

political tradition but whether it can provide Obama with the intellectual and political resources he needs to meet the challenges of these interesting times.

Western Europe

Andrew Moravcsik

The Politics of Precaution: Regulating Health, Safety, and Environmental Risks in Europe and the United States
BY DAVID VOGEL. Princeton University Press, 2012, 332 pp. \$39.50.

From 1960 to 1990, the United States led the world in rigorous health and safety regulations. European states struggled to catch up, often opposing regulatory protections. Around 1990, these roles were reversed. Today, Europeans enjoy the cleanest air, water, and land; the most natural food; the safest drugs and cosmetics; and the greatest commitment to a sustainable global environment. In Vogel's words, the EU has become a "global regulatory hegemon," driving corporate standards even in China and other far-flung jurisdictions. What explains this switch? In this engaging book, Vogel argues that extreme conservatives in the United States have brought regulatory innovation to a standstill, aided by decentralized and gridlocked U.S. political institutions. In Europe, by contrast, a more moderate consensus and centrist parliamentary systems maintain support for regulation, which the EU policy process tends to spread uniformly throughout the

continent. This book might not be the final word on this fascinating subject, but it should be required reading for businesspeople, officials, and citizens interested in the role of government in the modern world.

The Sleepwalkers: How Europe Went to War in 1914

BY CHRISTOPHER CLARK.
HarperCollins, 2013, 736 pp. \$29.99.

This compelling examination of the causes of World War I deserves to become the new standard one-volume account of that contentious subject. Clark, a history professor at Cambridge University, concedes the importance of basic structural causes, such as rigid alliance commitments; the temptations of preventive war on a rapidly growing, militarized continent; and the peculiarities of authoritarian decision-making. Yet he believes that such forces alone cannot explain the war and might just as likely have led to peace. He argues that war emerged from a complex conjunction of factors, each of which was far from inevitable and in many cases even improbable, often because it involved decision-makers who behaved less than fully rationally. They indulged in illusions of power, stereotypes about their enemies, and outmoded conceptions of sovereignty; they succumbed to the demands of transient domestic coalitions; and they misperceived their surroundings, sometimes for no good reason. In all of this, such leaders were "sleepwalkers," generally unaware of the horrific consequences of the war they were about to unleash. This interpretation not only captures trends in

modern historiography on the Great War but also highlights striking similarities with (and a few differences from) the decision-making in contemporary conflicts.

Mapping the Extreme Right in Contemporary Europe

EDITED BY ANDREA MAMMONE, EMMANUEL GODIN, AND BRIAN JENKINS. Routledge, 2012, 344 pp. \$150.00 (paper, \$49.95).

There has been much written about the extreme right in Europe in recent years. The contribution this book makes is its analysis of specific movements in several dozen European countries. Although the academic prose style and the authors' pursuit of personal research agendas are occasionally self-indulgent, an intriguing common theme emerges. Simply put, the extreme right seems to enjoy a position in European life that is more than the sum of its contradictory parts. European right-wing parties are in fact surprisingly fragmented, disagreeing over almost everything except ultranationalist sentiments and xenophobic opposition to non-European immigrants. The parties often change their views. They differ across countries, and labels fail to capture their beliefs. Still, although almost all of them are politically weak, they sometimes manage to force other parties to strategically adopt some of their positions. And although many of them appeal to atavistic notions of tradition, they are all quintessentially modern, skillfully exploiting the mass media to bolster their images and using the Internet to assist one another.

The Crisis of the European Union: A Response

BY JURGEN HABERMAS. Polity, 2012, 120 pp. \$19.95.

Europe's most eminent public intellectual, the German social theorist Habermas, here addresses the most important problem facing the continent: the legitimacy of European integration. The EU is more than a classic international organization subordinate to its member states, yet less than a state with a monopoly of coercive force and a cohesive political identity. Many believe that Europeans are thereby saddled with a perpetual "democratic deficit." Habermas disagrees, arguing that the EU permits its member states to better govern their societies in the face of globalization, thereby expanding, rather than shrinking, genuine democratic control. This works as long as its members share common democratic values and as long as the right to final legal adjudication lies with national, rather than EU, constitutional courts. This is a surprisingly conservative vision. On the question of the current euro crisis, Habermas is more radical, favoring electoral reforms that he believes would enhance participation and deliberation. Europeans might thus come to realize that a fairer distribution of the gains from monetary integration is consistent with their values and interests. Wishful thinking, perhaps; still, this slim volume is crucial for understanding how influential Europeans are reflecting on their predicament.

Europe's Unfinished Currency: The Political Economics of the Euro

BY THOMAS MAYER. Anthem Press, 2012, 272 pp. \$26.95.

Debates over the future of the eurozone have become polarized around two unrealistic alternatives: the formation of a political union and the breakup of the eurozone. Mayer suggests a middle path, arguing that European governments must avoid unlimited commitments to fiscal transfers and centralized control in favor of limited cooperation to construct a minimal regulatory framework. The European Union should move toward creating a banking union, he argues, in which the European Central Bank would increase its role in banking supervision and act as a lender of last resort to banks troubled by liquidity problems. Yet the EU cannot and should not handle its member states' fundamental solvency issues, particularly their sovereign debts, not only because the EU lacks a democratic mandate but also because this would undermine the European Central Bank's proper goal of price stability. One implication of Mayer's argument is that the eurozone is likely to shrink and some national currencies will likely reemerge in Europe. In Germany, with its emphasis on financial rectitude and price stability, this view is widely held, although mostly behind closed doors. Given Berlin's key role in European monetary decision-making, this vision is probably more realistic than other, more widely discussed scenarios.

Western Hemisphere

Richard Feinberg

The Fire Next Door: Mexico's Drug Violence and the Danger to America

BY TED GALEN CARPENTER. Cato Institute, 2012, 308 pp. \$24.95.

The Drug War in Mexico: Confronting a Shared Threat

BY DAVID A. SHIRK. Council on Foreign Relations, 2011, 56 pp. Free online.

Carpenter bases his sharp criticism of current U.S. counternarcotics policies not on libertarian principles relating to consumer choice (as one might anticipate from a senior fellow at the Cato Institute) but rather on pragmatic grounds: four decades of the "war on drugs," as Carpenter demonstrates, have clearly failed to stem the drug trade, while horrendous collateral damage continues to mount. The United States' get-tough, penalty-based law enforcement approach fails for the obvious reason that repressing the market for drugs only raises prices and profits for criminal cartels. Carpenter rejects the hysteria that often accompanies this topic. Although worried by recent trends, he is not persuaded that Mexico is a "failed state" or that there has been a significant spillover of drug-related violence from Mexico into the United States. Unwaveringly clear-eyed, Carpenter dismisses "bogus solutions," such as programs to reduce the demand for drugs in the United States, efforts