

him better” (p. 19). If so, we might only be slowly waking up to that fact that the Founders retained elements of monarchy and prerogative in the Constitution, to be invoked during crises (genuine or staged).

Second, all three books essentially tell a top-down story about the power play between the three federal branches, but they barely discuss the institutional balance of power, which is itself a result of public opinion, and, in particular, the distinct susceptibility of public opinion to presidential persuasion in moments of crisis. There is presidential power and there is war power (and there is presidential war power.) War powers open our eyes to the upper limit of presidential power, because it is just where prerogative is most in need and expansive indeed. As the American people were shell-shocked after the events of September 11, it was in this fluid and conducive environment that the Authorization for Use of Military Force Resolution (2001), the Iraq Joint Resolutions (2002), and the USA Patriot Act (2001) were passed.

Third, I wonder if it would have been rewarding for the authors to have toyed with the possibility that the Bush administration’s road to constitutional hell was lined with at least some good intentions, or even the possibility that what Bush did was constitutional, in the sense that while our Constitution was arguably stretched beyond recognition, we did not, and probably shall never, invoke its provisions for impeachment. And if so, either our Constitution is more elastic than we have expected, or presidential war power in the immediate aftermath of 9/11 could well have been *sui generis* because the president was allowed to cry wolf for up to six years, but not much more. Nevertheless, Ball, Bruff, and Pfiffner are right to remind us that as regards presidential power, and especially presidential war power, we need to stay ever vigilant.

The Legitimacy Puzzle in Latin America: Political Support and Democracy in Eight Nations. By John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 376p. \$83.99 cloth, \$24.99 paper. doi:10.1017/S1537592710001404

— Ryan E. Carlin, *Georgia State University*

Asserting that political legitimacy matters for regime stability is far easier than proving it. As John A. Booth and Mitchell A. Seligson point out, this presents a major theoretical problem. Despite David Easton’s (1975) prediction that regimes falter once their reservoirs of legitimacy are drained, the dramatic drop in institutional support in established democracies has not “consistently caused anything close to regime breakdown” (p. 5). Rather, discontented citizens are reinventing political participation and engaging with the political system on multiple fronts. The disjuncture between legitimacy theory and social reality has prompted some analysts to ask, “Where’s the beef?” (p. 3).

Booth and Seligson contend that testing Easton’s theory requires the resolution of three analytically prior puzzles concerning legitimacy’s 1) structure, 2) sources, and 3) implications. The authors begin with a rich survey questionnaire designed to tap six dimensions of legitimacy: *political community*, *regime principles*, *regime institutions*, *regime performance*, *local government*, and *political authorities*. The surveys were conducted in eight countries (Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, and Colombia) in 2004 by the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), and they adhere to high methodological standards and norms.

Throughout their analyses, Booth and Seligson take pains to avoid pitfalls of previous works. For instance, to uncover the structure of legitimacy, they employ multiple items for each dimension, none of which ask specifically about “democracy.” To test their six-pronged conceptualization of legitimacy, they use a more theoretically defensible form of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), rather than techniques that assume orthogonal dimensions (Figure 2.2). And, in light of recent trends toward state decentralization, the addition of local government legitimacy constitutes a major contribution to our understanding of the structure of legitimacy.

What they find is noteworthy. The average respondent in their eight-country sample registers relatively high levels of diffuse support for the political community and regime principles, but quite modest levels of specific legitimacy (regime institutions, authorities, local government, regime performance). This is surprising considering that diffuse support is theorized to mount over long periods of successful governance and economic management, a condition that does not characterize the regimes under study.

Turning to the sources of legitimacy (Chapter 4), Booth and Seligson hypothesize legitimacy to be a function of the macrosocial context, microsocial experiences and attitudes, and individual attributes. They also expect long-term factors to have a greater influence on diffuse legitimacy and short-term factors to matter more for specific dimensions. Limited degrees of freedom force the authors to analyze macrosocial variables one at a time. Nevertheless, reasonable associations emerge: Democratic experience increases support for the political community, good governance boosts the legitimacy of regime institutions, and growth over the previous fifteen years predicts satisfaction with regime performance. They find some intriguing microsocial patterns as well. Interpersonal trust correlates with all six legitimacy dimensions, bolstering theorized linkages between social capital and democracy. Better-educated citizens find the political community, regime principles, and local government legitimate, but question institutions and authorities. And while voting for a losing presidential candidate has no bearing on support for regime principles, it reduces legitimacy on every other dimension, including the political community. In general, then,

the evidence supports the guiding expectation that legitimacy springs from both macro- and microlevel sources.

