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# Event History Modeling: A Guide for Social Scientists. By Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier and Bradford S. Jones. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

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dozens of interviews he personally conducted with challengers during the 1996 and 2000 election cycles. Using quotations and simple data analysis based on these interviews, the author is able to make a clear and convincing argument as to why long-shot challengers engage in a very different kind of campaign than what we might expect on the basis of positive theory.

Many modern congressional districts are drawn in such a way that one of the major parties has a clear advantage over the other. This makes for relatively dull general elections insofar as the incumbent will be from the dominant party in that district. After one or two terms, an incumbent should be able to consolidate power and fend off any serious general election competition. Gary Cox and Jonathan Katz call this phenomenon "strategic entry," which is to say that any high-quality candidates from the party out of power are unlikely to emerge since their chances of winning the general election are slim to none. The single best predictor for how close a general election will be rests upon the quality of the challenger. In these districts then, other kinds of candidates emerge, and they have decided to campaign for office largely for reasons other than winning the election itself. This is quite important because it affects election outcomes: Incumbents' margins of victory are much higher than they would be otherwise; longshot campaigns rarely go negative against the incumbent and this allows the campaign to remain artificially civil. The author captures many of these sentiments in the dozens of interviews that he conducted. Some candidates run just so that the incumbent does not go unopposed in the general election. Others run to force the candidate to address certain issues or to spend more time in and attention on the district. These candidates also gauge their "success" in these elections not necessarily by the votes they garner but by the perception that they affected how the incumbent behaves on Capitol Hill or in the district.

Those challengers who have virtually no chance of beating the incumbent are those who engage in "expressive politics." They will run to address issues that they think are important. Thus, they are consciously not competing for the median voter, as Anthony Downs would have us believe. This is not irrational for the author; quite the contrary. Boatright is extending the model to include an explanation for why they run and why they campaign on the issues that they do. For instance, through his interviews, he finds that those challengers who are competitive (the ones who end up either beating the incumbent or narrowly losing) are likely to move their issue positions toward the center during their campaign and never away from the center. On the other hand, many long-shot candidates do move away from the center of the district in terms of issue positions that they stress in their campaigns.

The author also considers the role that parties play in these elections and the challengers' view of the parties.

Not surprisingly, most of these candidates did not receive help with money from the national party organizations since they were all but a lost cause. The competitive candidates who did receive money were typically quite grateful. But through the interviews, Boatright also asks about what other roles the parties played (at the national, state, and local levels). For instance, did the party exert pressure on the candidate to take certain policy positions to make winning the election more likely? For the expressive campaigners, the answer is usually "no," although sometimes there are pressures, particularly from local party organizations, to toe the party line.

While I understand that Boatright is interested primarily in explaining electoral competition among the two major parties, I do feel that he missed an opportunity to incorporate some of the literature about third party candidates in American congressional elections. These people, even more so than hopeless major party challengers, run for expressive reasons. From the outset, they know that their chances of winning a seat in Congress are nil, yet not only do they run, but oftentimes they also face other serious obstacles in their campaign, such as getting their names on the ballot in the first place.

Up till Chapter 7, all of the analyses are based upon interviews of candidates from four midwestern states in the 1996 election. Chapter 7 is based on 14 interviews of candidates from four mid-Atlantic states in the 2000 election. I suspect that this was added to give the book some basis for comparison, but it came off as a bit forced and I am not sure how much more we learn from this chapter.

Despite these small quibbles with *Expressive Politics,* I think Boatright has made a strong contribution to the congressional elections literature. It provides us a better understanding about why folks choose to run in districts with no chance of winning, and why they choose to run campaigns that do not fit nicely with our notions of competition for the median voter.

**Event History Modeling: A Guide for Social Scientists.** By Janet M. Box-Steffensmeier and Bradford S. Jones. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 232p. $65.00 cloth, $23.99 paper.

— Frederick J. Boehmke, *University of Iowa*

The study of durations in political science has been on the rise over the last decade and a half. Their application spans major research questions in virtually every field, including the duration of parliamentary governments, international conflict, policy adoptions in the U.S. states, and issue emergence in campaigns. Testing theoretical arguments regarding these and other questions involving durations has led political scientists to learn about and rely upon statistical models for durations, often referred to as event history models. Perhaps more than models for other classes of data, learning about event history models, particularly

those for continuous-time data, presents a formidable task. This is partly due to the unique language of the models (e.g., terms like "spell," "failure," "frailty," and "hazard") that developed through their application in other disciplines, but also because of the new concerns that they involve. For example, how should one control for duration dependence? Is the proportional hazards assumption met?

