possessing local roots in a district decreases the amount of money raised from outside the congressional district by nearly half. Finally, his analysis of communication styles illustrates that members with deeper local roots rely less on partisan messaging and emphasize their own connections to the local community when interacting with their constituents.

The research in this book is theoretically rich, empirically rigorous, and appropriate for evaluating the specific questions at hand. Additionally, the subject matter speaks to the fundamentally critical issue of why some candidates perform better in House elections than others. For several decades now, researchers have grappled with a variety of important and related questions pertaining to this issue. For instance, why do incumbents who seek another term almost always get reelected? Why do candidates possessing prior elective experience typically perform better electorally than do amateurs? Why are those candidates who are already familiar with the voters more likely to win, all else being equal? Why do some legislators run ahead or behind presidential candidates in congressional races? In attempting to answer each of these central questions, Hunt notes that one should carefully consider a member's local roots in addition to existing explanations in accounting for electoral success.

Hunt's theoretical framework builds appropriately on prior congressional elections work but easily makes an independent contribution to the literature. A member's local roots share notable qualities with well-known and established theoretical concepts such as a legislator's "homestyle" or "personal vote" activities, especially in terms of how they help representatives establish connections with their constituents. That being said, Hunt points out that local roots are distinct from either of these concepts because they characterize who representatives are before they first get elected, instead of activities that they pursue once in office. Additionally, local roots are established in a community over the course of one's life and cannot be applied to other districts, whereas a legislator's homestyle or personal vote activities could very much be relevant elsewhere under the right circumstances.

Hunt does an excellent job of anticipating potential criticisms of his argument in each of the empirical chapters. For instance, one might wonder whether his argument about local roots is more compelling in rural districts, where voters are far less transient than in urban settings where there is greater voter mobility. Hunt carefully considers these factors in chapter 3 and shows that the degree of urbanness, population density, and mobility are indeed significant but do not undermine his broader theoretical argument. He also considers whether shifting district boundaries stemming from redistricting affect members' ability to emphasize their local roots; he notes in chapter 9 that dramatic shifts in members' districts can indeed affect their relationship with constituents, whereas minor changes at the margins typically do not. Hunt even addresses potential limitations with the use of his local roots index, which serves to bolster its potential effectiveness as a measure in future research that seeks to build on his findings.

Hunt uses the final chapter of his book to discuss several possible future directions in the study of local roots. Many of these ideas are noteworthy and represent exciting avenues for further study (e.g., how members interact with their constituents via campaign events, how legislators behave in Washington with respect to policy making, and what extensions of the argument to the US Senate might look like). Although the argument has many notable strengths as noted earlier, it might also be useful for either the author or future researchers to consider further two counterintuitive findings discussed in the book. First, Hunt notes in chapter 3 that Democrats tend to be more locally rooted than Republicans. This seems to challenge much of the conventional wisdom about the type of congressional districts that Democrats and Republicans represent in the House and is clearly worthy of additional research.

Likewise, and as discussed earlier, Hunt finds that members possessing deep roots in their district rely significantly less on outside funding compared to those lacking place-based connections. He also notes that representatives who raise more money locally typically end up spending less money to get reelected. This is an especially noteworthy finding because fundraising patterns during the past few decades demonstrate increasing patterns of monetary surrogacy from outside the district. This raises a fundamentally important question: If local connections are of such value for members in the House, why then are we seeing increasing rates of monetary surrogacy over time? Could this be a function of declining local roots in Congress because individuals today are less likely to run in areas where they grew up or went to school? Or is this simply a function of a significant decline in the number of competitive seats in the House, which encourages rich donors to funnel as much money as possible to a limited number of races? Further attention to these types of questions will enrich our understanding of the representational connection with members and will build on this important new book's rich insights.

News and Democratic Citizens in the Mobile Era. By Johanna Dunaway and Kathleen Searles. New York: Oxford University Press, 2023. 176p. $24.95 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592723001937

— Mark C. Milewicz, *University of North Carolina at Pembroke*
mark.milewicz@uncp.edu

James Madison's widely circulated quote from the beginning of a letter to W. T. Barry on August 4, 1822, asserts, "A popular Government, without popular information, or the means of acquiring it, is but a prologue to a Farce or a

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592723001937 Published online by Cambridge University Press

Tragedy; or perhaps both." Although it directly refers to education more generally at the time, Madison's assertion is a helpful reminder of how important the acquisition of politically relevant information is to free societies.