Next, Booth and Seligson investigate legitimacy's implications by advancing a theory: The most *and* least politically supportive citizens should be expected to engage the political system via multiple modes of participation and more avidly than citizens holding middling levels of legitimacy. Not all dimensions of legitimacy impact all modes of participation, but when they do, this curvilinear relationship often holds (Chapter 5). Next, the authors show that rosy evaluations of regime performance and political authorities dampen support for both rebellions and coups d'état—striking findings for an economically and politically volatility region (Chapter 6). Adhesion to regime principles and institutions bolsters support for confrontational political action, meaning that demonstrations, road blocks, and building occupations have entered Latin Americans' repertoire of political expression and participation. Lastly, legitimacy reduces the preference for democratically elected leaders, but the effect is dwarfed by the positive effects of corruption victimization (Chapter 7). Legitimacy better reflects the perceived supply of democracy than demand for it. The effects of participation on the perceived supply of democracy vary in surprising ways. Citizens active in civil society, parties, and campaigns perceive more democracy, while protesters and those who contact officials perceive less, indicating potential feedback loops.

On the basis of these empirical findings, Booth and Seligson believe that they have solved the main legitimacy puzzle: why regimes do not collapse when legitimacy is low. Since legitimacy is multidimensional, there is no cognitive dissonance between holding diffuse legitimacy (i.e., feeling part of the political community, valuing core regime principles and norms) and evaluating regime performance and incumbent national and local authorities poorly. And rather than withdrawing from political life, disgruntled citizens are encouraged by democracy to remain engaged in within-system politics instead of resorting exclusively to confrontational or illegal actions. Thus, low legitimacy can indirectly reinforce democratic institutions. Previous conclusions that legitimacy plays only a minor role in the behaviors and attitudes that influence democratic stability are likely due to an overreliance on the regime institutions dimension.

So when might low legitimacy destabilize democratic regimes? Booth and Seligson build a simple hypothesis based on the ratio of "triply satisfied" and "triply dissatisfied" citizens in the polity (measured via support for regime principles, institutions, and performance indicators). Considering that both groups are highly participatory, they reason that if the ratio of triply dissatisfieds to triply satisfied exceeds 1.0, the conditions are ripe for antidemocratic mobilization by coup plotters and/or antagonistic candidates. Honduras and Guatemala are the only two

cases that exceed this threshold. While the authors hedge their bets on their ability to forecast future disruptions, the 2009 coup against Honduran President Manuel Zelaya and subsequent social turmoil is consistent with their hypothesis.

This compelling book will surely advance the research agenda on legitimacy. An obvious question is whether its key results vis-à-vis the structure, sources, and implications of legitimacy hold beyond the eight-country sample and within it over time. Further exploration of macrolevel factors remains a priority, as does the finding that the best predictor of democracy-enhancing behaviors and attitudes, regime performance, corresponds to economic, not strictly political, evaluations. Moreover, the triply satisfied/dissatisfied ratio hypothesis lays the groundwork for more explicit theorizing about the cultural, elite, economic, and institutional conditions of democratic instability. Democracy's return in Peru and Honduras, its erosion in Venezuela, and its uneven trajectory in Bolivia and Ecuador represent excellent proving grounds for this hypothesis. And it could potentially be tested at the elite level using the Universidad de Salamanca survey project. Existing and future waves of LAPOP surveys will be invaluable resources for probing these and other pressing questions.

In sum, this book inches us closer to a solution to the legitimacy puzzle and sheds light on the broader role political culture plays in macro-political outcomes. Its findings are likely to provoke both reflection and debate. As such, it should top the reading lists of students of Latin American politics in particular and of democratization scholars in general.

How East Asians View Democracy. Edited by Yun-han Chu, Larry Diamond, Andrew J. Nathan, and Doh Chull Shin. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008. 328p. \$26.50.
doi:10.1017/S1537592710001428

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The central question of this edited volume is clearly important. Since the 1980s, East Asia has seen numerous transitions from authoritarian rule to democracy. Until recently, however, there have been only very few comparative analyses of citizen orientations toward democracy in this region. *How East Asians View Democracy* is, therefore, an essential addition that ventures into mostly uncharted terrain.

This volume is the first to arise from the Asia Barometer Survey project, the leading comparative survey of citizens' attitudes, values, and political actions in Asia. It is based on opinion polls conducted between June 2001 and February 2003 in one authoritarian country (China), one semidemocracy (Hong Kong), five emerging democracies (Mongolia, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand) and one established democracy (Japan). The same set of questions was posed to significant