

# The Academy of Political Science

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## POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY

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Volume 124 · Number 4 · Winter 2009-10

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*Political Science Quarterly*

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upper-division courses on the presidency. Furthermore, Cohen's book belongs in an elite class of public presidency scholarship from this decade—along with Matthew Baum's *Soft News Goes to War*, George Edwards's *On Deaf Ears*, and Brandice Canes-Wrone's *Who Leads Whom?*—that merit mandatory inclusion on graduate presidential politics seminar syllabi.

JUSTIN S. VAUGHN  
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**In the Shadow of the Oval Office: Profiles of the National Security Advisers and the Presidents they Served—From JFK to George W. Bush** by Ivo H. Daalder and I.M. Destler. *Riverside, NJ, Simon & Schuster, 2009. 400 pp. \$27.00.*

Even experienced leaders struggle with the complexity of foreign policy. Incomplete information, unknown risks, and emotion hamper decision making. Bureaucratic politics makes the task more difficult, introducing bias and competition into the process. Presidents (as the first chapter suggests) need help. And in the case of this book, no position is more important in American foreign policy than the national security adviser.

The majority of the book explores the personal relationships between presidents and their national security advisers, from McGeorge Bundy through Stephen Hadley. Beginning with the Dwight D. Eisenhower–John F. Kennedy transition, the authors outline how administrations integrated the role of an independent adviser for national security affairs into the policy process. For presidents, the dilemma centered on using the national security adviser without undermining the authority of other actors, such as the Department of State or Department of Defense. The national security adviser holds an exceptional position, and by reviewing American foreign policy through the eyes of the national security adviser, the authors reveal an often-overlooked part of the process.

Though the history is engaging, the strongest contribution of the book is found with its description of decision making. Many works on presidential advising describe foreign policy from a presidential perspective. Presidents have different styles and beliefs that manifest different policy preferences. But this book offers a different view. Instead of a president-centric approach, the authors argue that the operation of decision making hinges on two sets of relationships: a relationship between the national security adviser and the president (often based on friendship or confidence), and the relationship between the national security adviser and other members of the National Security Council (which is based on impartiality). The authors make a strong case that advisers who fail to manage these relationships magnify decision-making deficiencies. National security advisers not attuned to the delicate balance of their position inculcate backbiting and rivalry.

According to the authors, the best national security advisers use trust to manage the process. The prime example in the book centers on Brent Scowcroft and his winning formula: creating trust among the key players, maintaining cooperation at all levels of the policy process, and strengthening the personal relationship with the president. As national security adviser, Scowcroft balanced the needs of the president and other advisers, recognizing that “you can gain and exercise power and influence without having to deprive other players of theirs” (p. 203). Advising is not a zero-sum game, and successful national security advisers maintain both the trust of the president, and the collegiality of the inner circle. And as the authors point out, each of the national security advisers that followed Scowcroft used his tenure as a model of how to staff the president.

*In the Shadow of the Oval Office* is a thought-provoking exploration of decision making at the highest levels. Advisers play a central role in decision making, and the authors should be applauded for placing the leader–adviser relationship at the center of foreign policy. Though the book is less systematic than a political scientist would prefer, its lessons are deep and germane to the challenges of presidential decision making.

BRENT A. STRATHMAN  
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**New York State and the Rise of Modern Conservatism: Redrawing Party Lines** by Timothy J. Sullivan. Albany, State University of New York Press, 2008. 247 pp. \$70.00.

Due to the fact that New York State allows parties to cross-endorse candidates, third parties can exist by allowing citizens to vote their preferences when the two major parties put forward candidates of their liking, and vote for third-party candidates when they do not. When the New York State Conservative Party prepared to contest its first set of elections in 1962, it expected that conservative Republicans would welcome their endorsements. Yet due to the powerful grasp of left-leaning Nelson Rockefeller (Republican Governor, 1959–73), candidates were forced to refuse them. Even candidates Barry Goldwater and Richard Nixon would not be able to accept endorsements until the Conservative Party became welcomed in 1972, and since 1974, no Republican candidate for statewide office has been elected without the cross-endorsement of the Conservative Party.

This book is a tidy history of the New York Conservative Party from its founding through the 1980 election, with an overarching theme of its attempts to have its cross-endorsements welcomed by state and national Republicans. Timothy Sullivan credibly argues that the state’s elections were often nationalized due to the liberal leadership provided to the national Party by Rockefeller and various mayors and senators. The book moves crisply through each election cycle, with special attention given to presidential elections, the candidacies