environmental ideas, despite the fact that global news reports, the internet, and international travel and meetings have shrunk the effective distance between peoples. This is especially noteworthy in the chapter on the southern challenge, where several of the examples Guha uses are commonly cited as classic instances of international advocacy networks (see Keck and Sikkink 1998). Guha stresses their domestic origins, which are certainly also a part of the story, but his references to the ãprolific misrepresentations...by the international mediaä (p. 119) do not do justice to the transnational flow of ideas, perspectives, and activists at work. Similarly, he misses the ways that at least parts of the environmental justice movements of the north were inspired by their southern counterparts. I would have liked to see a fuller analysis of transnational environmentalism as we turn into the 21st century. Is it, as some have argued, a new variant of the 19th centuryâs colonial relations? Could it be, in contrast, a manifestation of the more equitable and participatory global democracy Guha seeks?

Throughout the book, Guhaâs characteristic post-colonial critiques give the book a consistent perspective, which will challenge the northern students who are likely to be among the bookâs readers. Because of its focus on environmental thinkers across the globe, it is not the best presentation of the complexities of Guhaâs own perspective, however. For that, I prefer some of his other works, such as Ecology and Equity (with Madhav Gadgil, 1995) and Varieties of Environmentalism: Essays North and South (with Juan Martinez Alier, 1997).

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Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries, edited by Susan Pharr and Robert Putnam, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press (2000), xxvi, 362 pp.

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"It appears that democracy is always in crisis," Ralf Dahrendorf writes in his too-brief afterword (p. 311) to this volume. Read Dahrendorf's four pages first, then again after working through this compelling, frustrating, provocative, and sometimes inspiring volume. Dahrendorf wrote the afterword to this book's ancestor some 25 years earlier. Commissioned by the Trilateral Commission, like this successor volume, The Crisis of Democracy, saw serious threats to democracy everywhere. Michel Crozier, Samuel Huntington, and Joji Watanuki identified external threats (most notably security challenges from the Soviet Union and communism generally), internal threats (particularly citizen movements and political mobilization), and discussed the intrinsic characteristics of democracies that made them vulnerable to instability (an argument developed by Socrates many years earlier).

Of course, much has changed since that report, most visibly, the end of the cold war and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Ironically, the editors note, at a time when the external threats to the Trilateral democracies have been substantially circumscribed, the democracies are vulnerable to disaffection from within. To be fair, the editors (with Russell J. Dalton) use the term, "troubled," rather than threatened, in their introduction. The problem is that citizens of these democracies have lost confidence in the performance of their governments, and indeed, in their politicians, political parties, and many other secular organizations. Declining trust, they posit, leads to weakening institutional capacity, which leads to weaker government performance, which leads to, unsurprisingly, further losses of public trust.

If you hear the crash of bowling pins in the background of this argument, it's entirely appropriate. Robert Putnam's ideas about social capital, that is, the trust, organizations, norms, and networks that help society function, animate all of the discussions in this book. As expressed in "Bowling Alone," civil society is deteriorating in modern democracies, such that the prospects for effective organization for all sorts of public purposes have declined. Putnam has been admirably effective in inspiring public intellectuals and scholars to speak to the decline in social

organization he sees, and all of the authors here – an accomplished, international, and intellectually diverse team – have put on bowling shoes. This is not to say, however, that they agree with Putnam about either the causes or consequences of the decline of social capital – or even that it is declining, but they are speaking to the same sorts of questions, with informed reference to each other's work, in this volume and elsewhere. As a result, the book presents a coherent whole, rather than just an odd collection of essays, even if the ultimate arguments that come from it include contradictions and qualifications.

The first team of essays addresses the decline in public confidence in government. Russell Hardin wonders, accurately in my view, if the editors may have posed the question of declining faith in government backward. It is hardly surprising that the public would lose faith in governments that preside over failed wars (in the United States, on poverty, Vietnam, and drugs, to mention a few), growing economic inequality, and relatively high unemployment. Indeed, one would be foolish to continue to trust institutions that continue to under perform, and Kenneth Newton and Pippa Norris note that confidence in numerous public institutions (police, courts, armed forces, civil service), and even most private institutions, has declined in the past twenty years.

Not exactly, Anthony King writes; in Europe, existing distrust is of particular governments. Only in America, he argues (with less explicit reference to systematic opinion data than in most of the chapters) is the entire enterprise of government suspect. Distrust of government has a long history in the United States, but goes beyond the old American exceptionalism argument. For government to build trust, it needs to perform useful tasks for constituencies. In contrast to European states, the United States government does much less: it provides no national health care; makes extremely limited contributions to art and culture; and offers mostly low status and salaries in public service. Government action can build support for government, and indeed, can contribute to building social capital and democracy (see Ingram and Smith 1993). Limited government is coupled, however, with essentially unlimited expectations. In a peculiarly American way, King argues, citizens grow up idealizing their government, and expect everything from it, while candidates for office, particularly the presidency, campaign as if in a moral crusade, emphasizing on "character" or "values," and demonizing their opponents, all in hopes of mobilizing enough voters or contributors to compete effectively. Of course, in office they can't deliver on such promises (the structure of American institutions makes this impossible); disappointment and alienation then are virtually inevitable.

