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Editorial Review

Review

'In this slim volume, Randall Holcombe takes the reader masterfully on an informative journey through the main regions of public choice theory. Among the topics this fine volume covers are voting theory, presidential vs. parliamentary systems, interest groups, bureaucracy, political entrepreneurship, and constitutional political economy. Someone who works through this book will be solidly prepared to venture into the higher reaches of public choice theory.' --Richard E. Wagner, George Mason University

'Robert Kennedy said that "Some men see things as they are, and ask why. I dream of things that never were, and ask why not." This is a book for both kinds of people. Holcombe provides a hard-headed analysis of how government and politics actually works, and careful analysis of why the dreams for optimal outcomes, whether coming from the formal models of supposedly sophisticated economists, (based on "as if" assumptions that exclude politics), or those coming from idealist "reformers" (stemming from their utopian visions), end up shattered by harsh behavioral and institutional realities. Written in a completely non-technical fashion, and covering topics like rational ignorance, rent-seeking and regulatory capture, this book works beautifully either as a complement to traditional introductory economics courses, or to introductory courses in political science.' --Bernard Grofman, University of California, Irvine

'The author has extensive personal connections to all the aspects of public choice, and has produced a masterful volume. The insights of public choice are varied, but its explanatory power is consistent. Holcombe manages to weave together an interesting and informed commentary on the many strands of public choice scholarship in a way that will be useful even to experts, while providing an overview that a determined newcomer will be able to pick up immediately.' --Michael Munger, Duke University

About the Author

Randall G. Holcombe, DeVoe Moore Professor of Economics, Florida State University

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