

Introduction: Why Look to Europe for Lessons?

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Americans are looking for solutions to major policy challenges. The United States faces high unemployment, an unaffordable health care system that leaves millions uninsured, failing urban schools, a mounting climate crisis, a broken immigration system, rising inequality, a fractured social safety net, an aging population generating rising pension costs, and a massive and growing government debt, to name just a few challenges. In these areas and many more, American policymakers and citizens are engaged in heated debates about how our policies should be reformed. To understand which policies are likely to be effective in meeting our challenges and which are not, we must of course look to the lessons of our history and to the wealth of policy ideas circulating in our public sphere—among political parties, think tanks, academics, state and local governments, and citizens.

But this book is dedicated to another proposition—namely, that Americans should also look abroad for policy lessons. We should examine how other advanced democracies have addressed challenges similar to those we face, understand which policies have proved successful and which have failed, and consider whether these experiences might inform our own choices. In particular, the contributors to this book argue that the varied experiences of economically advanced European democracies offer a rich source of policy lessons—both negative and positive lessons—that provide valuable insights for policymaking in the United States.

We recognize the challenges in drawing meaningful lessons from European experiences and the even greater political and cultural barriers to applying any such lessons in the United States. But, difficult as it is, lesson drawing is inevitable. As discussed below, American citizens and policymakers draw lessons from Europe all the time, but they often do so based on misinformation and prejudice. This book seeks to move beyond the misleading rhetoric and distorted understandings that

have characterized recent discussions of Europe in the United States and to explore what Americans can actually learn from the experiences of European democracies in confronting our common twenty-first-century policy challenges.

Why Europe? Why Now?

It might strike many readers as an odd moment in time to look to Europe for anything but the most negative lessons. Much of the continent is mired in recession and record unemployment. Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain are struggling with profound debt crises. Ineffective handling of the eurozone crisis by European leaders has sparked fears that the common currency may collapse. The US media is full of gloomy stories about Europe, such as *Time* magazine's August 2011 cover story on "The End of Europe" (Feroz 2011). Titles of recent books, such as *After the Fall: The End of the European Dream and the Decline of a Continent* (Lacquer 2012), *The Decline and Fall of Europe* (Bongiovanni 2012), *The End of the West: The Once and Future Europe* (Marquand 2011) reflect the widespread view that Europe is an *old* continent in terminal decline, fading into irrelevance in the face of the rise of Brazil, Russia, India, and China, the *BRIC* economies.

Negative references to Europe have become a regular staple of national political discourse in America in recent years. Mitt Romney and other candidates in the 2012 Republican primary accused President Obama of seeking to transform the United States into a European-style social welfare state and said he must be stopped. As Romney put it in his New Hampshire primary victory speech, "He [Obama] wants to turn America into a European-style social welfare state. We want to make sure that we remain a free and prosperous land of opportunity." Or as primary candidate and former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum stated repeatedly on the campaign trail, "You want to see America after the Obama administration is through, just read up on Greece" (Fischer 2012).

Democrats talk far less about Europe than Republicans. Some prominent public intellectuals on the American Left do argue that we can learn valuable lessons from European public policies. Paul Krugman, for instance, has argued that the United States can draw positive lessons from European social democracies on how to achieve both social justice and economic growth, and he has argued that we can draw negative lessons about austerity policies from their failure in Europe (Krugman 2010, 2011). Though many Democratic politicians surely agree, they are generally reluctant to admit as much publicly. There are exceptions—such as when President Obama called for the United States to draw lessons from Germany's successful youth vocational training programs in his 2013 State of the Union address (Hill 2013). But generally Democratic politicians avoid mentioning lessons from European experiences when discussing public policy reform, even where

European experiences are clearly relevant to the proposals they are advocating, in areas such as health care, climate change, public transportation, or work–life balance. The reluctance of Democrats to publicly highlight positive lessons from Europe is understandable. In a political environment that often treats European ideas with skepticism or outright hostility, suggesting that a reform proposal is inspired by a policy in Europe would be a good way to kill it.

Recent discussions of Europe in the American political arena have produced more heat than light. Much has been said; almost nothing has been learned. Most discussions of Europe are based on inaccurate caricatures, not analysis of actual European policies. Consider for instance how comparisons with Europe were invoked in the context of the debate over health care reform in 2009 and 2010. Opponents of health care reform in Congress and town hall meetings across America regularly equated proposals for universal health insurance coverage in the United States with the specter of *socialized medicine* and a British-style state-run health bureaucracy. Our public debates rarely recognized that in fact most European countries achieve universal coverage while leaving health care provision and even insurance in private hands. There was little discussion of whether we might draw lessons from the most successful European models, such as those found in Switzerland, the Netherlands, or Germany.¹

