requirement, but its emphasis on blameworthy individual or corporate actors, rather than on enduring structures of racial hierarchy, takes much of the critical bite out of actual society approaches.

A still more profound problem emerges from Bedi's search for overlapping consensus. He repeatedly refers to the plural first-person "we" as the agent of the consensus. Consider again his desire to focus "on what we agree on, not what we disagree about." Yet who precisely is the "we" who agree on the overlapping consensus between Rawlsian ideal theory and an actual society approach that seeks to prevent individual actors from furthering or perpetuating segregation? Clearly, avowed white racists are not part of this overlapping consensus, but that ought not trouble readers. Instead, the significant absence here is integration-skeptical people of color who are committed to seeking racial justice through other means, as well as their intellectual and political allies. Bedi does briefly note such positions in his discussion of the critical reaction to Elizabeth Anderson's *The Imperative of Integration* (2010); however, he pays only limited and insufficient attention in later sections of the book to the compelling reasons why some people of color may want to maintain racial disclosure in dating or roommate searches or may have profound concerns about the ability of white parents to raise children of color. My point is not that the integration skeptics are necessarily right and Bedi is necessarily wrong, but rather that they do not seem to be included in his overlapping consensus at all. And this speaks to a general depoliticizing tendency throughout the book that claims a questionable non-ideological basis for its argument, as though colorblind liberalism were not itself an ideological position. Readers from more radical ideological and methodological orientations will likely find themselves frustrated by this approach, but Bedi nonetheless has much to teach us about the pernicious forms of private racism that structure our contemporary world.

The Politics of the Book: A Study on the Materiality of Ideas. By Filipe Carreira da Silva and Mónica Brito Vieira. University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2019. 272p. $89.00 cloth.

Political Vocabularies: Word Change and the Nature of Politics. By Conal Condren. Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2017. 210p. $110.00 cloth.
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Politics is a war of words. We stake out political positions, advance political claims, and gain political ground through linguistic combat. And we also fight for possession of the lexical weaponry needed to emerge victorious on the political battlefield. Wars over words, then, can be political too.

Explicitly analyzed in Conal Condren's *Political Vocabularies* and implicitly structuring Filipe Carreira da Silva and Mónica Brito Vieira's *The Politics of the Book*, this notion of politics as verbal combat unites both interventions and positions language as essential to political thought and action. Establishing the political primacy of language, both contributions focus in particular on the contingency of words.

For Condren, this plays out in terms of the language we use to talk about and understand the political. Shape shifting in haphazard and unpredictable ways, language reflects a multiplicity of contextually specific political concepts. As Condren notes, the very idea that politics is a form of verbal warfare is but one such formulation, happening to have developed in particular places and at particular times. By contrast, language takes haphazard and unpredictable shape for Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira in the process of bookmaking. Molded by a multiplicity of actors with conflicting aims and commitments—including editors, translators, and commentary contributors—the form that the printed word takes is a matter of happenstance. Books are the products of a network of agents, each dueling with the other, and it is this battle that constitutes the politics of the book.

Political Vocabularies sets out to understand political change as a function of the changing nature of political language. Issuing from a contextual concern, Condren's work effectively reproaches intellectual historians and historians of political thought who might be tempted to treat the terms of political analysis as in any way static or continuous. Not only is politics itself a highly protean concept but also corollary language that is now automatically registered as political has not always been so in the past. This is the case even with terms that might seem to be inherently political like "power," "citizen," and "state," which in fact have had a wide range of meanings in other times and places. As a corrective, then, to misguided histories that fail to take this appreciable variability into consideration, Condren constructs a "descriptive model of the processes through which any political vocabulary might be formed and altered" (p. 9). Nondiscrete and interactive, these mechanisms for lexical change include extension and salience, neologism, euphemism, loanwords and translation, and metaphor. Focusing on the English language in particular, Condren demonstrates that it is through such linguistic processes that different notions of the political come to seem eternal and enduring to particular minds in particular contexts.

To take one poignant example, Condren explains how the term "state" entered the English language first as a loanword from the Italian "*lo stato*" and then developed into the word as we know it today through additional metaphorical manipulation (p. 153). In sixteenth-century Italian, *lo stato* could refer to any form of government without suggesting anything about its institutionalization

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or legitimacy. Referring to an area of control, it was often "used to convey the uncertainty of possession," by way of the "physicalizing metaphor…*mantenere*, to hold with the hands" (p. 154). Journeying into other European languages, including English in the forms of "state" and "estate," it retained these associations. The loanword's metaphorical framing, however, came to take on new significance with its migration: increasingly "state" conveyed not just a territorial holding but also the duties figuratively held by those responsible for its upkeep. Even more gradually still, Condren argues, this set of connotations morphed into the idea of "territorial sovereignty" as we understand it now (p. 155).

