Book Reviews

***Beyond Sputnik: U.S. Science Policy in the 21st Century*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press. xii + 386 pages. ISBN 9780472033065, $30.00 paper. Homer A. Neal, Tobin L. Smith, and Jennifer B. McCormick, 2008.**

Science policy in the United States manifests persistent tensions that threaten effective action as we move on into the very challenging twenty-first century. Science policy participants share many social values but often use diverging perspectives and employ incommensurate operating logic, evidence, and approaches to consequences and accountability. Scientifically trained policy participants generally favor theoretically relevant research, tight technical definitions, rigorous formal logic, sound experimental methods, and peer review. Political and governmental actors are attuned to the complex and sometimes paradoxical realities of bureaucratic and legislative decision making where several ideologies may thrive, definitions remain vague, no one logical form dominates, evidential rules vary, competing interest groups must be balanced, and accountability is diffused. Public understanding is mediated through print and electronic sources that simplify the complexities of science and politics, persistently conflate science and technology, and construct stereotypic conflict narratives.

The distinguished authors of *Beyond Sputnik: U.S. Science Policy in the 21st Century* ambitiously seek to prepare future participants and to better inform current actors with a broad-ranging treatment of the history, the current situation, and the central challenges of this vital policy area. They seek scientifically and technologically oriented readers, those with policy backgrounds and aspirations, as well as members of the policy attentive public. The book is organized in four sections of five chapters in each. The authors begin with a survey of the main domains of science policy. A historical sketch pivoting around *Sputnik* is provided and measured by federal budget support of science. Key governmental policy players are identified and placed in an initial briefing on the policy-making process. In the second quintet of chapters, the "partners" of the federal government are explored with emphasis on universities, federal labs, industries, states, and the public. The third segment features what the authors propose as the most significant policy issues in the post-*Sputnik* period ranging across national security, the interplay of "big" and "little" science, the necessities of scientific infrastructure, scientific ethics, and science's demanding educational imperatives. Finally, the authors select some specific future challenges in an increasingly globalized environment to bring together many of the themes, problems, and possibilities touched on in earlier sections.

Beyond Sputnik: U.S. Science Policy in the 21st Century is an exceptionally successful textbook in design and organization, in the clarity of its writing, and its potential connections with readers and their informed action. Major scientific research programs and findings are explained in language accessible to intelligent adults. Political and policy processes are presented in sufficient detail to avoid easy oversimplification or reflexive cynicism. The authors provide relevant and intelligible

Review of Policy Research, Volume 26, Number 3 (2009)

graphics that illustrate and summarize complicated scientific and policy information. Each chapter includes a "Policy Discussion Box" that poses intelligent, nontrivial questions that flow from the chapter's materials and can move discussants well beyond mere recapitulation. Each chapter is also buttressed by extensive endnotes providing resource citations and extensions.

A book with such comprehensive coverage and ambition will inevitably leave readers (and reviewers) quibbling concerning some of the multitude of specific details. At the same time, it may leave readers grateful for its inclusiveness and still wanting more. For example, in spite of its frequent use of economic data, the analysis somewhat underplays the pervasive influence of neoliberal market thinking among all the science policy participants. While science-based participants may legitimately bristle at being seen by most of the other policy community actors as just another expensive interest group, competitive market-driven conceptions of science and politics in general, and policy-making in particular, reinforce that understanding. This has consequences for time-related thinking (e.g., scientific horizons are at odds with budget years and quarterly return demands), policy strategies (e.g., agenda setting and the persistent coalitional necessities for federal funding decisions), and prevailing public confusion of science with technology (e.g., science as a near-term solution for specific problems such as a lethal disease, new energy sources, or global warming). The perspective on science as just another expensive commodity has deep significance for the scientific priorities (e.g., distorting the always delicate balance of basic and applied research), for science policy-making (e.g., tipping the coalitional balance in favor of industrial partners), and for science education (e.g., overweighting the immediate educational needs for a scientific workforce to the detriment of scientifically educating democratic citizens).

Overall, *Beyond Sputnik: U.S. Science Policy in the 21st Century* succeeds as a thoughtful, notably well-written, comprehensive treatment of science policy for students, policy community players, and information-seeking readers. It deftly negotiates the difficult textbook terrain of assuming too much of readers without insulting their intelligence. It provides well-researched descriptions, plausible explanations, and thoughtfully mapped action paths for the present and future science policy communities.

