

the citizens' viewpoint of public policy. This point is that most public policies cannot be made and implemented solely by governments; almost all policy areas involve the interaction of citizens with their government. Even in policy-making systems, such as the United Kingdom, where government itself assesses tax obligations for citizens, there is some dependence on reporting and record-keeping by citizens and private organizations. In the United States, with self-assessment, the government ironically must trust the very citizens who do not always trust it. Other areas of public policy, such as crime prevention, depend increasingly upon coproduction between the public sector and private individuals, and even administering social benefits depend upon eligible citizens making themselves known to government. Thus, again we can see that policy analysis is not just about the decisions made by government; it is also about the millions of decisions which must be made by average citizens as they interact with each other and with government. The subtitle of the book, '*A Behavioural Analysis*', makes the point about the importance of individual behavior at the outset, and it is emphasized throughout the volume.

A final observation about this citizen perspective on public policy is that, to paraphrase V. O. Key, the average citizen is no fool. Some public policies, e.g. 'tax expenditures' rely upon citizen being self-interested and structuring his or her life to take advantage of the incentives offered by government. Other policies can be administered very easily, knowing that citizens are self-interested and are attempting to do as well as they can for themselves. Their self-interest does not mean, however, that these citizens are 'uncivic'; it only means that, despite pride in their country and legitimacy of governments, in most western countries the individual gives priority to his or her own well-being. Citizens can divide their activities among three economies without doing serious harm to the State, and they can make consumption choices without undermining the authority and legitimacy of government.

Despite the numerous interesting and important points raised by this book, there are some less positive aspects which should also be pointed out. A number of these essays have appeared as papers and their integration and linkage is not as complete as might be desirable. It is not always clear just what each chapter adds to the total picture Rose is painting. Also, at times the evidence used to make arguments is highly conjectural and alternative assumptions could produce very different conclusions. Attempts at false precision through equations, at times confuse rather than clarify the analysis. Despite these minor points, Richard Rose has produced yet another interesting and important book which should be read by serious students of public policy.

B. Guy Peters, University of Pittsburgh

Bernt Aardal & Henry Valen: *Velgere, partier og politisk avstand (Voters, parties, and political distance)*. Oslo-Kongsvinger: Statistisk Sentralbyrå, 1989, 329 pp.

This is the report from the survey of the Norwegian parliamentary election of September 1985. At that election, the bourgeois coalition, led by Kaare Willoch and consisting of *Høyre*, *Kristelig Folkeparti* and *Senterpartiet*, lost its majority in the Storting. The two mandates belonging to the right-wing *Fremskrittspartiet* came into a key position, from where they soon made the situation so difficult for the government that it gave up. In May 1986 it was succeeded by a minority government of *Arbeiderpartiet*, led by Gro Harlem Brundtland. Time will show whether something similar happens to the present bourgeois coalition led by Jan P. Syse; in any

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case, the parliamentary situation in the present election period is roughly similar to that in the previous period, which means that Aardal & Valen's book has not lost its actuality.

The 1985 election implied a swing to the left of about 4 percent – not enough to generate a socialist majority but enough to make us curious as to the causes of the outcome. For that purpose the Norwegian electoral surveys seem extremely well-suited, thanks to their many interview questions about voter attitudes to political issues, and about voter perceptions of the parties' stands.

The first half of the book deals with these topics, and step-by-step the impression builds up that the Willoch government underrated the social problems arising in the course of the wave of liberalization and privatization which it undertook. Quite contrary to the government's intention, social problems and health care came to dominate the election campaign completely (p. 44). At the previous parliamentary election, the welfare issue had been just one of four equally strong issues, the others being foreign policy, taxes and abortion.

Especially among women and older voters, the welfare issue dominated, and naturally it dominated more on the left side than on the right side of the political center. But even among voters of *Høyre* and *Fremskrittspartiet*, the welfare issue headed the agenda (p. 48). Furthermore, public opinion shifted to the left between 1981 and 1985 on this and similar issues, judging by the declining acceptance of such statements as 'Social benefits are abused to a great extent' or 'There should be less social benefits' (p. 57).

It is true that the social dimension, the one dealing with welfare and equality, is only the second most important in the factor analysis of those interview questions that are included in the Norwegian surveys. Far more important is the issue of private or public enterprise (p. 60). The social dimension has even to fight for second place with a third dimension, dealing with moral and religious issues, as well as a fourth dimension dealing with the issue of industrial growth or environmental protection.