What is at stake in recognizing the contingency of lexical change and the multiplicity of meanings that any one word has carried here and there across space and time? Condren both offers and hints at several answers. Failure to appreciate such variability is "impoverish[ing]" (p. 66) and generates "anachronistic[ally]" unsatisfactory histories (p. 83). Overlooking the way our language for and ideas about politics have shifted over time also makes terms and concepts appear universal when in fact they are not. And this in turn may unwittingly authorize invalid claims about what is natural or politically always and everywhere the case. Finally, this kind of oversight de-diversifies and homogenizes the past, rendering it overly familiar to us in the present.

It is here that Condren gestures at more than he specifies. Although this is an undoubtedly current and fashionable view, we might ask why heterogeneous histories are themselves preferable. Responding to a broader question about the importance of political theory as a tradition, Sheldon Wolin, for one, argued that the past is valuable precisely insofar as it appears foreign. We should look to past theories not because they are "familiar and therefore confirmative but because they are strange and therefore provocative" (Sheldon Wolin, "Political Theory as a Vocation," *American Political Science Review*, 63, 1969). Generating new perspectives and confronting us with new challenges, the past is, in fact, most edifying when it looks peculiar. A position that appears consonant with the force of Condren's analysis thus suggests that historians of political thought should welcome and linger on the unfamiliar. Such, of course, is the long-standing argument of Cambridge School historicists as well, and it would have been illuminative to see Condren explicitly contrast his interest in the transformation of political vocabularies with the various positions staked out by other like-minded interpreters of the history of political thought.

The Politics of the Book turns its attentions to classic texts in the history of *social* thought, many of which political theorists lay claim to as well. Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira set out to demonstrate that authorship is a porous category; canonical texts issue not from individual giants in the field but are collectively produced by an agonistic network of actors. Through paratextual contribution, translation, and compilation, a bevy of agents actively shape the material bookmaking process. To illustrate this, Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira examine the following: Durkheim's *Elementary Forms*; Mead's *Mind, Self, and Society*; Marx's *1844 Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*; Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*; Weber's *The Protestant Ethic*; and Tocqueville's *Democracy in America.*

The Politics of the Book's treatment of *Mind, Self, and Society* perhaps best exemplifies the distributed agency behind the physical production of books. Not written by Mead himself but compiled from a combination of students' notes and unpublished manuscripts, the text is a "sociophysical assemblage" and thus the "ultimate example of a classic with no author" (p. 61). Not only was the text simply stitched together but the manuscript's editor, Charles Morris, also took exceptional liberties with the work. Omitting material, rewriting sentences, and introducing entirely new terms, Morris's editorial choices have had an enormous impact on how *Mind, Self, and Society* is read. This is borne out by the text's reception history, in which Herbert Blumer and Jürgen Habermas loom large. Keen to stake out an alternative to structural functionalism, Blumer "appropriate(d)" Mead as the "founding father" of an oppositional analytical framework: symbolic interactionism (p. 51). Finding in Mead a way to bring functionalism and symbolic interactionism together, Habermas drew heavily on the book in advancing his communicative theory of society. However, in overlooking *Mind, Self, and Society*'s production through a distributed network of actors, both Blumer and Habermas ground their respective projects in faulty claims about the work and about Mead. Already a "fabrication," *Mind, Self, and Society* is further invented in later social theoretical analyses that in turn interpret it for their own purposes (p. 60).

Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira do a compelling job of showing how single- authored classics may actually be produced by, and achieve their star status through, the work of many competing contributors. However, the importance of this point is often unclear. *The Politics of the Book* complicates the notion of authorship, highlights the contingency of the agonistic process of book production, and emphasizes its material or "sensuous" dimension (e.g., p. 31). We are told that "to ignore the book 'makers' work on and in the book—which is not only the physical embodiment of its author's ideas but the very iconic representation of those ideas—would come at the cost of ignoring a crucial aspect of the vagaries of intellectual life" (p. 204). If left unspecified, however, this would seem to be an inexpensive and trivial cost. At times it appears that the importance of Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira's analysis has either to do with endorsing the texts in question or correcting others' readings of them. Durkheim's attention to the interplay between physicality

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and sociality is to be commended (p. 42), for instance, whereas Habermas's misuse of Mead comes in for special censure (pp. 56–58). Yet surely either such upshot reifies and re-inscribes the traditional, determinate notion of authorship otherwise chipped away by *The Politics of the Book.* Where, then, does appreciating the distributed agency and materiality involved in bookmaking get us? Why is either feature of the bookmaking process important?