Reviewed by Charles R. Green
Macalester College

***Environmental Law, Policy, and Economics: Reclaiming the Environmental Agenda*. Cambridge, UK: MIT Press. 1088 pages. ISBN 9780262012386, $90.00. Nicholas A. Ashford and Charles C. Caldart, 2008.**

Environmental Law, Policy, and Economics offers a thorough, well-reasoned, and convincing antidote to public choice approaches to environmental law and economics. The volume is a compilation of original essays, article excerpts, and case reviews concerning environmental law, policy, and technology problems and solutions.

The authors do not purport to tackle the breadth of twenty-first century environmental problems, and instead focus their efforts on pollution and pollution-control mechanisms. The first chapter, "The Nature and Origins of Environmental

Contamination," is a necessary part of environmental policy advocacy, litigation, and education. Many environmental law and policy books begin with statutes and regulations without adequate explanation of the problem source. The first chapters include some of the important iconic names and essays in the environmental movement: Garret Hardin's *Tragedy of the Commons* and a piece by Barry Commoner. While Commoner, Rachel Carson, Theo Colborn, Dianne Dumanoski, and John Peterson Myer's seminal books for facilitating change were mentioned, there was no real synopsis of them offered. Commoner's four laws of ecology (*The Closing Circle*, 1971) belong in every serious environmental law and policy book as they lay out how interconnectedness necessitates human restraint, a concept we have yet to grasp, and spawned the modern day environmental movement.

Ashford and Caldart next get into the science behind harm-based pollutant limitations, offering a thorough and accessible discussion of the nature of environmental harms and explaining clearly which chemicals we should be concerned about and why. Theirs is one of the best assessments of the expanse of harm caused by environmental hazards I have seen. Particularly enticing is the solution-oriented approach of many of the articles presented.

Chapter 3, "Economics and The Environment," is a similarly well-reasoned and cogent exploration of the serious concerns with narrowly configured economics-based environmental policies. I have yet to see another work with this level of depth and analysis that accurately depicts the biases inherent in, and actual harms caused by, cost/benefit analysis and other economics-driven solutions to environmental problems.

Ashford and Caldart take a unique approach to the legal aspects of environmental law. They do not get into the "law" until after having introduced the breadth of the pollution problem and dissecting the utility of the cost/benefit analysis. The authors begin with the common law and have an immensely readable section on tort law. They explain the difference between common law and statutory law, describe remedies and defenses to torts, and explain certain torts in detail (negligence, nuisance, trespass, and strict liability). However, this section did not provide sufficient case excerpts to give the reader a solid grounding in how common law works or to understand its ever-evolving nature. They did, however, include the quintessential tort case dealing with a cost/benefit analysis (Boomer v. Atlantic Cement Co.).

The authors are more comprehensive in discussing administrative law, covering the origins of agency power, how an agency fulfills its statutory mandate, the interface of the Administrative Procedure Act with other statutes, judicial review of agency decisions, the hierarchy of the court system, and the relationship between the three branches of government. Having said this, the chapter might have been better organized, as someone unfamiliar with the law of agencies may get lost navigating the information thicket.

Ashford and Caldart then move through specific statutes (e.g., the Clean Water Act and the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act). They do an excellent job providing appropriate case law to explain the statutes they address in detail and supplementing the cases with commentary, helpful questions, and explanation. Each chapter is exceedingly detailed, including excerpts from and/or reference to seminal historical cases as well as more recent

cases whose impact is yet to be seen. The authors also digest the common law interpretation of the aforementioned statutes for the reader and discuss how it has (or is anticipated to change the state of the law).

While this book is a phenomenal, in-depth treatise on economics and legal avenues, the authors fail to adequately acknowledge the significant and consistently underemphasized role of public interest law firms and environmental advocacy groups, among other nonprofit public organizations, in the continued advancement of environmental protections. Many efforts of not-for-profit organizations (and eventual successes of legal advocacy groups and legislators) are an eventuality because of education and lobbying oriented efforts of these unsung heroes.

I strongly recommend this compendium to colleagues in law as well as to researchers and policy analysts working in the environmental field. The book is also particularly well suited to graduate level courses in the social and environmental sciences, economics, political science, and public policy fields. While thorough and insightful, this scope and the cost of this volume might be too much for an undergraduate curriculum. *Environmental Law, Policy, and Economics: Reclaiming the Environmental Agenda* excels in its sobering warnings concerning economically based solutions to environmental problems.