The recession that has plagued much of Europe in recent years has provided fodder for simplistic, blanket attacks on European economic models. Critics of European social democracy—particularly those on the Right—treat *Europe* as a synonym for big government, high taxes, crushing debt, and economic stagnation. They have interpreted the recent crisis as proof of their claims that the European social model leads to ruin. In short: Europe = Socialism = Greece. This line of argument ignores some inconvenient truths about the current crisis and about the divergent experiences of various European economies throughout the crisis. First, this view ignores the fact that a number of countries in the European Union (EU) have weathered the global recession with lower unemployment rates than those in the United States. Second, this view ignores the fact that the more prosperous European countries funding the euro zone bailout, above all Germany, have larger social welfare states than the struggling countries (Greece, Ireland, Portugal, and Spain) who have received the bailouts. In short, the crisis has not demonstrated the failure of social market economies (some of which are performing well). Rather, the crisis has demonstrated the flaws in the design of the governance system for the euro zone currency and the failings of the economic policies of some European countries that have lost competitiveness within the bloc. More generally, the bogus depictions of Europe from the Right ignore the impressive achievements of many European social democracies. European countries continue to dominate the top twenty in international rankings of most conceivable measures of success, from gross domestic product (GDP) per capita, to standard of

living, to economic competitiveness, to good governance,² and they stand out as leaders in specific fields, such as health, education, worker training, social welfare, transportation, and many more.

While distorted views of Europe may be most common on the Right, many on the American Left also hold biased views of Europe. Many Europhiles on the left view Europe through rose-colored glasses (Geoghegan 2011; Rifkin 2004).³ Some imagine a community of social-democratic nirvanas that happily balance capitalism, social justice, and sustainable development. But such rosy depictions ignore the great variations in the policies that European countries have pursued, the successes and failures they have experienced, and the many profound challenges they face today. It is important to recognize that though the European Union is encouraging the convergence of public policies in many domains, significant national differences remain in all of the areas discussed in this book. There is no single *European model*, there are many. US Supreme Court Justice Brandeis famously said that US states served as “laboratories of democracy” where one could observe the effects of various social and economic policies. The same is clearly true of the member states of the European Union, whose diversity of approaches to important public policy challenges—their successes and their failures—can yield powerful lessons.

This book seeks to offer a balanced approach, neither idealizing nor demonizing European public policies but asking what the United States can learn from their achievements and shortcomings. Certainly, there are many negative lessons today, including cautionary tales about excessive deficits, rigid labor market regulations, and poorly regulated banking sectors and real estate markets. But there are many positive lessons as well—lessons about successful work–life balance policies; about the design of sustainable urban transport systems; about active labor market policies that produce a skilled workforce and combat unemployment; about health care systems that achieve universal, high-quality coverage at a far lower cost than in the United States.

In recent decades, the transatlantic flow of policy learning has moved mostly from the new world to the old: European countries and the EU itself took many lessons from US experience as they worked to liberalize their economies (Djelic 2001). But there is also an older tradition of US policymakers studying and drawing lessons from Europe. As Daniel Rodgers (1998) shows in his brilliant book, *Atlantic Crossings*, US Progressives in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries borrowed extensively from European models in developing the American welfare state. Again today, the economically advanced democracies of Europe provide a rich potential source of lessons for US policymakers.

With pundits speaking of the decline of the west and the rise of the rest, it may be tempting to look to the BRICs and other emerging economies, rather than to Europe, for policy lessons. And indeed, the United States may draw useful policy

lessons from a range of countries around the world. However, the United States has more in common with and is more likely to find applicable lessons in wealthy democracies than in developing countries or authoritarian regimes. And most of the world's wealthy democracies are in Europe and are members of the European Union.⁴ With twenty-eight member states, the EU comprises the largest group of democracies in the world. Collectively, the EU is the world's largest economy and the United States' biggest trade and investment partner (Hamilton and Quinlan 2013).

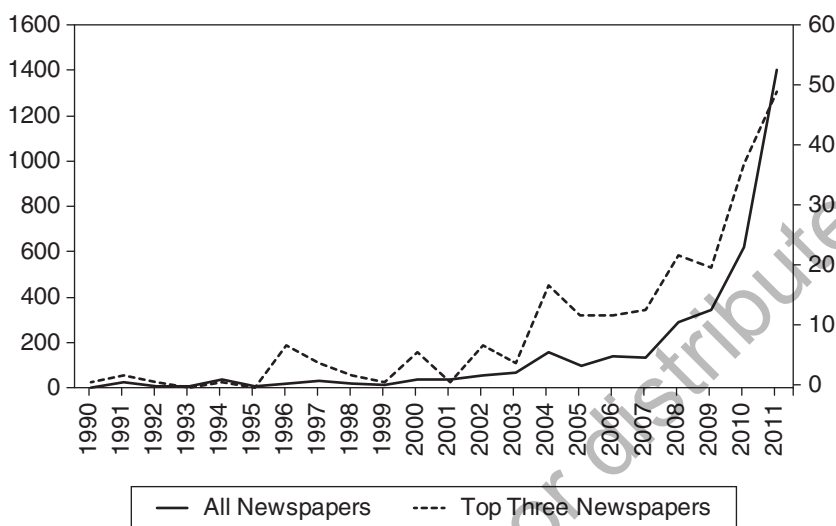
Our European partners face many of the same policy challenges that we do. They too must address issues surrounding increasing international economic competition, rising health care and pension costs, school reform, climate change, large scale immigration, financial market regulation, and child care and work–life balance, to name just a few common challenges. Various European democracies have taken different approaches to address these challenges—and seen different results. We can benefit greatly from studying European experiences, learning lessons both from policies that have proved successful and from approaches that have failed.