For too long, political scientists seeking answers to these and related questions about duration analysis have had to rely on a handful of older (e.g., Paul D. Allison's *Event History Analysis,* 1984) or brief (e.g., Box-Steffensmeier and Jones's "Time Is of the Essence: Event History Models in Political Science," *American Journal of Political Science* 41 [1997]: 1414–61) treatments of this method within the field, or on short discussions in commonly used social science methodology books (e.g., J. Scott Long's *Regression Models for Categorical and Limited Dependent Variables,* 1997). Into this major gap steps Box-Steffensmeier and Jones's eagerly anticipated book, which provides a thorough and in-depth introduction to duration analysis for political scientists and for social scientists in general. This book will instantly become the go-to guide for most political scientists interested in event history analysis, and it should become a staple on syllabi for graduate methods courses for years to come.

Given the dearth of social science books on this topic, it is fortunate that *Event History Modeling* covers the topic as thoroughly as it does. The authors cover a broad range of important topics, employing a combination of mathematical detail and verbal discussion; important concepts are illustrated with examples using political science data that readers can download. The book is generally clear and should be accessible to analysts with a broad range of methodological skills, though the level of the book is most appropriate for readers who have taken a few methods courses—anyone with a basic understanding of probit or logit should be able to follow most of the mathematical discussion interspersed throughout the discussion.

Starting out with a brief introduction to the use of event history models in political science, the book then moves on to an introduction to the essential structure and mathematical terminology of event history models. The following three chapters lay out the basic continuous and discrete-time event history models. I found the presentation of the flexible Cox model to be particularly clear. While the authors advocate using the Cox models to control for duration dependence in most situations, they follow the presentation of the various models with a chapter devoted to the choice between competing controls for duration dependence.

The subsequent chapters delve into a variety of important topics, including model diagnostics, time-varying covariates, repeated events, and competing risks. All of these topics are increasingly prevalent in empirical studies

and should become even more so as political science moves forward in its adoption of event history analysis. Analysts familiar with the basics of event history models will find these chapters particularly valuable. In addition, there is also an appendix describing the various statistical packages available for estimating event history models.

While the strength of the book is that it covers so many topics, this has the consequence of making it a bit dense at times. While the authors do a commendable job of balancing math with discussion and explanation, more time could have been spent on discussion in a few areas, particularly in the first few chapters. Chapter 2 covers the mathematical presentation of the event history approach quite quickly, moving from densities through hazards, survivor functions, and censoring to a likelihood function in a few pages; the "nonstandard" (p. 17) discussion of censoring and truncation is a bit confusing and could be clearer if more fully explained. Spending a bit more time working through the basic duration models in Chapters 3 to 5 would be helpful, especially for readers seeking an introduction to event history techniques, as the major hurdle in learning event history analysis is mastering the basic terminology and functional forms; once this is accomplished, tackling the advanced techniques is generally less cumbersome.

Overall, later chapters do a better job of balancing equations with intuitions and providing extensive citations for readers interested in extended discussions. These chapters explain a variety of issues that are likely to arise in political science applications. In particular, the potential for repeated events raises important considerations about the risk set and the independence of multiple failures by the same unit. In this section, as in others, the authors make clear recommendations about the approaches that are likely to be appropriate for political scientists. Given the increasing importance of modeling this type of heterogeneity, however, I think many readers would have benefited from a more extended discussion of the alternative approaches.

While the authors' recommendations are generally appropriate and backed up with statistical arguments, the consequences of incorrect choices could be more clearly documented. They frequently illustrate competing models using political science data, but the resulting estimates often exhibit relatively minor differences. Perhaps they could have supplemented these examples with Monte Carlo analysis to more explicitly underscore their points. For example, readers interested in drawing substantive conclusions about duration dependence parameters must choose between the many competing parametric models that estimate duration dependence. As the authors note, though, choosing the wrong model can lead to incorrect inferences about the effect of substantive variables. A Monte Carlo analysis that illustrated and demonstrated the severity of incorrectly specifying duration dependence based

on a known data-generating process would have provided some context and offered visual evidence for these concerns.