Reviewed by Corey Denenberg Dehner
Northeastern University

***Imaginary Futures: From Thinking Machines to the Global Village*. London: Pluto Press. xi + 344 pages. ISBN 9780745326610, $95.00 cloth. ISBN 9780745326603, $26.95 paper. Richard Barbrook, 2007.**

In *Imaginary Futures*, author Richard Barbrook makes a provocative argument. "The importance of a new technology," he says, "lies not in what it can do in the here and now, but in what more advanced models might be able to do one day" (p. 8). From this insight he has written a book on the power of imagination; specifically, how visions of technology-induced Utopias are used by *status quos* to legitimize their policy preferences. For example, in the late-1950s/early-1960s, American elites used space rockets, computers, and nuclear reactors in two time frames at once: contemporary capabilities demonstrated more than just what is doable today, they also advertised what will be here tomorrow. Indeed, much of modern history, says Barbrook, has been shaped by the struggle over competing visions of the future. To prove his thesis, Barbrook probes the past for imaginary futures—"data-mining"—as he puts it, their social underpinnings and policy implications. To look forward, Barbrook argues, we need to look back (p. 11).

In the history presented, Barbrook traces the American state's support of what he calls The Cold War Left whose job it was to forecast the future—a future crafted to counter international Communism's promise of a workers' paradise. The coming of the so-called "information society," for example, was framed in terms of the elimination of undesirable industrial-age jobs with purportedly preferable service sector careers, while cutting-edge technologies would bring comfort and security to everyone (nuclear power, for instance, would provide limitless cheap energy). A new, better world supposedly was just around the corner as long as "we" (the West,

led by America) supported capitalism and liberal democracy. According to Barbrook, throughout modern history, such promises have been repackaged and reissued through a cadre of intellectuals. The result, over the past fifty years, has been the obfuscation of geopolitical rivalries and class conflicts through an elite-managed focus on "opposing definitions of the global village" (p. 273), most recently articulated through the fetishization of the Internet.

Unfortunately, despite Barbrook's occasionally brilliant insights—particularly his skillful recounting of The New Left's propagation of a simplified version of Marshall McLuhan's writings—*Imaginary Futures* falters mainly as a result of its analytical and methodological problems. In examining the history of the future, the book—written for a general audience—lacks theoretical rigor and inadequately documents core arguments. Barbrook's conceptual limitations impede, for example, his presentation of time and its complexities in various cultures. As for the author's admonition that we must take history seriously, the book's dearth of direct interviews and archival materials underscores its inadequacies.

To repeat, throughout *Imaginary Futures*, Barbrook argues that a cluster of intellectuals (Walt Rostow and Daniel Bell, in particular) were the West's primary authors of the future. Indeed, the CIA-backed Cold War Left, he says, "were *the only people* . . . *capable* of inventing the Anti-Communist grand narrative . . . which proved that the American present was the rest of the world's future" (p. 130, emphasis added). Too frequently, in the absence of convincing documentation or clear explication, such conclusions are presented as historical facts. More problematically, Barbrook provides no substantive evidence for his view that it was, indeed, The Cold War Left's vision that successfully generated wider political–cultural beliefs. For example, the book emphasizes the 1960s *Commission on the Year 2000* as these intellectuals' definitive coming together, generating their formulation of "a new imaginary future . . . for the American Empire" (p. 147). While no doubt an important exercise, except for scattered references to "citizens seduced . . . with promises of consumer prosperity and hi-tech futures" (p. 196), Barbrook's rendition of events fails to convincingly demonstrate how such prognostications were successfully disseminated and, subsequently, internalized by various publics. How, for instance, did Bell's prophecies filter down to the consciousnesses of most Westerners? How, precisely, did The Cold War Left so effectively influence a broad range of socializing media, most importantly those shaping cultural norms concerning time?

In sum, *Imaginary Futures* boils down to a provocative idea that needs more research and analytical rigor. Ironically, in a book concerning the power of conceptualizations, the author's focus on elite intellectuals, his assumptions as to their importance in the crafting and circulation of dominant ideas, and lastly, his portrayal of citizens as generally passive or enthusiastic audiences are disappointingly underdeveloped. This is not to say that Barbrook's book is without merit. Any work that at least takes Marx's under-assessed observation—that the ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas—seriously, certainly is worth a peek. But ultimately what limits Barbrook's project is also what makes his book relatively accessible—its general absence of weighty, but for the trained academic, essential conceptual tools (heuristics such as the neo-Gramscian take on hegemony, George Gurvitch's analysis of cultures and time, Harold Innis's theory of media bias, to name just a few). Readers already familiar with such concepts will find much in

Barbrook to stimulate further research on what is, to repeat, a provocative, interesting idea.

