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Publisher Routledge

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New Political Science

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713439578>

Waismel-Manor and Lowi's Reply

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Online publication date: 09 March 2011

To cite this Article Waismel-Manor, Israel and Lowi, Theodore J.(2011) 'Waismel-Manor and Lowi's Reply', New Political Science, 33: 1, 97 – 99

To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/07393148.2011.546143

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/07393148.2011.546143>

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Waismel-Manor and Lowi's Reply

Response to Reviewer #1, Clyde Barrow

We begin with Review #1, "Politics Denied: Comments on Waismel-Manor and Lowi's Politics in Motion." We like very much the politics of this author. He has us fairly well categorized, but he slips, like us, into areas not really pertinent to our argument. We like his comments because, together with ours, they will trigger off more thorough and effusive analyses of the nature and tendencies of our discipline, and we take pride in the length of this reviewer's comments, because he should take his critique as the beginning of a fully fleshed-out argument, whether a later article or, we hope, a book. Yes, touché, we don't touch on the corporate dimension. And, touché again, we don't delve into the significance of the structure of APSA as an oligarchy. This was the entire focus of the Caucus for a New Political Science, of which Alan Wolfe was leader. Wolfe, by the way, will be relieved to be corrected here that he was not a student of Lowi. The oligarchic influence on political thought was the essence of Wolfe's being, forty \pm years ago, and the reason why Lowi withdrew altogether from the Caucus because it became a war against the American Political Science *Association* rather than a war against political science itself. We can cite this here in the text and not in a footnote: Alan Wolfe, "Practicing the Pluralism We Preach: Internal Processes in the American Political Science *Association*" (Fall 1969, n.b., emphasis added). Wolfe denounced the oligarchy of APSA (but failed to recognize oligarchy in *all* "voluntary associations," so spoke Michels, the source).

This author then turns also away from the oligarchy factor directly into Stephen Toulmin with Max Weber, whose philosophic approaches have drawn Toulmin and this very good review directly into virtual anthropology, "not just as a changing population of *concepts* ... but as a changing population of *scientists*, linked together in ... formally organized institutions" (Barrow, p. 83). This puts us back into the universal tendency of oligarchy, the product of the institutionalization we chose to avoid. We have tried to stick rather narrowly to individual scientists gaining recognition despite the institution while exploiting it, thanks to "the kindness of interventions" of state institutions (thanks to Tennessee Williams' "the kindness of strangers"). Further, just like a drop of blood can tell much about the health of a patient, we have argued in the paper that our sample, while not being "the" profession, is still indicative of the health of our profession. In sum, the two of us plus all three reviewers could surely make a book out of our differences!

Response to Reviewer #2, Judith Grant

We admire and respect the critique of Judith Grant. But we cannot confront her critique directly. As it so often happens, a reviewer can become so engrossed with the authors' argument that she would rather write our piece herself. We do,

however, agree that our subtitle, “*A Personal History of Political Science*,” is somewhat misleading. We liked the subtitle because it promised to highlight the modal experiences of the discipline, defined as a calling and career within an institution. And of all the academic disciplines, the focus on personal experience should be prominent among political scientists. In fact, there should be an APSA Organized Section devoted to “the politics of political science.” Professor Grant and we together would be comfortable in such an Organized Section. But in this piece we did not want to weigh it down with the substance of the field, its varieties and their bearing on our careers.

Our goal was to establish a gross pattern from which we and others, like Professor Grant, be moved to more serious study of “the politics of political science.” And in order to avoid bias in selection we took as our universe those political scientists deemed by our colleagues the most prominent in the profession. Our criterion was simply the selection of our presidents rather than the quantification of citations.

Our argument will inevitably irritate some, but it’s a good start. And Professor Grant is one among many who will be irritated by our choice of “surge and decline.” Again, let us explain. We pulled this formulation out of a classic article by Professor Angus Campbell, senior author of the famous Campbell, Converse, Miller and Stokes, to stake out “certain impressive regularities.” Their focus was on “voting behavior of the American electorate [and] why the regularity exists.”¹ Moreover, we can be criticized for our reliance on a systemic grid, leading us to a tone or expectation that the discipline itself would turn out well.

In sum, we hope we can reject her last sentence, that we have defined “a narrow political science” (Grant, p. 91). We see it as a choice of one piece of a much larger discipline, and we hope other pieces in the politics of political science will enrich us with self-analysis.

Response to Reviewer #3, Rogers Smith

Rogers Smith has characterized our argument in an entirely different way. He hopes that our “surge and decline” is not a tragedy, aimed at the garbage heap that might “outlive” (Smith, p. 93) and “outperform” the product of our ancestors and colleagues. But, he observes, we embrace a “Darwinian connection”—to a certain extent, and as the beginning of our history—that the phenomena of expanding state development provided a new context of government regulation against which a “new political science” would favor “more sociological and psychological studies” (Smith, p. 94). We are very favorably disposed to his reaction. Even if we differ in detail, we like the Darwinian intrusion, a good mind game to play around with as a sort of dynamic, possibly even “Social Darwinism.” We hope this level of argument will take hold.

Another of his promising observations is that no regime has ever spent resources bent on its own downfall. There is merit to this accusation, and it should be encouraged, because an emerging opposition could advance by feeding on “scholarship that is [more] intellectually compelling ... than its predecessors” (Smith, p. 95). This observation helps strengthen our argument by

¹ Angus Campbell, “Surge and Decline: A Study of Electoral Change,” *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 24:3 (1960), pp. 397–418.

identifying an observable dynamic rather than an inherent, systemic one "that just happened this way."

Another point of interest but of somewhat less pertinence is the debt we owe to the history of the APSA elite, especially in our time when we who enjoy "extraordinary privileges of tenure without mandatory retirement" (Smith, p. 95), have a duty to be critical to our benefactors. We endorse this but go far beyond: Political science should be a science of pathology, in which we hope for the courage to criticize ourselves and the awareness to recognize when the criticism should stop.

Smith's best cut—and we look forward to taking him up on it in our next effort—is that we should not stop by counting and evaluating citations of our leaders but to "track the extent and impact of its more critical and dissenting voices" (Smith, p. 95). We agree that the dissenters may pay the price of their dissent by the cold shoulder. But many of our "recognized leaders" (Smith p. 95) actually started out as dissenters.

Smith ends on points we very strongly endorse: first, to study *why* we study; second, *what* we study; and third, to *write* essays on and about political science, with emphasis that *essay* means "to try." We hope to be around in a decade or so to document the rise of the modern movement that may topple such new movements as rational choice.

Dissenters, on your marks, get set, go!