Notably, *The Politics of the Book* is invested in bringing highfalutin theorizing back down to earth. Carreira da Silva and Brito Vieira reject the idea of "'theory' as an abstract, disembodied, purely cognitive affair" (p. 12). To some extent, *Political Vocabularies* shares in this aim: Condren cautions that political theorists are frequently so preoccupied with the "grander" part of the world of language and ideas that they make unreliable "guide[s]" to the "whole" (p. 168). Theory tends to be too narrow an enterprise, ignoring the body in favor of the mind or the many in favor of the few. Yet insofar as *The Politics of the Book* leaves the significance of its own intervention opaque, it exacerbates the unfortunate perception that theory is irrelevant. Given its view of politics as a battle over language and written at a time when theory is all too often already marginalized, this has the curious effect of undermining the very project *The Politics of the Book* frames itself as advancing.

Strategies of Justice: Aboriginal Peoples, Persistent Injustice, and the Ethics of Political Action. By Burke A. Hendrix. New York: Oxford University Press, 2019. 320p. $50.00 cloth.
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A familiar question in political philosophy has to do with the nature of political obligation: How do we reconcile the autonomy of the individual (or the group) with the authority of the state? And in moral philosophy, along similar lines, we ask, What do we owe each other, and in what circumstances do our moral obligations change and why? In this deeply interesting and fine book, Burke Hendrix develops a subtle variation on these two philosophical questions in relation to the political situation of Aboriginal peoples in the United States and Canada today. Hendrix asks, What are the ethics (the plural is important here, as we will see) of political action for those who are subject to the structural and persistent injustice associated with colonialism? The approach he takes—signaled in the title of the book—is one that focuses on highly contextual, incremental, piecemeal, and "cautiously experimental" (p. 271) modes of political action. Along the way, Hendrix provides an acute reading of a range of major issues in contemporary political philosophy, including ideal and non-ideal theory, Rawlsian egalitarianism, and historical injustice; he also engages extensively with leading contemporary Aboriginal political theorists. A significant achievement of *Strategies of Justice* is the way it provides readers coming from Anglo-American political theory, as well as those from Native American and Aboriginal studies programs, with a clear and informative interpretation of some of the leading arguments in their respective fields.

The central question of Hendrix's book is this: In conditions of long-standing and persistent injustice, what are those who are suffering from these injustices normatively permitted to do to protect their most urgent moral interests? This question applies to a wide range of different contexts, including African Americans, migrant workers, and others. However, Hendrix's focus is on Aboriginal peoples in Canada and the United States, and he discusses a wealth of rich material in developing his response. What makes the case of Aboriginal peoples particularly hard is the depth of injustices they face. The very institutions that are supposed to be delivering justice are themselves deeply compromised by colonialism; this includes those institutions through which liberal egalitarians typically think justice ought to be provided. The long-standing effects of colonialism end up "channeling" patterns of debate and political action in particular directions, and Aboriginal "word warriors" (borrowing a term from Anishinaabi philosopher Dale Turner) must navigate these channels with great care and self-awareness about both the dangers and benefits that might come in doing so. We can only really appreciate the nature of these injustices, Hendrix argues, if we take a radically bottom-up approach to political theorizing more generally. Instead of seeing politics from the perspective of a political master architect (à la Rawls or at least early Rawls), we need to start with the perspectives of particular political agents and the inevitably constrained choice sets within which they operate. Ideal theory, except as a kind of open-ended meta-process for clarifying normative values and tacit presumptions, is otherwise deeply problematic as a philosophical approach for these profoundly non-ideal circumstances.

Hendrix's answer to the question of what victims of persistent injustice can do, in short, is that they have "permissions" for certain kinds of political action that are not available to others who do not face similar injustices. The more serious the injustice, the greater the latitude for action that departs from existing normative standards. "Permission" is the key idea here. What it *does not* mean is permission in the sense of action that is allowed or tolerated by the state or the majority culture. Rather, building on examples from Rawls, Tommie Shelby, and others, it refers to a normative space and category of action within which it is morally permissible for individuals (and groups) to act in ways that might otherwise be considered wrong or as violating established normative standards.

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