In *News and Democratic Citizens in the Mobile Era*, Johanna Dunaway and Kathleen Searles place the issue of access to political information squarely at the center of their inquiry and clearly show that access to information is not enough. Specifically, they investigate political news consumption on mobile phone technology. Their primary purpose is "to analyze how the features of platforms and devices affect individuals' ability and willingness to pay attention to information, or what we refer to as cognitive access" (p. 65). Underlying their approach is the assumption that the way information is presented on mobile phones affects our ability to understand that information —in part because it increases cognitive demands. This creates a curious situation in which the devices with the most reach and usefulness for sharing politically relevant information are the same ones that make it more difficult to actually comprehend, or learn, that information.

Through this focus on technological change and cognition, Dunaway and Searles offer important steps forward in media effects research by noting that political learning, not just persuasion, should be central to that body of scholarship. They provide improved theories on how technology structures information and affects processing of that information post-exposure. In support of that effort, they present a physical and cognitive access (PCA) framework that suggests mobile technology can increase *physical* access to information while simultaneously making the *cognitive* acquisition of that information more difficult. Furthermore, they develop a model to help explain the effect of technology on post-exposure processing (PEP).

Another distinctive aspect of their research involves their methodology. Many of their traditional experimental designs deploy psychophysiological methods for measuring attentiveness and arousal to media messages. They use eye-tracking technology to measure the length of time spent reading news content. Similarly, pupil dilation is used to measure arousal to news information. Galvanic skin conductivity readings and heart rate variability measure arousal to news stories presented within the experiments.

The heart of the research effort lies in its central chapters, in which they propose and test five hypotheses. First, mobile internet technology expands access to information (chap. 3). Second, mobile devices reduce attention to information (chaps. 5 and 8). Third, mobile devices increase cognitive effort (chap. 7). Fourth, mobile screens reduce attention and arousal (chap. 6). And fifth, mobile devices reduce recall (chap. 7).

The data in chapter 3, which is drawn from the Pew Research Center and industry-based data sources, reveal a central claim made by the authors, which is that the breadth of the news audience for mobile internet technology is widespread but the depth of engagement varies by device. As the authors note, "Taken together, these patterns of use indicate a breadth (audience reach) versus depth (time spent on site) trade-off: breadth is better on mobile devices, and for smart phones in particular, but attention is more substantial on computers" (p. 45).

Experimental designs are later deployed to reveal some of the most compelling features of the book. Chapter 5 addresses the degree to which mobile devices reduce attention to information. Recalling that we are cognitive misers, the authors argue that information processing will be harder on smaller devices, and therefore more costly, because of the excessive scrolling and altered structuring of information. Using eye-tracking technology, the data suggest that users on tablet and mobile devices spend less time and attention on content and that attention appears constrained on such devices. More complex experiments are reported in chapter 6 that test the degree to which the findings on text content may be generalizable to video. The fourth hypothesis is tested here, using different-sized viewing windows for seven news stories. Using skin conductivity and heart rate variability measures, the authors find that "small screens tend to decrease arousal over the course of the experiment, particularly for more interesting/negative news content" (p. 81). They note that perhaps more worrisome is the fact that "*interest in news diminishes on smaller screens over the course of the exposure to the story*" (p. 81; emphasis added).

Perhaps one of the most practical and important findings of this research is presented in chapter 7, which reports results from measures of information recall. One of the major concerns of Dunaway and Searles's research is the degree to which ubiquitous mobile phone technology contributes to a more informed citizenry. Results from their study do not generate significant optimism. Recall that one of their general claims is that unique features of mobile devices (e.g., small screen size) make it more difficult to consume information. These features tax cognitive resources and negatively affect learning. Chapter 7 reveals results for hypotheses 3 and 5, which expect that cognitive effort will increase with mobile phones and that recall rates, conversely, will decrease. The results indicate two things. First, tablet and smartphone users exhibit higher degrees of cognitive effort than computer users. Second, there are meaningful differences in recall that generally favor computer users over tablet and smartphone users.

The skill and innovation required to execute these studies are notable. However, there is some concern regarding issues of external validity. Dunaway and Searles are aware of this concern and provide web traffic data to bolster their results. These data here do have their limits but nevertheless help assuage more serious concerns. Other weaknesses, of which the authors are similarly aware, are the limited number of respondents in their experimental designs and the overreliance on college-age participants whose skill with

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592723001937 Published online by Cambridge University Press

mobile devices may be more advanced than that of older users. Although some may see these weaknesses as meaningful, I am doubtful they are severe limitations and tend to agree with the authors' responses to these concerns.

