

One of the great strengths of this book is the clarity and sensitivity with which Gill treats a wide range of views on this subject. She identifies four positions on same-sex marriage (traditional opponents of same-sex marriage; traditionalist proponents of same-sex marriage; skeptics about marriage; and liberal rights advocates of same-sex marriage) and sketches out the core arguments within each category. Ultimately, she aligns her own thinking with the final category. In so doing, Gill prioritizes the value of autonomy as “the correct grounding for the rights of consenting adults to intimate lives of their own choosing” (p. 98). From the autonomy argument flows her contention that freely chosen emotional and sexual relationships are deserving of respect, that citizens in a liberal democratic polity have the right to decide what intimate relationships they wish to participate in, and that laws that abridge autonomy also serve to stigmatize and stereotype individuals in the targeted group.

With all the space devoted to various philosophies concerning equality, neutrality, the establishment clause, and same-sex marriage, Gill stakes out her own position with authority. When she analogizes the free exercise of religion to the ability of same-sex couples to marry (which she does throughout the book but especially in chapter 5), she directly addresses and refutes possible objections to her employment of the analogy. While she surely will not please those who maintain a religious objection to same-sex marriage, her careful attempt to acknowledge and engage with potential critics is effective indeed.

This book has a broad potential audience, due to its subject matter and the wide range of subtopics that Gill touches on under the rubric of advocating for same-sex marriage. For political philosophers, her reliance on John Stuart Mill’s *On Liberty* will prove rewarding. For those more concerned with the contemporary cultural climate, her concluding chapter highlighting the culture wars will be particularly apt. Gill’s close readings of Supreme Court decisions such as *Thomas v. Review Board* and *Romer v. Evans* will intrigue legal scholars. And for the general reader energized by the recent rulings in *Hollingsworth v. Perry* and *United States v. Windsor*, Gill offers a clear, succinct, and reasoned argument in support of same-sex marriage.

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Early Start: Preschool Politics in the United States by Andrew Karch. Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2013. 288 pp. \$60.00.

In 1971, Senator Walter Mondale introduced an ambitious Comprehensive Child Development Act that passed both houses of Congress. It was promptly

vetoed by President Richard Nixon, who denounced it as an endorsement of “communal approaches to child rearing” (p. 82). Andrew Karch believes that this “watershed” moment had profound, lasting effects on preschool politics in the United States.

Using a political development perspective, Karch chronicles the evolution of preschool policies during the twentieth century and beyond, citing other books, congressional hearings, and archived oral interviews. Three key concepts propel his narrative: critical junctures, venue shopping, and policy feedback.

Karch asserts that the failure of children’s advocates to enact comprehensive preschool legislation in 1971 (a critical juncture) led advocates to shift their focus to state governments (forum shopping). As the states responded with initiatives of their own, a motley assortment of stakeholder groups emerged that preferred incremental, piecemeal reform over a comprehensive approach (policy feedback). The result, in Karch’s words, is a “fragmented amalgamation of programs and services” (p. 2).

It is always a pleasure to read a public policy book that takes multiple levels of government seriously. This book also has the virtue of introducing an analytic framework early on and sticking to it. Chapter 3, an in-depth case study of the ill-fated Comprehensive Child Development Act, is great reading, with lots of revealing quotes from the participants. And the central argument that the preschool advocacy community is splintered and fragmented seems both accurate and disturbing.

Still, I have two concerns. First, Karch’s key concepts could benefit from crisper definitions and a fuller discussion of cases that deviate from his story line. For example, the creation of two federally funded child care programs in 1990 might well be considered a critical juncture and a success for children’s advocates, including the Children’s Defense Fund, which spearheaded the earlier unsuccessful fight for reform. These new programs provided child care for many disadvantaged mothers with young children. Sometimes non-incremental reform is possible in this policy domain, even in Washington, D.C.

Second, Karch’s evidence in support of some key assertions is slim. He portrays the 1970s as an era of strong state activism on early childhood education. Yet much of what happened then involved the creation of offices of child development. Some observers would regard this as symbolic politics (much later, the states did indeed promote preschool successfully and aggressively). Also, the causal connection between assorted interest groups and the failure to adopt various congressional bills during the 1980s and the 1990s is not firmly established (Karch does a better job of demonstrating that Head Start supporters helped to discourage pre-K growth at the state level).

If we fast forward to preschool politics today, let us consider the future of President Barack Obama’s universal preschool initiative, which builds on

successful programs in Georgia, Oklahoma, and other states. As Karch would predict, the proposal faces tough sledding on Capitol Hill. Yet it is difficult to lay the blame for this on a fragmented preschool advocacy community. Instead, divided government, intense partisanship, a crowded agenda, prolonged inattention to our national debt, and weak political leadership seem much better explanations for stasis on this issue.

On the bright side, state governments, which doubled their enrollments of four-year-olds in state-funded pre-K between 2002 and 2012, are once again strengthening these programs, as they emerge from the Great Recession. The states are at times a better forum for policy innovation than the federal government.

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Principled Negotiation and Mediation in the International Arena: Talking with Evil by Paul J. Zwier. New York, Cambridge University Press, 2013. 472 pp. \$120.00.

The topic of how states should and do deal with actors like terrorists, murderous dictators, and leaders of lawless guerrilla movements who are usually considered beyond the pale is important for both scholars and policymakers. The same is true for the role of mediators in a range of conflicts. These subjects are not only ethically challenging, but pose analytical and methodological challenges. Unfortunately, the book under review does not rise to them. Although the histories of some of the cases are useful, the book is rambling, analytically weak, thinly researched, and filled with errors. The first sign that the book is superficial comes in the preface when the author asserts that the breakdown of the cease-fire in Gaza at the end of 2008 “could have been prevented if the United States had been open to dialogue with the enemy and willing to facilitate communication between the parties” (pp. xi–xii). Neither there nor in the rest of the book does Paul J. Zwier go beyond the assertions to provide evidence or a serious argument. It is not as though there were no communication between Israel and Hamas. What, exactly, was any mediator supposed to do? What would be the role of various forms of power in any such effort? The literature has at least discussed these questions, if not answered them. Zwier does not seem to realize that they need to be addressed.

To the extent that the book has a theme, it is that mediation, especially by the United States, can be very valuable if it is based on a principled pragmatic approach. The problems here are very great, however. To start with, Zwier never explains why it should be the United States that serves as a mediator in many