These are mostly matters of taste and space constraints, however. In the end, Box-Steffensmeier and Jones have written an invaluable resource for political scientists interested in learning and expanding their knowledge of duration analysis. For a book on statistical methods, *Event History Modeling* is quite readable, and the authors do a commendable job of presenting a great variety of issues and making clear recommendations.

**After Brown: The Rise and Retreat of School Desegregation.** By Charles T. Clotfelter. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004. 216p. $24.95.

**Boom for Whom? Education, Desegregation, and Development in Charlotte.** By Stephen Samuel Smith. Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004. 246p. $86.50 cloth, $29.95 paper.

— Richard A. Pride, *Vanderbilt University*

Charles Clotfelter was moved to write his book because he discovered that his students at Duke had no real appreciation of the intense struggle to end racial isolation in public schools begun by the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision. He felt some urgency in laying out the historical record since there were strong indications that contemporary schools were becoming resegregated. *After Brown* focuses on "interracial contact," the physical proximity of the races in schools, because it is the necessary intermediary for all other potential benefits, including educational achievement, self-esteem, attitudes, and long-term social and economic success.

After a brief historical narrative, Clotfelter lays out the changes in interracial contact and segregation over the 50-year period following *Brown*. Gary Orfield did the basic work in this area and called attention to the resegregation of the nation's schools, and in this book, Clotfelter extends backward the trend analysis done by Orfield and uses newly calculated measures for more recent years. This is a significant contribution to the field. By region and in selected districts, Clotfelter shows the incremental decline in racial isolation after *Brown,* and its sharp decline in the South after the *Swann* decision in 1971, but he gives special emphasis to the harmful effects of the *Milliken v. Bradley* decision in 1974. In that case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that courts could not reach beyond existing school district lines in fashioning a remedy. Predictably, since *Milliken,* the data show that while there were increases in interracial contact within districts, overall racial isolation grew as whites moved from city to suburb, particularly in the Northeast and Midwest.

Clotfelter cites other studies to show the dynamics of white flight from desegregation, but he pays particular attention to "white avoidance" of neighborhoods. If whites prefer to avoid racially mixed schools, desegregation will be accompanied by a decline in housing prices in areas served by such schools, and that is what Clotfelter found in his own analysis. Moreover, he found that whites with school-age children were more likely than other whites to move from neighborhoods served by racially mixed schools. In this chapter as in others, Clotfelter is reluctant to say why many whites prefer to avoid blacks. He offers two possibilities for "white avoidance," assessments of educational services unrelated to race and racial prejudice. He cites other scholars' views on these likely causes, but, disappointingly, he offers no clear position based on his own authority.

When segregation patterns between private and public schools are taken up, Clotfelter shows that private schools' enrollments were increased by public school desegregation programs, a manifestation of white avoidance, but he also argues that private schools' contribution to the growing resegregation of the country is modest. In Table 4.4, he displays the segregation index scores for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan counties by region and nationally, and he shows that 62% of total segregation in recent years can be attributed to differences between school districts, 22% to disparities within school districts, and only 16% to differences among private schools (p. 121). Metropolitan districts in the Northeast showed the greatest contribution of private schools to total segregation.

The analysis of within-school segregation is hampered by lack of extensive data, but Clotfelter assembles original data from four North Carolina school systems to show that in recent years, there was significant within-school segregation due largely to academic tracking, especially at the high school level. A similar pattern was found in a study during the 1970s. Here again, he stops short of deep interpretation. He says that such patterns could be motivated by racist sentiments, but he also allows that active lobbying by concerned parents or prudent decisions by administrators anxious to hold high-status whites in the public schools could lead to the racial disparities he noted.

Clotfelter's data and analysis of interracial contact is extensive, and it is an important summary of this important aspect of the nation's most ambitious attempt to change its racial practices. Still, his caution mutes its impact. He tells us in the introduction: "Documenting changes in interracial contact is one thing. Assigning causation is another. . . . I generally sidestep the question of causation" (p. 6). And he does. One wonders if this helps his students.

Stephen Samuel Smith has taken another approach in *Boom for Whom?* Unlike Clotfelter's aggregate statistical summary, Smith gives us a single important case where school desegregation rose and receded over the same post-*Brown* decades. Regime theory, not pluralist theory, is used as the lens by which meaning is made in this account. In