Even so, one might speculate that between 1981 and 1985, great numbers of Norwegian voters moved along the social dimension and in consequence shifted their preferences away from *Høyre* and toward *Arbeiderpartiet*. But alas, it is not as simple as that. Surprisingly, the voters of these two big parties are somewhere near the middle of the social dimension. On one pole we find *Sosialistisk Valgallianse* and the small *Venstre*; on the other, *Fremskrittspartiet* (p. 65). Therefore, the two former should win the election, and the latter should lose. But this prediction fits only poorly with the actual outcome.

The authors fail to lead us out of this maze. Factor scores are interesting, but one longs to see them validated by simpler analytical tools. Aardal & Valen might have investigated the simple hypothesis that respondents with welfare orientation shifted toward *Arbeiderpartiet* whereas those not so oriented remained with the bourgeois parties. A similar hypothesis is tested elegantly in chapter 7, which deals with economic performance, and in his previous writing, Professor Valen has done it with great success on the issues of abortion and EEC membership. So why not here?

Another possible explanation for the 3.7 percent increase in support for *Arbeiderpartiet* could be that the previous elections, 1981 and 1977, deviated in a negative direction from the normal vote for that party. In order to judge this, one might want to investigate which voter types defected from the party at the previous election and returned to the fold in 1985. Such a longitudinal study, however, fits badly into the idea of the election report.

Other problems are effectively dealt with by Aardal & Valen. Chapter 5 gives a vivid impression of the opinion winds which blew over Norway during the first half of the 1980s. Most of them were blowing against the bourgeois parties, despite much talk about 'the right wave'. Chapter 6 pinpoints the attitudinal forces either uniting or splitting the bourgeois voters and their parties, summing the situation up by showing that the voters of *Kristelig Folkeparti* and *Senterpartiet* are generally closer to *Arbeiderpartiet* than to *Fremskrittspartiet*.

The second half of the book deals with structural changes in party support. Here the authors can draw on the long series of Norwegian election surveys. For example, chapter 10 shows that the difference in socialist party choice between workers and non-workers has dropped from 26 percent in 1969 to 15 percent in 1985, when one controls for trade union membership and length of school education (p. 204). On the other hand, the difference between trade union members and non-members has risen from 29 to 34 percent during the same period. Thus, in 1985, trade union membership has moved up to be the dominant sociological indicator determining the choice between socialist and bourgeois parties. Here Aardal & Valen, with linear regression methods, confirm the conclusions which Ola Listhaug draws in his longitudinal study, *Citizens, Parties, and Norwegian Electoral Politics 1957-1985*, in which he employs log odds regression: over this longer period, traditional class differences have declined, and more generally, sociological variables for explaining partisan choice are less efficient than they used to be.

Much of the decline in explanatory power is due to the post-war generation and its greater momentum in the electorate for every new election. One is tempted to say that we have not succeeded in constructing a satisfactory sociological model for the political behavior of that generation. Social class, status, education and family pattern all appear to have a different meaning in the post-war cohorts compared with the older cohorts. Aardal & Valen do a great job in discussing, for example, the gender gap in a generational perspective. Surprisingly, they can show that in 1969, the women of the post-war cohorts, voted much more socialist than the men – 63 percent compared with 48 percent (p. 206). By 1985, when the vanguard of the post-war generation was approaching its forties, the figures were 47 percent socialist among the women and 38 percent among the men. Thus, in Norway at least, it is not correct to say that the women did not take part in the swing towards the right; rather, they started out by being to the left of the men, and it seems, that we have to go back to the schools of the 1960s to get to the origin of the gender gap. Furthermore, Aardal & Valen, in chapter 12, find that what keeps up the gender gap today is related to women's low work status and ensuing social problems, rather than indicators of their family positions such as the number of children.

The final chapter is a well-aimed attempt at explaining the local elections of 1987, based on letters sent to the respondents two years after the main survey. No less than 80 percent responded, and the replies show that the spectacular success obtained by *Fremskrittspartiet* came from shifts towards that party, both from *Høyre* and from *Arbeiderpartiet*. Thus it appears that the blame for ungovernability was laid on the big parties, not on the small party whose two mandates had upset the Norwegian parliamentary system.

Aardal & Valen's book is a useful, almost indispensable tool for those who follow Norwegian electoral politics. It contains rich material presented in attractive forms. It should be of interest to both researchers and to the interested lay public.

*Ole Borre, University of Aarhus*