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Far Right Parties and Euroscepticism

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news stories have played in the changing newscasts over the years, steadily creeping toward the top of the newscast. Even though the volume of polls has grown significantly over the past half-century, the volume of poll coverage on CBS peaked in 1992, the year of the highly volatile contest among Bill Clinton, George H.W. Bush and Ross Perot. While no subsequent cycle of election news matched the amount of poll reporting that year, journalists continued to use survey results to contextualize candidate choices and campaign dynamics throughout the elections that followed.

This book offers a very thorough treatment of the interplay between surveys, reporters and presidential campaign stories generated on CBS News. Even so, Craig might have said a bit more about his decision to downplay the role of state-level surveys in this discussion. While television newscasts have consistently focused on nationwide surveys through most of the study period, the increasing use of battleground state polls in the evening newscasts in more

recent election cycles arguably deserves more attention than Craig provides.

This highly accessible book has great relevance to undergraduate courses in political communication, media studies and journalism. Today's students will be fascinated by the "just the facts" orientation of CBS News during the years of Walter Cronkite, and even by the occasional departures from that standard, a very different approach from the "politics as sports" orientation of contemporary campaign journalism. Well-fashioned, thoughtful essays from Eric Sevareid and Andy Rooney on campaign polls from a generation or two ago are presented here, and likewise provide a compelling contrast from today's white-hot political commentary found online and on partisan cable outlets.

For some scholars, this book offers compelling evidence that there really was a golden age of television news. For others, this book offers a dismal recounting of the decline in campaign news reporting and analysis on television over the past half-century.

Sofia Vasilopoulou, *Far Right Parties and Euroscepticism*. Colchester: ECPR Press, 2018; xiii+ 191 pp.: ISBN 9781785522291, £50.00 (hbk).

Reviewed by: Benjamin Leruth, *University of Groningen*
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Over the past two decades, Euroscepticism has become a genuine sub-field in the rich literature on European studies. The United Kingdom's vote to leave the European Union in June 2016 further demonstrated the need to get a better understanding of patterns of opposition to European integration, both at mass and elite levels. Leading scholars have published ground-breaking studies to analyse and understand party-based Euroscepticism. Sofia Vasilopoulou, the author of this volume, is one of them. In *Far Right Parties and Euroscepticism: Patterns of Opposition*, she offers an essential contribution to the existing literature which reflects on research she has conducted for more than a decade.

The main objective of this book is to conceptualise, analyse and explain patterns of far right Euroscepticism. Vasilopoulou distinguishes three types of far right opposition: rejectionist, conditional and compromising. In Chapters 2 and 3, the author identifies 14 far right parties in 11 European countries and makes a strong case for the use of such conceptualisation. Instead of offering a broad study of these 14 parties (which would have been undeniably superficial), the book focuses on three parties and analyses their opposition to European integration in comparative perspective. Each of these parties represent one of the above-mentioned patterns of Euroscepticism: the French National

Front (rejectionist Euroscepticism – Chapter 4); the Greek Popular Orthodox Rally (conditional Euroscepticism – Chapter 5); and the Italian National Alliance (compromising Euroscepticism – Chapter 6). Each of these three empirical chapters includes a wide range of primary and secondary data which many readers will find particularly valuable. This includes: interviews with Members of the European Parliament and an in-depth analysis of their speeches in Strasbourg, an analysis of the evolution of party manifestos, and the socio-demographic profile of party voters. One of the key findings of the book, as Vasilopoulou concludes in Chapter 7, is that far right parties do not oppose European integration to the same extent. Indeed, much depends on: the domestic context, the parties' degree of normalisation, their views on liberal democracy and their position on the political system. It is thus inaccurate to argue that all far right parties are equally Eurosceptic.

