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the leading power's own goals and interests as their own (p. 49). In contrast, states that rely solely on military coercion are likely to be faced with "hard disempowerment," (p. 52) stripped of their effective influence through either balancing or overextension. Gallarotti calls for nations to embrace an "optimal diversity" (p. 48) of hard and soft power, to seek balance in the forces of coercion and persuasion in international politics.

Gallarotti's concept of cosmopolitan power adds to international relations literature calling for increased synthesis among international relations paradigms. He effectively demonstrates that paradigmatic disputes over power are overblown, devoting two chapters to demonstrating that classical realists from Thucydides to Machiavelli to Morgenthau all took soft power seriously. Gallarotti, moreover, makes a compelling case that neoliberals and constructivists too often emphasize norms and rules as constraints, rather than sources of power in world politics. His case studies of British and U.S. economic leadership, as well as U.S. cultural hegemony, suggest instances in which norms facilitated rather than constrained great powers in international politics.

Gallarotti's book raises two critical questions, however. First, to what extent is it possible to separate the effects of hard and soft power, as Gallarotti has defined them in this work? Gallarotti insists that "soft power" is not the same as "intangible" or "ideational" power. Soft power is about acting in accordance with liberal principles (p. 37); the source of power might very well be based in tangible resources, be it military or economic might (think humanitarian intervention or global free trade). But if both hard and soft power stem from the same source, how are we to know the difference? This becomes particularly challenging in Gallarotti's discussion of British and American economic hegemony: did other states emulate these countries because they were "endeared" (p. 21) to soft power, or because emulation made good economic sense? Second, in attempting synthesis among the paradigms, one wonders if Gallarotti has captured the range of paradigmatic understandings of power. Notably, constructivists may be unified in their view that power is as much ideational as material, but many constructivists see ideational power as being coercive as well as persuasive. A search for synthesis may be productive, but it is worth evaluating the costs of such an enterprise, particularly when privileging a liberal conception of power in international politics.

STACIE GODDARD
Wellesley College

Power, Politics, and Universal Health Care: The Inside Story of a Century-long Battle *by Stuart Altman and David Shactman. Amherst, NY, Prometheus Books, 2011. 492 pp. $26.00.*

While the impact of Barack Obama's 2010 health care initiative will not be known for some time, Stuart Altman and David Shactman make clear that

it was a long time coming. Altman himself was directly involved in the reform efforts of Obama and Richard Nixon, and was bitter for having been sidelined by Bill Clinton. The book reads as a recounting of lessons learned during the Nixon administration, anger for Clinton's refusal to heed those lessons, and ultimate redemption with the passage of health care reform under Obama, when Altman was brought back into the fold. At its best, the book recounts the twists and turns of a longstanding quest for a better American health care system.

In general, however, Altman positions himself as a political player rather than a health care expert. For example, instead of analyzing single-payer systems, he and Shactman largely dismiss them on the basis of political infeasibility, tempering what is possible with perceived limitations of American political culture. To this extent, they provide readers with a good accounting of decades of American failure to take health care seriously rather than an understanding of what a good health care system, with objectively good outcomes (such as low infant mortality rates) might require. This vantage point allows the authors to portray the Obama health care plan as a stroke of tactical brilliance. In their telling, Obama heeded the lessons from Nixon and Clinton, working with health industry stakeholders, reforming existing structures rather than building new ones, and promoting congressional "buy-in" rather than using the executive branch to force a plan. At the end of the process, the authors hail Obama for "employing all available tools" (p. 335) to great effect.

But this analysis often seems to be beside the point, since the text is really a recounting of Altman's career in health care politics. As a result, the book's best resource—Altman's expertise—turns out to be its Achilles' heel, pretending to objective analysis despite its highly subjective reality. This contradiction will make the book problematic for classroom use, as students will undoubtedly distrust both Altman's analysis and perspective precisely because they are not adequately acknowledged. Here, the grinding of axes intermingles with assessment. Ultimately, this bars the text from a sufficiently critical perspective on the certainly important but flawed Obama health care bill. The book's title, for example, points to a quest for "universal health care" even as the bill attains no such thing, leaving millions uninsured and subject to the whims of market forces. Similarly, the penultimate chapter—"The Future is Cost Control"—rightly points to the fact that "cost and affordability still loom as major challenges" (p. 338), but the chapter fails to note that both of these "challenges" should have been—and, with a more aggressive campaign, could have been—part of the bill. Indeed, the bill exacerbates rather than merely failing to address these problems, to the point where, as critics note (and hope), they could be the bill's ultimate undoing.

In the final analysis, *Power, Politics, and Universal Health Care* would have been better served had it been written as a memoir of Altman's career, in which his own ideological leanings—pro-business liberalism with the admirable goal of insuring all Americans—were made explicit. This approach would invite readers to reflect on why someone like Altman was afforded a central role at

some times and excluded at others. This would go a long way toward seeing just how compromised American health care policy is.

DANIEL SKINNER
Capital University

Coalitions of Convenience: United States Military Interventions after the Cold War *by Sarah E. Kreps. New York, Oxford University Press, 2011. 240 pp. $27.95.*

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, the United States was left alone with an unusual degree of power preponderance. Such a position of preponderance could have led to a series of unilateral military interventions, but instead, the United States has intervened multilaterally more often than not. In *Coalitions of Convenience*, Sarah E. Kreps offers a convincing explanation for this mixture of unilateralism and multilateralism.

Kreps argues that powerful states like the United States choose multilateralism not because they value it for its own sake, but because doing so helps conserve their power while reassuring other states about their intentions. However, these benefits come at a cost. Multilateralism typically requires time-consuming negotiations prior to the intervention, and may also require that the lead state make significant concessions to gain allies. Kreps argues that because of this combination of costs and benefits, the choice of strategies is sensitive to the perceived urgency of the situation and the perceived costs of intervention. When there is an urgent need to act, states will favor unilateral action, since multilateralism is so time-consuming. Where the situation is less urgent, multilateralism is more attractive as a way of conserving power. However, this depends on the expected costs of intervention. If those are low, there is no need for burden-sharing, so any multilateralism may be formal rather than substantive. Conversely, if the expected costs are high, states have strong incentives to intervene multilaterally.

The majority of the book consists of four well-written and interesting case studies in which Kreps tests her argument against alternate explanations for the observed behavior. These case studies—the Gulf War, the 1994 intervention in Haiti, and the Afghanistan and Iraq wars—include a nice variety of strategic situations. Of particular interest are the three case studies in which the level and type of multilateralism varies. In the Gulf War, the urgent need to protect the Saudi oil fields leads to a unilateral intervention, followed by the construction of a coalition to accomplish the much more challenging task of expelling the Iraqi forces from Kuwait. In Haiti, expectations of little resistance result in an initial intervention that is only formally multilateral, but which converts into a truly multilateral operation as the mission transitions to the more-challenging long-term task of state-building. In Afghanistan, the desire to quickly respond provides a powerful incentive to reject offers