

on gay rights). Explanations based on the formal institutions of urban government and on the intergovernmental context of federal and state laws, court decisions, and mandates are not uniformly helpful in understanding decision making. Morality issues are not all the same. Findings suggest that there are “pure morality” issues, such as abortion access and protest, drug courts, and needle exchange programs, that are grounded solely in moral arguments. The economic interests of service providers are not a factor. “Material morality” issues such as casino gambling and sex business (prostitution, nude dancing clubs, and adult shops) involve material benefits and economic stakes. Gay rights are less clear-cut, in that industry stakes trigger opposition to domestic-partner benefits policies but usually not to gay pride events or civil rights antidiscrimination ordinances. Conversely, the quest for “cool”-city status and high-tech industry leads economic interests to support gay rights.

A number of other provocative arguments are offered regarding urban democracy. To wit, public officials respond to the values of the general public, not mobilized special interests, in forming “pure morality” policies. “Material morality” policies are elite-dominated, shaped by industry interests with economic stakes. Mayoral leadership only rarely matters, perhaps because the distinction between reformed and unreformed government no longer applies in today’s hybrid structures. The impact of mayors and councils here may also be weakened by the role of county officials and public health and criminal justice bureaucracies. Finally, the variation among states on the five issues is minimal; where differences exist (on abortion and gambling) they do have an impact. But states may no longer be the “laboratories of democracy” that they once were.

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**The Urban Origins of Suburban Autonomy** by Richardson Dilworth.  
*Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2005. 280 pp. \$49.95.*

Richardson Dilworth’s examination of the origins of metropolitan fragmentation in the New York City region presents a persuasive case that divisions between central cities and autonomous suburbs long predated the acknowledged urban crisis of the post-World War II period. He contends that the linkages between public policies of infrastructural development and political battles over suburban annexation proved determinative in sorting out municipal boundaries during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Whereas many other scholars have attributed metropolitan fragmentation primarily to government policies and suburban pressures that established racial segregation and economic homogeneity, Dilworth instead highlights infrastructural factors such as water and sewer services and the suburban backlash against urban corruption. The book employs rational-choice theory to emphasize the role of “private benefits” in shaping the

development of “public goods” such as infrastructure systems (p. 11). Dilworth argues that city leaders pursued policies of suburban annexation primarily to secure the personal financial rewards available through controlling land development and public works projects. Suburban residents favored annexation by the central city only when incorporation proved necessary for obtaining adequate services, but otherwise fiercely defended their political independence.

Dilworth portrays “suburban autonomy . . . as a product of city government policy and thus an inherent part of urbanization” (p. 4). The heart of the book explores this claim through four case studies situated in New York and northern New Jersey. In the 1870s, New York City’s expansionist agenda provided the competitive threat that spurred infrastructural development in Yonkers, making possible its preemptive incorporation as an independent city with sufficient services. Two decades later, New York City overcame substantial suburban resistance to higher taxes and Tammany Hall graft in the great consolidation of 1898. Although annexed municipalities such as Flushing and Queens had already developed their own infrastructure systems, the state legislature’s consolidation mandate helps explain an episode that otherwise would contradict Dilworth’s model. The final two case studies explore the failure of annexation strategies in Jersey City and Newark, where urban competition and corruption galvanized nearby suburbs to develop their own infrastructure systems in order to maintain political independence. Dilworth concludes that “infrastructural development facilitated suburban autonomy and metropolitan fragmentation and laid the groundwork for the ‘urban crisis’ of the twentieth century” (p. 110). Absent from this equation are the many metropolitan service districts of twentieth-century origin, often chartered by state governments to provide the transportation networks and infrastructure for economic growth, that have facilitated suburban sprawl without challenging suburban exclusion.

The chronological scope of this book provides a welcome corrective to the conventional focus on the postwar era of mass suburbanization as the catalyst for metropolitan fragmentation, but Dilworth’s thesis also displays some of the limitations inherent in the compression of history into a single theoretical model. Although he does not explicitly endorse the “public choice” stance that metropolitan fragmentation represents a desirable way to provide efficient services through intercity competition (a position that ignores or discounts the relationship between exclusionary public policies and race/class segregation), Dilworth’s account does downplay the extent to which “suburban infrastructural development was closely tied to the development of suburbs that were small enclaves for the affluent” (p. 105). The focus on the New York region also reinforces a Northeastern/Midwestern bias evident in much of the suburban literature that fails to consider the many metropolises (especially in the Sunbelt) where tools of annexation and consolidation remained available to twentieth-century policy makers. Still, this book provides a compelling reminder that key elements of the structural foundations of the contemporary

urban crisis can be traced back to infrastructural policies and annexation show-downs that happened a century ago.

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**Press “ONE” for English: Language Policy, Public Opinion, and American Identity** by *Deborah J. Schildkraut*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2005. 264 pp. \$35.00.

In this well-written and engaging book, Deborah Schildkraut argues that competing images constitute distinct conceptions of American identity and that all of these must be incorporated into analyses of public support for and opposition to ethnicity-related policies such as official English. Relying on theories of American identity advanced by political theorists, with confirmatory support from polling and survey data, Schildkraut identifies three conceptions of national identity: the liberal tradition, the civic republican tradition, and the ethnocultural tradition. To this list, she proposes the addition of a fourth conception, which she labels the incorporationist tradition. To better understand how these conceptions, individually and interactively, might be applied by individuals in assessing particular policies involving language, Schildkraut did a content analysis of the discourse of fourteen focus groups that were convened in New Jersey in 1998. She did qualitative and quantitative analyses of these data to show how people justify attitudes toward official-English laws and bilingual education. Schildkraut provides support for previous claims in the literature about the importance of the liberal and civic republican traditions of American identity, while also showing that the same conception may be invoked by both supporters and opponents of a particular policy. For example, liberal discourse is used to justify support for making English the official language when the belief that a command of English is essential for economic self-sufficiency and success is emphasized; on the other hand, liberal opposition to this policy focuses on civil rights and freedom of expression. Another interesting (although not surprising) finding is that combinations of different conceptions of American identity (which Schildkraut labels conceptual hybridization) shape both support for and opposition to language policies, and that the interplay between identity and opinion will vary from issue to issue. Finally, she finds that attitudes toward complex issues, such as bilingual education, are less influenced by conceptions of American identity than are attitudes toward abstract or symbolic issues, such as declaring English the official language.

There is a lot of detailed and very interesting analysis about the relation between conceptions of American identity and how individuals respond to official-English policies, reflecting differences in self-identified ethnicity and race, among other characteristics. What is especially interesting is the predictive association between the ethnocultural tradition and attitudes toward