The second team of authors looks at the declining capacity of the trilateral governments. Legitimation of government, Fritz Scharpf argues, is generally a function of government delivering good and services, a point echoed by Alberto Alesina and Romain Wacziarg, who focus on the fiscal and political constraints that growing internationalization places on governments. As public education and mobilization has increased, governments face increased demands, even as they can provide less. Increasingly, what governments do provide is less public goods and more transfer payments. This sort of policy, essentially brokerage, undermines support for public purposes, and heightens fears about government withdrawal at the same time that it breeds suspicion of other claimants for government goods, and government itself.

Peter Katzenstein disputes macro-trilateral understandings of falling levels of social capital and political confidence. In fact, he argues, using public opinion data, distrust of government in small states is not increasing, partly because those states may be better able to limit promises and improve services at the same time. In other words, smaller states may provide more effective governance, and therefore engender confidence. Besides, Katzenstein notes, even if trust in government is declining, trust in social organizations independent of government is increasing. The new social movements, a point echoed by Sidney Tarrow in a later essay, may provide civic outlets and social ties, even if promoting a, perhaps well-deserved, distrust of government.

The third team of authors step to the line to discuss the causes of declining confidence in government. Susan Pharr, in writing about Japan, and Donatella della Porta, writing about Europe with a focus on Italy, point to political corruption as both a proximate cause of the decline in confidence, and a source of building "bad" social organizations that seek to exploit government resources without serving larger public purposes, undermining faith in government. Pharr tracks coverage of corruption and confidence in government in Japan and finds a strong correlation.

(In the final section, Hideo Otake traces how distrust in government in Japan may have issued in the era of a more responsive and competitive democracy.) Della Porta contends that slow or poor government performance breeds corruption by creating a space and demand for expediters. This undermines faith in government, drives up costs, weakens performance, and contributes to a cycle of declining confidence and alienation. In looking at the "troubles" facing contemporary democracies, they say, the fault lies not in ourselves (social capital) but in our states.

The final team of authors look at broad changes in society and assess their relationship to declining trust. Pippa Norris examines the notion that television is the cause of the erosion of social life, a claim Putnam has made. Although this argument makes intuitive sense (watching television makes democracy a spectator, rather than

participant sport), Norris finds the empirical support for it wanting. Self-reported television watching varies across countries, with the largest percentage of heavy television viewers in Japan, Finland, US, and Australia. Heavy viewers (more than three hours daily) are, in fact, less likely to participate in politics; light viewers of television are more engaged in politics, other civic institutions, and have more confidence in social institutions. But television effects disappear when the analysis controls for more conventional predictors of political engagement (particularly race, class, and gender). It looks like the alienated turn on the TV, rather than TV turning off the engaged.

Russell Dalton looks at value changes in the advanced democracies, and finds that wealth has bred a different kind of social capital. "Post-materialists," he argues, that is, people who act on concerns beyond day to day survival, are more common in the wealthy democracies, and they are more likely to distrust some governmental institutions, but this doesn't mean they have checked out on political life. Rather, they want government to do more on certain fronts: promoting human rights, protecting the environment, and providing broad public support for education and the arts.

It is these "post-materialists," apparently, who animate the social movements Sidney Tarrow examines in his contribution. While trust in government has declined, Tarrow notes, voluntarism has not; while conventional political participation has declined, participation in movement activities has increased. There has been a diffusion of social movement forms and tactics across the advanced industrialized countries, which suggests that some citizens have found more effective ways to make claims on government, and to create a responsive and vital political life. He concludes provocatively, that there may be "[L]ess trust about government and more activism interacting with government: these may be the ingredients of a less comfortable but more robust democracy."

As a whole, the volume addresses critical issues about the future of democracy. It's hard to gripe about the thoughtful, spirited, informed, and important debate presented here. Taken all at once, broad generalizations about distrust and confidence don't stand up when subjected to empirical examination, but something is happening. My frustration in reading through the essays is hearing a suggested, but untold, story, harkening back to earlier ways of analyzing politics. While some people are tuning out on political and social life, others are mobilizing in new social movements for collective goods. It appears that social capital has been increasingly concentrated, most generously distributed among those who have the most of everything else. "Post-materialism" may predict the divide between the do's and the do-not's, but it also tracks class. It is laudable that the well-heeled and well-educated can now agitate for clean air or human rights; but who speaks for those on the bottom half of the economic ladder? Who worries about minimum wages, employment security for less-skilled workers, or access to high quality public education for poor people? As governments respond to the squeakiest wheels, they actually may be exacerbating social and political inequality. If this is the case, sponsoring bowling leagues seems an exceptionally tepid response to a very serious problem.

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