Dunaway and Searles's research in *News and Democratic Citizens in the Mobile Era* has significant normative and practical value. In terms of political learning these studies show that, overall, people who consume news information on a tablet or smartphone pay less attention to it, and the increased amount of cognitive effort required to access information on mobile devices leads to lower levels of recall. These conclusions result in a worrisome conundrum: the devices capable of reaching the most people seem to support learning the least.

Calling to mind Madison's original statement on the importance of information access, Dunaway and Searles's work raises new questions about the challenges of mobile technology for supporting an informed citizenry. Moreover, their use of new frameworks and innovative methods offer important and constructive steps toward advancing media effects research.

Power Shifts: Congress and Presidential Representation. By John A. Dearborn. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2021. 368p. $105.00 cloth. $35.00 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592723001688

— Richard W. Waterman, *University of Kentucky*
richard.waterman@uky.edu

There is an old TV show called *Unsolved Mysteries*, which examined issues from UFOs to the disappearance of individuals. At the end of each segment, its host, actor Robert Stack, would implore, "If you have any information that can help us solve this mystery, please contact us." One mystery that would have been perfectly suited for that show is why did Congress repeatedly, over nearly a half-century, delegate its own legislative authority to the presidency and the executive branch? Alas, this mystery has been solved by John Dearborn's outstanding book *Power Shifts.*

As Dearborn notes, "No institution of American government has been more profoundly reshaped by ideas than the presidency" (p. 1). Many works focus on presidential power, with a primary examination of the expanded use of unilateral power. Such studies provide a wealth of information, but they do not address a key question: Why did Congress consistently delegate its own authority to the executive branch? According to the theory of checks and balances, each of the three branches is supposed to guard its own power. Rather than explaining this phenomenon, many scholars merely note its existence. Although there have been some excellent studies of this development, particularly James Sundquist's work on the decline and resurgence of Congress, it has been a largely neglected area of study, until now.

One of the key ideas that Dearborn draws from the larger literature on the presidency is that presidents are "power maximizers" (p. 4). This is true of the presidency, but the same logic also should apply to Congress. After all, why should it delegate its authority, such as the ability to create a budget, to the president? The Constitution is clear in designating the power of the purse, one of the most important of all powers, to the legislative branch. Why then, provide presidents with a first-mover advantage in this area? And why should Congress give the president fast-track authority to negotiate tariffs? Because the power of the purse is one of Congress's most important responsibilities, and if Congress is a power maximizer, this transfer of power makes no sense whatsoever.

Therefore, various explanations have been offered. Perhaps it was because Congress confronts a collective action problem. Or delegated power to the presidency only in times of unified government? Or perhaps only the president's partisans supported such reforms, while the party out of power vehemently opposed them? Such explanations sound reasonable, yet Dearborn convincingly demonstrates that they are insufficient to explain Congress's continuing pattern of delegating authority. First, although Congress does have a collective action problem, there were institutional alternatives other than delegating authority to the president. They could have set up committees to deal with this issue, as they eventually did in the 1970s. Another possible explanation is that Congress only delegated its authority during periods of unified government, with a president of its own party in the White House. As Dearborn shows, even though many reforms occurred during unified government, others occurred during divided government. Perhaps then it was a matter of how many seats the president's party controlled. Yet, even though presidential partisans did indeed overwhelmingly support delegation, so too did members from the opposition party. Although each of these explanations is tantalizing, they simply do not hold up to empirical scrutiny.

So what is the answer? Maybe Congress did not realize what it was doing: it may have believed that it was not giving away its power. But again, the evidence suggests that many members identified the fact that these delegations of authority would indeed have the effect of increasing presidential power at the expense of Congress's constitutional authority. By creating various institutions, such as the Bureau of the Budget, the National Security Council, and the Council of Economic Advisers in the executive branch, as well as providing presidents with broad reorganization authority, Congress established the basis for the modern presidency, an institution that would carry over from one president to another, thus establishing a permanent foundation for the expansion of presidential power. In so doing, Congress knew what it was doing, but

https://doi.org/10.1017/S1537592723001937 Published online by Cambridge University Press