

Best Book Award American Political Science Association: Comparative Democratization 2008: *Barriers to Democracy: The Other Side of Social Capital in Palestine and the Arab World* (Princeton University Press, 2008).

Amaney Jamal has written an excellent book on the origins of democratic attitudes and the effects of associational life on trust and support for particular regime types. She asks, are the sources of democratic attitudes different across different regime types, and more specifically, do civic organizations have the same positive effects in authoritarian regimes as in democracies? These questions are of great importance to the comparative study of democratization. Using Palestine as her primary case study and looking closely at organizations linked to the Palestinian National Authority, she teaches us that civic organizations have very different effects in non-democratic states. Far from being schools for democrats as some of our literature would suggest, civic organizations produce actors who mirror the attitudes and behaviors of their political patrons. In keeping with the larger literature on social capital, she finds that members of associations do display higher levels of trust than non-members. But, breaking with the older literature, she shows that their attitudes toward democracy are ambivalent at best. The association between trust and democratic values posited in work from established democracies does not hold.

Jamal's *Barriers to Democracy* is a fascinating test of the theory of social capital built with evidence from survey data, open-ended interviews with elites, observation of over one-hundred individual organizations, and comparative reference to Morocco, Egypt, and Jordan. The committee was impressed with the force and import of Jamal's arguments and the truly impressive empirical data and research she brought to bear on her analysis. The study represents comparative politics at its best.