# The Academy of Political Science

475 Riverside Drive · Suite 1274 · New York, New York 10115-1274

(212) 870-2500 · FAX: (212) 870-2202 · aps@psqonline.org · http://www.psqonline.org

## *POLITICAL SCIENCE QUARTERLY*

Volume 112 · Number 1 · Spring 1997



No part of this article may be copied, downloaded, stored, further transmitted, transferred, distributed, altered, or otherwise used, in any form or by any means, except:

- one stored electronic and one paper copy of any article solely for your personal, non-commercial use, or
- with prior written permission of The Academy of Political Science.

*Political Science Quarterly* is published by The Academy of Political Science. Contact the Academy for further permission regarding the use of this work.

---

*Political Science Quarterly*
Copyright © 1997 by The Academy of Political Science. All rights reserved.

and contingent world, a world too complicated to be captured by formal models. Since then the trend has been toward increased use of rational-actor models and increasing formality, which has tended to leave interdependence theory behind. Whether one thinks of this as a positive trend or not, this volume is an effective statement of the current methodological predominance of deductive, rational theorizing amongst liberal approaches to the study of international political economy.

It is interesting to note that as the topical ambitiousness of formal models increases to encompass the sort of broader and more general questions tackled by interdependence theory, the ambitiousness of claims to prediction seem to be retreating to the point where we still need qualitative, even narrative, research to predict in any specific situation. In attempting to apply formal logic simultaneously to the effects of internationalization on domestic policy preferences and to the mitigating effects of political institutions, this volume has shown that formal theorizing in the end faces many of the same limitations as the methodologies it replaces.

J. SAMUEL BARKIN
*University of Victoria*

**High Hopes, The Clinton Presidency and the Politics of Ambition** *by Stanley A. Renshon. New York, New York University Press, 1996. 320 pp. $24.95.*

This is an excellent book in which politics and pyschology are artfully joined. The author's primary purpose is to solve a puzzle about why Bill Clinton's talent has misfired so often. To this end he explores the development of Clinton's political personality and its expression in different fields of action. His method is informed by the prudent use of psychoanalytic theory.

Renshon believes in the moral and political efficacy of truth telling in politics. The most serious problem in the modern polity, he argues, is the lack of public confidence in leaders and governments. This can only be overcome if political leaders tell publics the truth. They should educate rather than sell. And character is the key to efficacy.

Character, as the core element of personality, has three parts, which are ambition, integrity, and relatedness. Ambition is healthy in its commitment so long as it is not narcissistic. Integrity consists of ideals that guide ambition and move us outward toward others. A president with a solid, coherent political identity has the ability to reach out to publics and make that identity contagious.

Renshon finds that Clinton falls short of character at its best. He has been unable to give the public a clear picture of his political identity. He claimed to be a "new" Democrat but sometimes acted like an old one. His self-confidence as president was so great that he overreached badly in his policy goals with too little respect for limits of the feasible. He has not so much wished to be liked as to be validated, and this self-absorption has limited his insight into reality.

Renshon's analysis of Clinton's early life suggests that the haphazard manner in which Clinton has lived his life—always late, doing several things at one time, refusing closure on decisions—was learned from his mother, who lived this way. She abandoned young Bill even as she adored him. His grandmother was the nurturer, but neither she nor his mother taught the boy a sense of limits. The adoration fostered self-idealization that had to be validated

by action but with little sense of limits or boundaries. Clinton grew up with a sense that he was "deprived but entitled."

These characteristics were seen in the history of Clinton's draft record in which he tried to have it both ways, that is, to appear to volunteer but also to avoid service. Hillary Clinton is depicted as ambitious to do good but unbending and intolerant of caution. Grandiosity is thus reinforced.

The political consequences of character were most apparent in the disastrous overreaching of Clinton in his first term as governor and his first two years as president. He leads from a roller coaster; every win is accompanied by a loss, and then he revives. The author believes that Clinton lost his opportunity to be an effective president because he reached for more policy achievement, without being effective, than the public actually wanted. We see here Renshon's political centrism as well as his theory that character in the form of truth telling based on a good sense of reality is the most effective kind of leadership.

In my judgment Renshon sees Clinton as a person and politician accurately. However, an analysis of the same behavior as explained by the deep divisions within the Democratic coalition, including the congressional party and the intransigent congressional Republicans, could also explain the zig-zagging and suggest that Jimmy Carter and Clinton were both prisoners of a no-win politics. It might be better to set the context first and then ask what personality contributed to outcomes at the margins. Still, this is a superb example of how psychology may illuminate politics.

ERWIN C. HARGROVE
*Vanderbilt University*

**War Powers: The President, the Congress, and the Question of War** *by Donald L. Westerfield. Westport, CT, Praeger, 1996. 245 pp. $55.00.*

The book focuses on a critical controversy dating back to the founding of the Republic: the conflict between the president and Congress over their respective authority in decisions involving the use of armed forces in foreign conflicts. Rooted in ambiguous constitutional provisions that vest in Congress the power to declare war and designate the president as commander-in-chief, the dispute over war powers still awaits resolution.

At the outset, Donald Westerfield identifies several factors accounting for the predominance of the White House in decisions involving the use of force. These include the expressed and implied authority of the president to act on the basis of his aggregate powers as commander-in-chief, chief executive, and chief diplomat; his ability to commit U.S. armed forces to the defense of other nations through executive agreements without the advice and consent of the Senate; and the presumed power of the president to authorize U.S. participation in United Nations military or peacekeeping operations in response to Security Council resolutions under Chapter VII of the Charter. Missing from the explanation is the president's ability to control, manipulate, and withhold information from Congress, so adroitly exercised by Lyndon Johnson to extract the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin Resolution from Congress. Such omission is especially glaring, given the author's claim that members of Congress "were thoroughly knowledgeable regarding the . . . scenario of hostilities leading up to the confrontation in the Gulf of Tonkin" (p. 82).

In the second half of the book, the author illuminates the diverse perspectives of the two branches on the 1973 War Powers Resolution (WPR) and evaluates the extent to which