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says about federalism's downside is that federalism's critics misrepresent it by associating it with a Calhounian theory of state sovereignty (pp. 89–94). Perhaps so, but federalism has more costs than Garry acknowledges.

To Garry, federalism promotes liberty by allowing diversity in state legislation, compared to a nationalizing centralism. Here he overlooks the possibility that legislation can be liberty-promoting and its absence liberty-limiting, as well as the possibility that a centralized system can adopt diversity-promoting policies as a matter of choice rather than constitutional compulsion. And Garry's survey of modern rights jurisprudence enumerates centralized solutions but downplays the many cases in which the modern Court has refrained from imposing such solutions—including cases allowing states to regulate and take property as they choose.

Perhaps the oddest discussion, and one that students should be warned about, deals with judicial review of administrative action. According to Garry, “By increasing the power of the agencies, the courts have in turn increased their own power” (p. 43). Hard-look review and easing standing requirements to challenge administrative action do increase judicial power relative to a baseline of complete deference to agency decision making. Garry works hard but with limited success to minimize the plainly deferential effects of the *Chevron* doctrine. More important, nothing about aggressive judicial review of agency action increases judicial power vis-à-vis Congress and the president. In administrative law, the political branches are free to reject what the courts do. Garry's discussion of administrative law fits awkwardly into his overall argument.

Garry's assessment of separation-of-powers cases is somewhat skewed. Some of those cases involve laws that either intrude on judicial prerogatives or expand judicial power, and Garry correctly observes that the courts uphold the latter and invalidate the former. But many separation-of-powers cases, such as line-item and legislative veto cases, involve the balance of power between the president and Congress. As to these cases, it is misleading to assert that the Court's decisions have “chipped away at [the] power and freedom” of both political branches (p. 68).

The book's brevity makes it no more than a good and temperate introduction to the conservative case for federalism and one version of the separation of powers, valuable as such, but needing supplementation to provide a more comprehensive view of those structures.

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Echo Chamber: Rush Limbaugh and the Conservative Media Establishment by Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph N. Cappella. New York, Oxford University Press, 2008. 320 pp. \$24.95.

In the brief history of twenty-first century American politics, few developments have been as profound as the transformation of the media environment.

The dizzying proliferation of information sources—24-hour cable networks, online news sites, and blogs, among others—is rapidly expanding citizens’ menu for political news. Against this backdrop, Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Joseph N. Cappella examine one aspect of this shift: the rise of a conservative media establishment over the last two decades.

The authors contend that Rush Limbaugh’s radio talk show, Fox News, and the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal* constitute an “echo chamber” that promotes and defends Reagan conservatism (limited government, robust foreign policy) and the fortunes of the Republican Party. As such, these outlets create an ideologically comfortable space for conservatives with a taste for political news that resonates with their existing beliefs.

In the opening chapters, Jamieson and Cappella examine the framing of two events—the 2002 controversy over then-U.S. Senate Majority Leader Trent Lott’s comments about former segregationist presidential candidate Strom Thurmond and the portrayal of Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry during the 2004 campaign—to illustrate how these outlets promote conservatism, attack liberals, and denigrate the mainstream media. The authors’ rendering of these events, and several others, provides a rich, textural feel for the way arguments are marshaled to defend and promote conservative ideology.

In the second half of the book, Jamieson and Cappella argue that exposure to conservative media—and in particular, Limbaugh, the focus of most of the book—leads individuals to adopt more-extreme attitudes, hold distorted perceptions of opposition viewpoints, and interpret facts in ideologically friendly ways. It is these effects that observers fear will be institutionalized by a fragmented media environment, and that will threaten democratic deliberation and discourse.

Indeed, Jamieson and Cappella express concern over the consequences of partisan news—the polarization of political attitudes and the ease with which emotion can prevail over reason. But they also note its potential benefits. Ideologically charged news may spur political interest, lead citizens to see politics as meaningful, and promote political engagement. Readers familiar with Diana Mutz’s work on social networks, *Hearing the Other Side: Deliberative versus Participatory Democracy*, will recognize the tension: the same factors that inhibit deliberation promote political participation.

This is a lively book, and one that will be of interest to students of political communication and American politics more generally. I will, however, note a couple of concerns. For one, the authors fail to provide a broader framework to understand the nature of ideological programming in the new media environment. Limbaugh and others are clearly protectors of Reagan conservatism. But they are also central to the Republican Party apparatus (just ask Republican National Committee Chairman Michael Steele). Under what circumstances are Limbaugh and others willing to promote conservatism even if it damages their own party? Thinking about this issue might yield insight into what we can expect from the recent, and predictable, rise of expressly liberal

media outlets. News sources that have as their core mission the promotion of an ideology are bound to find themselves at odds with the direction of their party on occasion. More theorizing about the conditions under which ideological considerations are likely to trump party fortunes is warranted.

Questions of empirics and impact also remain. The audience for partisan news sources is small; Limbaugh's regular audience, for example, constitutes less than 10 percent of the public (pp. 46, 254). Given that his audience consists largely of committed partisans who tune in because they enjoy hearing him cheerlead their own team and disparage the other side, what effects does the content of his show have on election outcomes or political discourse writ large? Jamieson and Cappella acknowledge the difficulty of disentangling Limbaugh's effects on his listeners from the effects of selective exposure. But even if we grant that Limbaugh has the power to move his already-conservative audience even further to the right, how much does it matter? This is one of the many questions that can be answered as the media environment continues its evolution.

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Choices and Changes: Interest Groups in the Electoral Process by Michael M. Franz. Philadelphia, PA, Temple University Press, 2008. 240 pp. Cloth, \$74.50; paper, \$23.95.

In the wake of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 and its 1974 amendments, group involvement in elections took a dramatic turn. The number of interests attempting to influence elections proliferated, accompanied by spiraling expenditures. At first, the expenditures were largely in the form of "hard money," disclosed and/or limited by Federal Election Commission (FEC) regulations, such as contributions to candidates through political action committees (PACs). Over the past quarter century, but especially since the mid-1990s, groups have begun changing their strategies and influence techniques, spending even greater sums of money and utilizing a broader array of tactics. Various "soft money" tactics such as "issue advocacy electioneering" have become prevalent, where expenditures are unlimited and typically outside of the scrutiny of the FEC. When soft money contributions to national political parties were banned by the Bipartisan Campaign Reform Act of 2002, 527 Committees became in vogue, as some organizations circumvented the intent of the new law.

In *Choices and Changes*, political scientist Michael Franz attempts to uncover why and under what circumstances groups altered their strategies and tactics in order to affect electoral outcomes. The volume is a revised and extended version of a dissertation that received the prestigious E.E. Schattschneider Prize from the American Political Science Association as the outstanding con-