

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

---

Publications of Affiliated Faculty: Nebraska  
Public Policy Center

Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska

---

2005

## Review of *Power, Knowledge, and Politics: Policy Analysis in the States* by John A. Hird

Mitch Herian

University of Nebraska - Lincoln, [mnherian@nebraska.edu](mailto:mnherian@nebraska.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/publicpolicyfacpub>



Part of the [Public Policy Commons](#)

---

Herian, Mitch, "Review of *Power, Knowledge, and Politics: Policy Analysis in the States* by John A. Hird" (2005). *Publications of Affiliated Faculty: Nebraska Public Policy Center*. 3.  
<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/publicpolicyfacpub/3>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Public Policy Center, University of Nebraska at DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln. It has been accepted for inclusion in Publications of Affiliated Faculty: Nebraska Public Policy Center by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln.

broader representation of eco-Marxist literature would certainly be apposite. There are also various missed opportunities in the case studies, such as the examination of the role of gender among Chicago's economic elites, and further conceptual exploration of the self-censorship induced by symbolic inclusion (Gonzalez dutifully avoids post-structural analysis but might have benefited from a Foucauldian excursion or two).

However, this book remains a useful foray into the contested concepts of legitimacy, co-option, and strategies for social change. After all, it is not the most damning observation that this book's greatest weakness is its brevity, and I hope to see more engaging scholarship from this provocative author in the future.

PETER STOETT

Concordia University, Montreal  
Copyright © 2006 Heldref Publications

Hird, John A.

**Power, Knowledge, and Politics:  
Policy Analysis in the States**

Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press  
256 pp., \$26.95, ISBN 1-5890-1049-3  
Publication Date: April 2005

John A. Hird, associate professor of political science and director of the Center for Public Policy and Administration at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, has put together a unique analysis of the role of nonpartisan research organizations (NPROs) that exist in the United States. In *Power, Knowledge, and Politics: Policy Analysis in the States*, Hird becomes one of the first researchers to systematically study NPROs in the states.

Hird begins the book by describing policy analysis and the ways in which it is used. Policy analysis is essentially policy research that is intended for a specific audience. At the state level, NPROs commonly work at the service of the legislature, which is a change from the time when state executives were most likely to be served by a research branch of government. In chapter 2, Hird discusses extensively the political pressures that usually surround policy analysis, particularly analysis that is intended to be nonpartisan in nature.

Hird continues by taking a state-by-state look at NPROs in chapters 3 and 4; for this task, he relies on survey data that he collected directly from state NPROs. Chapter 3 is devoted to describing the types of states in which NPROs flourish in terms of volume and resource availability. Chapter 4, in turn, is largely an explanation of why state legislatures vary in their use of and reliance on NPROs. The explanations include, among others, state political culture, think-tank presence, and party competition.

In chapter 5, Hird's analysis becomes a bit more specific as he begins to determine how

legislatures work with NPROs throughout the country. Many of the variables that affect NPRO presence in a state also seem to affect whether or not a particular NPRO is influential within a state, according to the legislators who were interviewed by Hird. He finds that political culture, state political ideology, and legislative professionalism are related to whether NPROs are viewed positively. Chapter 6 largely follows from chapter 5, as Hird takes a more nuanced look into legislators' opinions of NPROs; from his analysis, it appears that many of the variables described above interact to determine the extent to which NPROs are used or regarded as useful. Hird concludes the book by providing an overview of his findings. Essentially, he shows that NPROs are influential in some environments and that the characteristics of NPROs can be quite distinct from state to state.

Hird's work is valuable in that it provides scholars with one of the first descriptions of NPROs and the environments in which they thrive. As a result, this book is appropriate for a wide audience; undergraduate scholars interested in state politics or public administration would find this book informative, as would more advanced scholars of state politics and public policy.

MITCH HERIAN

University of Nebraska-Lincoln  
Copyright © 2006 Heldref Publications

Teske, Paul

**Regulation in the States**

Washington DC: Brookings Institution  
275 pp., \$38.50 cloth, \$16.50 paper  
ISBN 0-8157-8312-4 cloth  
ISBN 0-8157-8313-3 paper  
Publication Date: February 2004

Published in PERSPECTIVES IN  
POLITICAL SCIENCE;  
doi 10.3200/PPSC.34.4.217-236  
Copyright 2005 Heldref Publications.

Blair, Roger D., and Thomas F. Cotter  
**Intellectual Property: Economic and  
Legal Dimensions of Rights and  
Remedies**

New York: Cambridge University Press  
304 pp., \$75.00 cloth, \$29.99 paper  
ISBN 0-521-83316-7 cloth  
ISBN 0-521-54067-4 paper  
Publication Date: May 2005

In *Intellectual Property: Economic and Legal Dimensions of Rights and Remedies*, Roger D. Blair and Thomas F. Cotter present a challenging overview of the intellectual property (IP) field. Their particular emphasis is on using a law and economics perspective for analyzing the larger issues of maintaining the incentive structure encouraging such innovation while sustaining public access. In their view, the existing rules regarding damages when a patent,