kinds of death. She argues that we need to denaturalize the legal family by exposing its psycho-social political origins, in the process delegitimizing the family's most virulent political analog, the nation itself. She reasons that by accepting the artificiality of legally constructed families, states will be empowered to eliminate laws of inheritance and to appropriate the property of the deceased. Material property that no longer passes intergenerationally can be redistributed to meet the basic needs of the world's population. The author also intends for states to abolish the transfer of their most valuable political capital, citizenship, from parents to children. This requires eliminating birthright citizenship rules, replacing legally endorsed marriages with parenting contracts, and invalidating private land rights.

Anyone who has followed Stevens's courageous public challenges to US Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention and deportation practices will be unsurprised

by the scope of her aims and the diversity of intellectual resources she marshals in support of her agenda. The breadth and creativity of her arguments are refreshing. Given the ambition of Stevens's agenda and her provocative claims, it is inevitable that readers will have questions about the implications of her arguments. In the following I offer two sets of queries directed at Stevens's claims about birthright citizenship and the religious/hereditary origins of political violence.

First, while birthright citizenship is a worthy object of critique, its demise could conceivably lead to more pernicious membership arrangements. The elimination of birthright political privileges for some won't guarantee full citizenship for others (such as migrant and guest workers). What is to prevent the replacement of birthright citizenship with a more explicitly market-based system of membership? Equally worrisome is the prospect of the parceling of citizenship into forms of semi-citizenship that reserve certain rights (for example full franchise rights) for an even smaller circle than currently enjoys them. On a related note, the prospect of eliminating privately held land might be alarming to the millions of people who aspire to use their most significant resource, labor, to acquire property that will better their position relative to more affluent people. One might even argue that family-based reunification, which the abolition of the legally constructed family would presumably eradicate, is more progressive than policies in which globally mobile workers are exploited by markets that devalue their labor and obstruct the kinds of attachments that could ground their claims of membership. Conversely, Bryan S. Turner illustrates the point that developments such as transnationalism and postnational citizenship, which many thought would cause the demise of national boundaries, have instead hailed the rapid emergence of privatized security, biomedicine, border policing, and other sources of immobilizing "enclaves societies" ("Enclosures, Enclaves, and Entrapment," *Sociological Inquiry* 80 [April 2010]: 241–60). Even as Turner shares Stevens's concerns about the deadly effects of nationalism, his argument makes it difficult to have confidence that the removal of any given barrier to free movement will inexorably lead to the radical democratization of membership.

Next, a set of at least two broad questions is raised by the author's claims that nearly all mass violence in modern history is a direct outcome of political communities defined by hereditary or religious ties. First, it is imperative that Stevens explain to her audience why they should share her faith that politics not premised on the blood ties of ethnic nations will be immune from the corrupting influence of power and fear of external threats that cause states to deteriorate into violence when they experience instability. Second, Stevens comments only briefly on ideological violence (using Naomi Klein as her foil). To this point, it would be useful to learn more about Stevens's analysis of what Michael Mann terms "classicide" (*The Dark Side of Democ-*

racy, 2004). Classicide refers to forms of mass political violence not predicated either on hereditary or on religious premises but, rather, on class. Because Stevens advocates replacing private property with collective/state ownership, one is left wondering whether acts of mass political violence perpetrated on behalf of ideologies that have frequently referred to collective ownership of property and resources will truly cease following the adoption of her proposals. In short, more reassurance is required that leaders and regimes whose motivations for political violence are not reducible to hereditary or religiously-based ties will be disarmed by a world of states without nations.

This request for Stevens to "say more" should convey the message that *States Without Nations* requires sustained attention from political theorists and citizenship scholars. Its agenda is ambitious and provocative. The author relies on unexpected forms of evidence and unpredictable turns of reasoning that are, unfortunately, absent from the many contemporary works in the field whose authors call and respond to one another rather than breaking new ground. For these reasons of form, as well as much of its substance, this book is a welcome addition to the citizenship literature.

Judicial Politics in New Democracies: Cases from Southern Africa. By Peter VonDoepp. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2009. 185p. \$55.00.
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— Nic Cheeseman, *Oxford University*

This book represents an important contribution to our understanding of judiciaries and democratization in Africa and the third wave more generally. By developing a thought-provoking comparative framework through which to understand the degree of autonomy enjoyed by judiciaries in southern Africa, Peter VonDoepp has gone some way toward plugging a significant gap in the extant literature. Despite the great excitement and numerous publications that greeted Africa's return to multipartism, scant attention was paid to the internal politics of many key democratic institutions. In part, this was because commentators assumed that the patrimonial nature of political competition rendered such institutions impotent. In part, it was because data on these institutions was not freely available, and Africanists were not accustomed to searching for it. As a result, a worrying ignorance of the internal functioning of parties, legislatures, and judiciaries has threatened to undermine our understanding of the microdynamics of democratization (and de-democratization) on the continent. Thanks to a flurry of recent publications, these institutional histories are finally being excavated. Following two important edited collections on legislatures and elections (Joel Barkan's *Legislative Power in Emerging African Democracies*, 2009, and Staffan Lindberg's *Democratization by Elections*, 2009), this book promises to return judicial politics to the center stage of