Reviewed by Edward Comor
University of Western Ontario

***Confronting the Coffee Crisis: Fair Trade, Sustainable Livelihoods and Ecosystems in Mexico and Central America*. Cambridge, UK: MIT Press. 400 pages. ISBN 9780262524803, $27.00. Christopher M. Bacon, V. Ernesto Mendez, Stephen R. Gliessman, David Goodman, and Jonathan A. Fox (Eds.), 2008.**

Confronting the Coffee Crisis examines the drivers and consequences of the most recent drop in coffee prices that in December 2001, reached a nominal 30-year low and a 100-year low in real terms (p. 43). Focusing on Mesoamerica, Bacon and co-authors explore "how participation by coffee farmers and producer organizations in alternative, relational trade networks has extended livelihood opportunities, reduced producers' vulnerability to the coffee crisis, and stimulated the adoption of more sustainable farm-management practices" (p. 4). The volume collects field studies that, by uncovering the subtleties of individual experiences, work as a counterpoint to aggregative studies. It aims to reveal the diverse strategies producers have used in response to the coffee crisis and contribute to theoretical understanding of how the interplay between social and ecological systems features in processes of individual adaptation. Arguably, the authors' greatest contribution, as exemplified by the concluding chapter's strong synthesis, is to underscore the dynamic and complex processes by which farmers' livelihoods and environmental conditions are threatened in Mesoamerica, and, hence, the concerted and diverse responses that are needed.

The book approaches its task in three parts. The first part (Chapters 1–3) frames the analysis, describes a spectrum of coffee production strategies from an agroecological perspective, and reviews the reasons for the most recent and previous coffee crises. The second part (Chapters 4–9) examines ecological and social facets of producers' responses to the coffee crisis. Three chapters are dedicated to regions in Mexico, two to regions in Nicaragua, and one to regions in El Salvador. In each, surveys, interviews, and ecological sampling are combined to examine landscape-level patterns of production and marginalization; yield and environmental consequences of organic versus intensive production practices; environmental impacts (e.g., biocide and fertilizer use, weeding, soil erosion, and shade-tree abundance) of farm management and technological choices; and livelihood implications of participation in social or environmental certification programs, and the concurrent environmental benefits of diversified production (particularly shade-tree abundance).

The book's third and final part (Chapters 10–14) reviews alternative North–South trading arrangements. Three chapters detail challenges facing certification initiatives. At the farm-level, trade-offs can exist between, on the one hand, ecological benefits of organic and shade-coffee practices, and on the other hand, profits available from alternative crops. For instance, certain organic coffee farms in Chiapas, for historical reasons, are at low altitudes. This has the unfortunate result of limiting coffee quality, and it raises questions concerning whether organic and

shade-grown coffee should be promoted over other crops that could yield higher economic returns. With certification procedures, conformance to ISO norms as a means to increase credibility has the downside of creating conflicts with social norms in coffee-producing communities. Farmers employed to assess their cooperative's compliance with organic standards are placed in a tensed role, mediating the expectations of their community and those of an international certification organization. In this sense, the pursuit of credibility in the market may be offset by the unintended alienation of growers. Finally, not all programs are created equally and their differences matter for how likely certification can serve progressive ends. Highlighting this challenge, a chapter reviews how pioneer initiatives—fair trade, organics, and the Rainforest Alliance—struggle to maintain their integrity given pressures from the proliferation of initiatives, an increasing role of governments, and the ongoing problems with accessibility and cost.

In the penultimate chapter, Jaffe and Bacon ask: what next? "What if we take certification as a starting point instead of a finish line?" (p. 311). This question and the discussion merit reflection. The chapter reviews an organization—the Community Agroecology Network (CAN)—formed to "expand and deepen alternative trade networks" (p. 311) and to surpass the constraints of organic and fair trade certification in order to help farmers "transition towards sustainability" (p. 325). Many logistical and attitudinal challenges were faced in this undertaking, including resistance to ideas of exchange and empowerment, cross-cultural exchange, and organizational development. It was also harder than anticipated to export small volumes of coffee, even when strong ties existed: for instance, paperwork requirements for permission to export to the United States were a large barrier for smaller producers. These are important issues to consider, since, in Chapter 12, Courville remarked that few players understand how "robust certification systems are actually quite expensive to build and maintain given the significant information and credibility requirements" (p. 296).

