

long-festering Alabama claims issue with Great Britain under the steady guidance of Grant's indispensable secretary of state, Hamilton Fish.

The same determination could also serve as a source of Grant's failures, most notably, his unwavering support for the annexation of Santo Domingo. Additionally, a landslide of second-term woes, including a reinvigorated Democratic Party, factional divide within his own party, economic depression, and allegations of rampant corruption, all combined to render Grant largely ineffective in his final year in office.

Inheriting the pandemic corruption of the Gilded Age, Calhoun convincingly argues, Grant was a victim of its excesses, not an inspiration. Calhoun exonerates Grant from criminal malfeasance by thoroughly detailing the chain of events surrounding the major scandals that plagued his administration but does fault Grant for misplaced loyalty and questionable associations.

Calhoun unveils Grant as a much more robust chief executive than historical orthodoxy suggests, leaving the office of the presidency stronger than when he assumed it. Grant could be a formidable legislative advocate, manipulating a dedicated staff to pursue his agenda, interacting with members of Congress, and strategically dispensing patronage to suit his purpose. The author cites critics' charges of "Grantism" and "Caesarism" as evidence that Grant was a formidable political operative. Further, Calhoun suggests the outpouring of vitriol in opposition to a possible third term lent tacit recognition that despite the hard times that consumed Grant's second term, he remained personally popular and a viable option for reelection.

Calhoun delivers on his promise to "get it right" (p. xi.). Meticulously researched, richly detailed, and logically conclusive, this excellent book is indispensable to the study of Grant and the American Presidency.

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**Calling the Shots: The President, Executive Orders, and Public Policy** by Daniel P. Gitterman. Washington, DC, Brookings Institution Press. 2017. 304 pp. Paper, \$30.00.

Though executive orders have recently taken center stage in scholarly and public consideration of public policy, presidents have long wielded this unilateral tool for political purposes. In *Calling the Shots: The President, Executive Orders, and Public Policy*, Daniel P. Gitterman examines the most common yet fruitful ways presidents use these orders to pursue policy goals through their official role as head of the executive branch, or as he deems it "the CEO of the largest and most powerful enterprise in the United States" (p. 2). More specifically, he focuses on three distinct strategies to derive power

from the chief executive's management role over the federal procurement process ("power of the purchaser"), the civil service ("power of the employer"), and the distribution of health care ("power of the payer"). In several chapters, the author meticulously describes how presidents from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Barack Obama issued executive orders in these ways by building on previous authority and acting within their legal boundaries.

In doing so, Gitterman carefully delineates the political context surrounding the decisions behind these unilateral actions—including mounting electoral pressures, crippling legislative gridlock, and pronounced social change. Additionally, he details the considerable long-term policy effects of these orders ranging from minimum wage increases for government contractors to more expansive federal employee health care to broad antidiscriminatory labor protections. Taken together, he demonstrates the most effective ways presidents have historically used executive orders to influence policy outcomes and how these policies have continued to change over time.

Overall, *Calling the Shots* has much to commend. Among a literature largely preoccupied with counting executive orders, Gitterman provides a substantially more in-depth treatment of their content to advance our understanding of how precisely these orders move the status quo. Furthermore, in addition to assessing decisions to promulgate certain important orders, he also considers why presidents refrain from issuing them. Though most scholars solely focus on the former given measurement challenges, both are important in truly understanding the limitations of presidential unilateral power. Finally, this book makes useful strides in uncovering what happens after an order is issued, such as reactions from other political actors, subsequent policy change, and tangible consequences for those individuals it affects. These factors, Gitterman argues, are often what determine whether presidents choose to act unilaterally, particularly given possible political backlash from not only Congress and the courts but from key supporters and interest groups as well.

Given its important contributions, *Calling the Shots* serves as a natural springboard for future research. Based on Gitterman's historical descriptions, subsequent studies can more systematically develop and test theories of how presidents consider critical electoral constituencies when issuing executive orders as well as whether, why, and when such targeted orders are effective. Moreover, scholars could examine the conditions under which executive orders lead to more widespread policy change—through legislation, succeeding orders, or private sector policies—and when such orders are undermined or ignored. Finally, future work should consider how these prospective policy changes shape presidential incentives for issuing significant executive orders in the first place. Though Gitterman may not produce exhaustive answers to all of these questions in one book, *Calling the Shots* certainly provides useful

historical and political context surrounding some of the most consequential presidential orders and the policy content lying therein, which will undoubtedly serve as a strong foundation for building future theories.

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**When the Senate Worked for Us: The Invisible Role of Staffers in Countering Corporate Lobbies** by Michael Pertschuk. Nashville, Vanderbilt University Press, 2017. 232 pp. \$25.00.

Preparing for an interview to work for Senator Warren G. Magnuson in 1973 as an American Political Science Association Congressional Fellow from Washington State University, I became immediately aware of the reputation of the much-admired Mike Pertschuk, Democratic staff director of the Senate Commerce Committee chaired by the senator. Although I accepted a position with Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, I watched the extraordinary role that Mike played in the Senate. Pertschuk's book is a rare behind-the-scenes account of the extraordinary role of an entrepreneurial Senate Commerce Committee staff (of almost 40) that pushed for progressive public interest legislation throughout the 1970s and 1980s in consumer protection, public health, environment, energy, and almost every area of economic life in America.

The creed of successful congressional staff then was to hide your name, and especially to stay out of the press. The less the media and the voters learned of the role of staff in serving elected public officials, the more credit and reelection currency they accrued. That thinking held for Mike for almost 50 years, until he decided to break it and boldly reveal the central role of staff in the politics and policy of the Senate.

This is an informative and inspirational book, with a large dose of humor, about the role of congressional staff during a golden age of progressive giants in the Senate. Pertschuk writes about the major policy battles during his time in the Senate that included more victories than defeats with lessons learned drawn from extensive his interviews of staff directly involved in the work of the Commerce Committee. He shows the relevance of his stories today by revealing the oppressive influence of corporate money—its power now and then. He celebrates the role of staff in helping enact legislation “to serve the public interest against the power of vested interest lobbyists” (p. 205). The Senate Commerce Committee staff under Magnuson's chairmanship and Pertschuk's guidance as Democratic staff director were so successful they infuriated President Nixon. His adviser, John Ehrlichman, called them “bumbees,” and that wrathful term became a badge of honor to the staff. *When the Senate*