A second major strength of the book can be found when White addresses the topic of prime ministerial power in Canada. He provides an exceptionally clear rejoinder to the "governing from the centre" thesis put forward by Donald Savoie and others. Chapter 3 is dedicated to recapping the prime ministerial government thesis and then chipping away at its monotheistic position in the Canadian political science canon. It is a welcomed, succinct, and measured critique, and it is extremely useful for presenting the other side, particularly to undergraduate and graduate students.

Regrettably, White's challenge to Savoie highlights one of the book's weaknesses. Like all published materials, *Cabinets and First Ministers* was timely for the period in which it was written (2004–2005) but already it is a product of its time—how things change even in four years. For example, White's discussion reflect the difficulties experienced by the Liberal party in the twilight of the Chrétien–Martin years but the book was published before the Liberals' final implosion in 2006 and too soon to effectively assess the strengths and weaknesses of Stephen Harper's first minority government, a case which would have greatly informed his audit. Likewise, it was published too early to comment on the attempts at change with respect to electoral system and fix election dates that have affected power relations inside and outside provincial and federal cabinets since 2005.

As an actual audit, the book accomplishes its task in a reasonable and refined manner. White makes a number of recommendations both as part of his chapter summaries and in his final conclusion. The recommendations are far from radical. They appeal to common sense and they are often repeated in the public discourse: give more power to elected representatives, promote greater transparency, change the electoral system, fix election dates, and raise the level of civic participation in Canadian politics. He emphasizes the need for voters to put pressure on opposition leaders to hold them accountable to bold promises if and when they assume power. As such, White's contribution to the Canadian Democratic Audit may be best read as part of a wider endeavor, one which includes other contributions to the CDA series.

But what is missing in this audit is an actual statement of accounts with respect to Canadian governments. Canadians want to know, post hoc, whether their governments were accountable, whether citizens got good value for their political investments. *Cabinets and First Ministers* could have benefitted from a simple table or appendix outlining the extent to which each Canadian government was accountable, perhaps with a nod to individual and/or collective ministerial responsibility. Also, did the government accomplish what it set out to accomplish? The conditions which enhance or diminish accountability and efficiency, conditions which White discusses in detail, could then have been explored across cases and across time.

To conclude, Graham White's *Cabinets and First Ministers* is a welcome contribution to the Canadian Democratic Audit family. Its strengths include its comparative scope and challenge to the conventional wisdom regarding prime ministerial power. While not theoretically sophisticated, this book will be used as a helpful and concise reference on the subject of first ministers and cabinets in Canada by both academics and non-academics alike.

MATTHEW KERBY *Memorial University of Newfoundland*

Voting and Collective Decision-Making: Bargaining and Power
Annick Laruelle and Federico Valenciano
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How should groups make decisions? And how does this change when the groups represented by each representative are unevenly sized? These two questions, funda-

mental as they are to legislative studies, to social choice theory, and to political theory more generally, are taken up by Laruelle and Valenciano in their work *Voting and Collective Decision Making: Bargaining and Power*. They do so first theoretically and on the basis of a clever division between two types of committees. They then demonstrate how this applies to the European Union. This is a technical volume, but the authors do make a valiant effort to connect it to contemporary and practical politics. It is an important work.

Much of social choice theory has been concerned with understanding and measuring power within committees, power being broadly understood as the ability to realize committee outcomes consistent with one's preferences. To this end, power indices are computed with the hope of identifying which actors generally and/or in particular situations have the greatest ability to realize their desired outcome. But, generally speaking, these measures have been developed without identifying what kind of a decision a committee is allowed to make. Rather, these indices are mostly concerned with decision rules. This is particularly problematic in committees with unevenly sized groups.

The noteworthy contribution of Laruelle and Valenciano is to draw a distinction between two different types of committees. "Take-it-or-leave-it" committees are those that vote a decision up or down with no chance to bargain within the committee about choices or the content of those choices. (One is actually hard pressed to come up with mandates of this type within legislative committees. An example outside of a legislature would be when citizens are in a referendum asked to vote up or down on a government policy and different groups are given different weights). By contrast, "bargaining committees" are those that allow members to choose between several different arrangements and can modify the content of proposals before voting.

By making a distinction between these two types of committees, Laruelle and Valenciano are able to draw out the shortcomings of existing power indices, as they work very differently for these types of committees. Laruelle and Valenciano argue that they work poorly in both cases. In the first case, these indices tell us very little in take-it-or-leave-it committees while in bargaining committees they are effectively indistinguishable from game-theoretic type measures of the probability of being decisive.

The book is well arranged. It opens with a review of notation and preliminary concepts. Laruelle and Valenciano then review some seminal papers in social choice while highlighting the ambiguities therein. These two chapters would provide any interested reader or graduate class with a good introduction to social choice and collective decision making. They next examine their two committee types in a chapter each and follow this with showing how these two different models apply to the European Union. This is the principal place where more could be done. In the first place, they struggle to demonstrate that decision making in the EU ever approximates a take- it-or-leave-it committee structure. This must discount the value of their model, if only slightly. Second, Laruelle and Valenciano could better demonstrate how the insights they generate about the practical distributions of power within the current EU lead to the actual policy outcomes that we see. That they do not discounts the value of the volume but only slightly.

All told, this is an interesting, informative and potentially important volume. It is occasionally uneven in its presentation and perhaps strained in its application. But it is also very clever and maybe even seminal in its distinction between extreme committee types. For those continuing the work of collective decision making and voting rules, this is the proposal over which they must now bargain. It must be taken and not left.

PETER JOHN LOEWEN *University of Toronto*