In this respect, the book closes by posing two alternative hypotheses for a path to the future; these are partly in tension, but may, under the right conditions, be mutually reinforcing. One hypothesis builds from Couville's remark: it is costly to form a credible and workable certification program (or, by extension, any organization seeking to help the situation of coffee farmers), and existing, pioneer programs are not irreparably broken. Hence, we should focus on working from within to make them better. Why is this preferable? First, existing programs have expertise gained from years of practice in the area, and they have momentum around their activities. Starting again would risk losing this knowledge. Second, the proliferation of programs is part of the problem, not part of the solution. Adding new organizations to an already fragmented arena is counterproductive.

By contrast, an alternative hypothesis builds from Jaffe and Bacon's discussion: the shift to certification undermines the alternative, social-movement ethos of fair trade and organics. A new start can correct this shift and reengage core principles of the movement. Why is this preferable? First, existing certification programs are becoming too professionalized, leaving them unable to address the root problems they were established to correct. Starting afresh overcomes the bureaucratic inertia limiting progress, and new organizations could easily learn the right lessons from the experiences of certification to date. Second, the proliferation of efforts is not a

problem in and of itself, especially if it can uncover solutions to the problem that are more effective than those currently in practice.

Again, these are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Alternative trade organizations including Equal Exchange and Traidcraft existed before fair trade labeling and they remain committed to improving the lot of coffee farmers as well as that of producers of other products. However, the risk of proliferation, as the authors explain, comes more from those initiatives that may water down standards, leading to a possible race to the bottom. Whatever the path, be it one of the above, or another alternative, a redoubled effort seems necessary. According to the authors, by 2005 certified coffees (fair trade, organics, shade grown, Rainforest Alliance, and Utz Kapeh) probably accounted for 2–4 percent of the world coffee trade (pp. 347–349). How much further can growing demand for certified and alternative trade coffees progress the ends of improving environmental conditions and farmers' livelihoods? Are there ways to adapt existing efforts, following the first hypothesis, to better address the diversity of livelihood strategies (for instance, the links between intercropping and certification, or pressure for migration and certification)? Are the rigidities in and strategies of existing initiatives hindering rather than helping progress? In all situations, are there ways to promote and defend transparency and accountability in the global coffee supply chain? In raising these questions, *Confronting the Coffee Crisis*, is a first step that untangles many critical issues and sheds light on complexities and paradoxes in coffee production and trade that are critical to understand for those seeking to help coffee move toward sustainability.

Reviewed by Graeme Auld
Yale University

***Lies, Damned Lies, and Drug War Statistics*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press. vii + 268 pages. ISBN 9780791469750, $83.50 cloth. ISBN 9780791469767, $28.95 paper. Matthew B. Robinson and Renee G. Scherlen, 2007.**

In *Lies, Damned Lies, and Drug War Statistics*, Matthew B. Robinson and Renee G. Scherlen set out to provide a "critical analysis of the claim made by the Office of National Drug Control Policy" (ONDCP), the primary federal agency responsible for establishing policies, priorities, and objectives for the drug control program in the United States. They analyze and evaluate the accuracy of the types of claims made by ONDCP in its yearly National Drug Control Strategy from 2000–06 and then draw inferences concerning the effectiveness of the war on drugs and the utility of ONDCP. They assess ONDCP statements related to drug use in the United States, treatment for America's drug users, the disruption of drug markets both in the United States and abroad, and the costs of the drug war.