All scholars working in the field know that, much like populism studies, there is a strong division over what Euroscepticism effectively *is* and how it should be conceptualised. Several categorisations were put forward by leading scholars, from Taggart and Szczerbak's influential 'soft'/'hard' dichotomy to Kopecký and Mudde's four ideal-types of party-based Euroscepticism. Vasilopoulou's patterns of opposition do not attempt to compete against existing conceptualisations and thus does not add an extra layer of complexity in the field. Instead, by focusing solely on far right parties across Europe, she successfully attempts to refine existing studies of Euroscepticism and demonstrates the need to differentiate party-based Euroscepticism per party family. Given that opposition to European integration tends to be a key feature of far right parties' ideology – and that France, Greece and Italy are countries with

comparatively high levels of Euroscepticism – the case studies used in this analysis make a lot of sense. One might argue that the inclusion of one defunct party (the National Alliance) and another party whose influence has considerably declined since 2012 (the Greek Popular Orthodox Rally) makes the book less timely or slightly outdated. I would disagree with that view, as all three empirical chapters make a clear distinction between the three far right party models which can be used to conceptualise the evolving position of well-established and emerging far right parties across Europe. As such, the conceptualisation offered by Vasilopoulou can be applied to many other far right parties, such as the Dutch Party for Freedom or the Sweden Democrats for instance, and the volume thus paves the way for future research on far right Euroscepticism.

This book is based on Vasilopoulou's doctoral dissertation at the London School of Economics, entitled 'Euroscepticism and the radical right: domestic strategies and party system dynamics' and published in 2010. Her research was brilliantly summarised in an article published in *Government and Opposition* in 2011 (volume 46, issue

2). Since then, much has changed at the European Union level. Yet, this volume takes into consideration some of the most recent developments by including up-to-date data, while the conclusion discusses the impact of events such as the migration crisis, the Brexit referendum or the election of Donald Trump as President of the United States.

Published ahead of the crucial 2019 European Parliament elections, this was an important book which should be read by all scholars interested in populism, the radical right and opposition to European integration. It also provides key insights to practitioners and journalists, as major differences between far right parties provided by the author tend to be overlooked by the media. In sum, Vasilopoulou's book is a brilliant comparative study and it should be used as a key text for future studies on the topic. As far right parties (like pro-European and Eurosceptic movements) will need to adapt their position as a response to Brexit, *Far Right Parties and Euroscepticism: Patterns of Opposition* provides both the theoretical and empirical foundations needed for an in-depth understanding of party-based Euroscepticism.

Benjamin Farrer, *Organizing for Policy Influence. Comparing Parties, Interest Groups, and Direct Action*. New York: Routledge, 2018; 248 pp.: ISBN: 9781138724815.

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In *Organizing for Policy Influence*, Benjamin Farrer clarifies under which conditions some political organizations are more effective than others. He develops and tests "a theory of organizational choice," based on a formal signaling model that predicts the allocation of resources by activists to three different types of political organizations: political parties, interest groups and direct action groups; the latter referring to organizations that try to work around the political system, for instance via political consumerism. He focuses specifically on the political representation of minority groups, whom he defines as "any set of individuals for who one issue is highly salient, but where this issue is not salient in wider society" (p. 3).

His theoretical framework distinguishes response costs and access costs, the former referring to how costly it is for mainstream parties to change their platform on niche issues, while the latter relates to the effort it requires for activists to signal electoral relevance, which is necessary to convince politicians to pay the response costs (p. 77). The nature and balance between response and access costs is shaped by the interaction of three institutions: electoral rules, the degree of corporatism and the level of

decentralization. One of the key findings is that "interest groups are the least costly choice, even when electoral rules are proportional, and it is only when corporatism is high (...) that parties become the optimal organizational choice" (p. 225). Aside from a chapter that examines new party entry and party system size, the empirical analyses focus on the political organization of environmentalists. Specifically, the chapters address organizational choices of activists as well as their policy influence and motivations, combining quantitative analyses at the individual and national level.

Farrer provides an insightful review of previous research and an extensive justification of the chosen analytical approaches, which demonstrates both his mastery of key scholarly debates on these different topics as well as his ability to approach them from a novel perspective. He is also very transparent about the accumulative nature of his work, his choices in terms of data and empirical approaches, and the resulting limitations. While these are considered standard guidelines of high-quality scientific research, they are not often applied in such a systematic and thorough manner. While the book generally reads easily and most arguments are formulated in a clear and logical way, some sections run over 15 pages and consequently appear overly long. A more frequent use of sub-chapters would probably make it even easier to follow the author's reasoning.

Many scholars who study political organizations often limit their focus to one particular kind of organization, such as political parties or interest groups. Yet, to truly understand the functioning of these organizations, that all provide key vehicles for representation and political influence,