

54-5799 HM851 CIP
Nichols, Tom. **The death of expertise: the campaign against established knowledge and why it matters.** Oxford, 2017. 252p index ISBN 9780190469412 cloth, \$24.95; ISBN 9780190469429 ebook, contact publisher for price

Timely and disappointing. In the age of "alternative facts," readers are likely to be favorably disposed toward Nichols's central claim—that expertise has been devalued in the US in a way that is new and troubling. Nichols is an engaging writer, and this book is at its strongest in making the case that even in a truly egalitarian democracy, citizens must be able to rely on a cadre of experts to exercise their power responsibly. The book is replete with examples of disregard and even contempt for expertise. Unfortunately, Nichols's evidence seldom rises beyond the realm of anecdote, and though there are lots of assertions that the current state of expertise is grim, there is shockingly little evidence of change over time. Nichols may very well be correct in everything that is asserted here—it seems likely—but this book fails to convince. **Summing Up:** ★ Optional. General readers.—*T. C. Ellington, Wesleyan College*

54-5800 JA71 CIP
Weithman, Paul. **Rawls, political liberalism and reasonable faith.** Cambridge, 2016. 255p bibl index ISBN 9781107147430 cloth, \$99.99; ISBN 9781316792834 ebook, \$80.00

For scholars of John Rawls's corpus, nothing has been more contentious or confounding than the so-called political turn that occurred between his landmark *A Theory of Justice* and its follow-up, *Political Liberalism*. In this detailed, methodical, highly technical work, Weithman makes a largely convincing argument that Rawls's "political turn," if it was even a turn at all, is not what the standard interpretation of it has made it out to be. Instead, Weithman argues, Rawls's *Political Liberalism* should be read not as a turning away from the principles established in *A Theory of Justice* but as an earnest attempt by Rawls to more adequately account for *stability*, a feature that he addresses in the third part of *Theory* but with which he was largely unsatisfied. Secondly, yet certainly related to stability, Weithman's book confronts the notion that Rawls's concept of public reason was overly restrictive of, or even hostile to, people of faith. The author draws out important nuances in Rawls's work to suggest he was sympathetic to comprehensive religious doctrines but concerned about the alienating effects of public arguments grounded primarily or solely in such doctrines. **Summing Up:** ★★★ Highly recommended. Graduate students through faculty.—*R. Reed, Bradley University*

U.S. Politics

54-5801 JK1896 MARC
Corder, J. Kevin. **Counting women's ballots: female voters from suffrage through the New Deal,** by J. Kevin Corder and Christina Wolbrecht. Cambridge, 2017. 316p bibl index ISBN 9781107140257 cloth, \$99.99; ISBN 9781316505878 pbk, \$29.99; ISBN 9781316723289 ebook, contact publisher for price

The 19th amendment doubled the size of the US electorate, but until now a lack of contemporary public opinion polls has forced most observers to base their descriptions of the size and impact of the women's vote on speculation and theory. In *Counting Women's Ballots*, Corder and Wolbrecht use advances in ecological inference to overcome that lack of survey data to examine turnout and vote choice in ten states for five presidential elections (1920–36). Some conventional accounts are supported; others are not. Women acted more as peripheral voters at first

(in the 1920s) in terms of turnout, but not so much in terms of vote choice. The book includes nuggets of history from the suffrage movement and the five examined elections, as well as surprising results. In 1924, women were less supportive of Progressivism than has been assumed, a "great irony" given the support of women's rights. Women's turnout was impressive—57 percent in Kentucky in 1920 and in the low 60s in the Midwest in 1936—contradicting the conventional wisdom that women failed to take advantage of their new right. While data limitations preclude much discussion of the South or West, overall the book provides strong evidence and fascinating descriptions of the way in which women's votes counted. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through faculty.—*M. R. Michelson, Menlo College*

54-5802 HT123 CIP
Florida, Richard. **The new urban crisis: how our cities are increasing inequality, deepening segregation, and failing the middle class—and what we can do about it.** Basic Books, 2017. 310p index ISBN 9780465079742 cloth, \$28.00; ISBN 9780465097784 ebook, contact publisher for price

In 2002, Florida wrote *The Rise of the Creative Class*, in which he argued that the answer to urban ills was not giving tax breaks to big corporations but attracting creative people back to the cities. Fifteen years later, Florida concedes that creative people have returned to so-called superstar cities and that a rising tide has not raised all boats. Instead, the return of the creative class has created even greater inequality, as the "super-rich" are attracted to and invest in superstar cities (he identifies about 20, with New York and London being the leaders) and technology hubs, such as San Francisco, driving out the poor and middle class, who can no longer afford to live in the urban core. He even expresses concern that the creative class is beginning to be driven from these cities as they are no longer affordable. This "new urban crisis," he believes, can be alleviated only by building affordable housing, improving mass transit, and raising wages. Though Florida offers a good analysis of the crisis, the solutions suggested are not likely (as he seems to acknowledge) to be part of the new administration's agenda. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. Graduate students through faculty.—*J. F. Kraus, Wagner College*

54-5803 HT168 CIP
Hanson, Royce. **Suburb: planning politics and the public interest.** Cornell, 2017. 310p index ISBN 9781501705250 cloth, \$45.00; ISBN 9781501708077 ebook, contact publisher for price

This is an examination of the history of the Montgomery County, Maryland, planning process, in cooperation with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. Montgomery County is unique, perhaps, in having a long-term process for determining its future, yet its history is replete with conflicts over the balance between large investments, small and larger homes, and the land reserved for agricultural uses. The regimes that determined these over the past century are the informal arrangements by which private bodies and public agencies carried out the governing decisions for the county. Four regimes presided during this time: that overseen by E. Brooke Lee from 1916 until the 1950s; the builders and bar regime that dominated until about 1970; the progressive regime that followed it, which sought to translate its symbols into policy; and the most recent pure political regime, which lacked a single vision for integrating the planners' views with the many participants. The county has done quite well in its many planning ventures, the author concludes. The survey gives little attention to other counties' planning efforts and is limited to Montgomery County alone. **Summing Up:** ★★ Recommended. Upper-division undergraduates through professionals.—*W. C. Johnson, independent scholar*