Their overall conclusions are that ONDCP consistently distorts data to portray the war on drugs as effective, except in periods where it wants to generate public fear for either political or bureaucratic reasons; that it embraces successes as the results of its policies while disavowing failures as unrelated to policy; that it celebrates short-term successes while ignoring long-term trends that betray the inef-

fectiveness of policies, and that overall it does not admit to failures. In addition, although ONDCP presents its strategy as a balanced approach between source country policies and punitive domestic policies on the one hand and demand reduction—treatment and prevention—on the other hand, Robinson and Scherlen conclude that the first approach is in reality the dominant strategy in terms of resource appropriation and policy emphasis while treatment programs are systematically underfunded and inadequate and prevention programs are ineffectively designed. The authors charge that in order to put a positive spin on what they assess as ONDCP's and the war on drugs' overwhelming failures, ONDCP uses shifting baselines to avoid negative evaluations of policy effectiveness, presents only partial data in its graphic presentation of results in its annual reports, inappropriately combines data from several studied categories to report a success in achieving goals while analysis of individual data categories does not merit a success evaluation, and provides less data on vital statistics, such as drug availability, drug prices, and drug purity than it did previously to hide failures.

A desire of the executive to portray its policy in the best possible light and spin failures as successes is perhaps as old as politics itself. Congress itself has been aware of the dangers of government self-reporting and the possibility of the executive "cooking the books" on the drug war. In 2002, for example, as Robinson and Scherlen also point out, ONDCP narrowed the way it counts federal antidrug spending programs, which are scattered over dozens of agencies, thus giving the impression that demand reduction programs represent a much higher portion of the antidrug budget than they in fact do. Many policy studies have shown that demand reduction programs are both more effective in reducing drug consumption and more cost-effective than supply side policies, but that the drug war overwhelmingly emphasizes supply side approaches. Despite a congressional directive for ONDCP to return to the old accounting, ONDCP has not fully done so.

Robinson and Scherlen's analysis is most persuasive when they point out the internal inconsistencies of the actual data presented by ONDCP in its reports and the positive, but frequently undeserved, interpretations ONDCP gives the data regarding the effectiveness of policy. This work required a lot of painstaking and careful analysis by the authors, and the reader is treated to over 150 pages of detail regarding the various claims and the data behind them. This work is also of great policy, public accountability, and drug-policy research significance given that Congress appropriates money for policy to a large extent on the basis of government self-reporting. An objective evaluation by outside observers of the facts presented by government agencies is necessary for long-term effectiveness of policy, appropriately the responsibility of academics and analysts, and ultimately one of the hallmarks of democracy.

It is thus a pity that Robinson and Scherlen overreach in their analysis and they themselves make incorrect and distorted assertions, frequently when discussing overseas programs and drug trends. They, for example, stress that the war on drugs was sacrificed to security objectives by toppling the Taliban regime, arguing that the Taliban was extremely effective at eradicating opium poppy in Afghanistan. The statement is problematic for several reasons: first, the Taliban did not actually engage in eradication, but only prohibited new cultivation in 2000 and punished violators. Second and more importantly, the authors fail to neither mention that the

Taliban fully sponsored and taxed opium cultivation for several years prior to the 2000 prohibition, nor do they investigate whether the prohibition was sustainable if the Taliban stayed in power. In fact, even prior to the U.S. toppling of the Taliban regime, the immiserated Afghan population started violating the ban and went back to cultivation.

On the most fundamental level, however, Robinson and Scherlen do not discuss the inherent difficulties of drawing inferences concerning the effectiveness of policy from drug data trends without control comparisons. Imagine the following scenario: a sick patient has been taking a pill as treatment, but is not getting better. Does that justifiably imply that the pill is not effective treatment? That is one plausible answer and indeed it may be the correct answer. But there are several other possibilities: (1) the pill is in fact an effective treatment, but the dosage needs to be higher. US agencies frequently use this logic to argue for more and more intense eradication campaigns in source countries; (2) the pill is at least partly effective, and without it, the patient would be much sicker. In the drug war rhetoric, this means that consumption of drugs and its social costs would be far greater in the absence of antidrug policies holding them in check; and (3) another option is that not only is the pill ineffective, but that is in fact counterproductive and compromises other aspects of the patient's health. Although Robinson and Scherlen argue that the war on drugs is profoundly flawed, their analysis actually does not resolve the accuracy of these competing interpretations. All it shows is that there are good reasons to be skeptical concerning the strategic and tactical claims of success in the war on drugs.

The U.S. government evaluation of antidrug efforts has been stuck for decades on interpretations number 2 and 3. But failing to consider other policy options as, at minimum, control tests and arguing for ever-increasing supply side policies without acknowledging the possibility of policy ineffectiveness and without attempting to address its counterproductive aspects runs the substantial risk of killing the patient by the treatment without succeeding in curing his disease.

Reviewed by Vanda Felbab-Brown
Georgetown University