Of course, as Kent Weaver describes in the concluding chapter of this book, there are many profound obstacles—cultural, institutional, and political ones—to transplanting lessons from successful policies in Europe. And likewise, approaches that fail in Europe may succeed in the United States. One of the crucial tasks of comparative public policy analysis is to determine—given cross-national differences in culture, institutions, and existing constellations of power and interests—which policy lessons from one country may be applied in another. This book takes up this challenge, exploring not only which policies have proved effective in Europe, but asking whether or not such policies might prove effective in the US context.

American Exceptionalism?

It might seem obvious to many readers that we should look abroad for lessons that might be applicable in the United States. And as Rodgers's *Atlantic Crossings* reminds us, there is a long tradition of drawing lessons from Europe for US policymaking. However, despite this history, a powerful stream in US political thought—*American exceptionalism*—largely rejects the notion that we can draw lessons from abroad. The concept of American exceptionalism has a long pedigree in American political life, and there has been a dramatic increase in public discussion of the term in recent years, particularly in the context of the 2012 Presidential Election (see Figure 1.1). Generally, American exceptionalism is the notion that the United States is unique among all other nations, and that because of its distinctive history, culture, and values the normal rules and historical forces that apply in other countries do not apply in America.

FIGURE 1.1 Discussions of “American Exceptionalism” in Print Media (frequency)



Source: Data from Westlaw and Alliance for Audited Media (2013).

Note: Top three newspapers (by circulation): 1. *The Wall Street Journal*, 2. *The New York Times*, 3. *USA Today*.

American exceptionalism has taken on different meanings over the years. The term itself can be traced to two sources—a French aristocrat and a Soviet dictator. In *Democracy in America*, Alexis de Tocqueville’s brilliant study of early nineteenth-century American democracy, he wrote, “The position of the Americans is therefore quite exceptional, and it may be believed that no democratic people will ever be placed in a similar one” (1990, 36 [originally published in 1840]). De Tocqueville highlighted Americans’ Puritan ethos, their commercial culture, their geographic position, and their class structure as factors that make the United States exceptional. While de Tocqueville argued that the position of Americans was exceptional, it was Joseph Stalin who first used the actual term *American exceptionalism*. In 1929, Stalin chastised American Communist leader Jay Lovestone, who had explained the absence of proletarian revolution in the United States arguing that America was exempt from the historical forces described by Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. Stalin demanded that Lovestone and his followers recant the “heresy of American exception” (McCoy 2012; Pease 2009, 10).

Understandably, American politicians invoking the term *American exceptionalism* prefer not to cite a communist dictator. Some do reference de Tocqueville, but as a Frenchman, he, too, is suspect. Therefore, American politicians from both sides

of the aisle—from John F. Kennedy and Barack Obama to Ronald Reagan, George W. Bush, and Mitt Romney—often link the notion of American exceptionalism to a deeper, home-grown source, John Winthrop’s 1630 sermon, “A Model of Christian Charity.” In that sermon, Winthrop invoked Jesus’s Sermon on the Mount and told his fellow Massachusetts Bay Colonists that their new community would be “a city upon a hill”; the world’s eyes would be upon them and therefore they had a special duty to embody the Christian virtues they held so dear and to set an example for other nations.

For some, American exceptionalism and the city-upon-a-hill metaphor imply that the United States has a special set of obligations and a special destiny—to set an example of democratic virtue and to lead other nations. For others, these ideas mean not only that America is unique but that it is better than other countries—the greatest nation on Earth. Though politicians across the spectrum have invoked the notion of American exceptionalism, the idea has been embraced more forcefully on the Right. Reagan made use of the term regularly as a candidate and as president, as did President George W. Bush. American exceptionalism became a catchphrase in the 2012 Republican presidential primaries, with Newt Gingrich, Rick Santorum, and the eventual Republican nominee Mitt Romney regularly incorporating the term into their stump speeches. Newt Gingrich (2011) wrote a book on the subject, *A Nation Like No Other: Why American Exceptionalism Matters*. Mitt Romney made the concept a centerpiece of his general election campaign, attacking President Obama for his supposed lack of belief in American exceptionalism. As he put to a crowd of supporters in Wisconsin, “Our president doesn’t have the same feelings about American exceptionalism that we do.” Romney went on to implore them to take the opportunity “to restore to this country the principles that made this nation the greatest nation in the history of the Earth” (Mehta 2012).

Discussion of American exceptionalism is not confined to the political realm. There is a large academic literature on American exceptionalism as well.⁵ The concept is invoked in studies examining the distinctiveness of American culture and values (Hartz 1955; Lipset 1996; D. Madsen 1998), American political institutions (Kingdon 1999), the history of the American labor movement and the failure of socialism in America (Voss 1994; Lipset and Marks 2011), domestic social policies (Hacker 2002; Morgan and Campbell 2011), foreign policy (Ignatieff 2005; Kagan 2004; Koh 2002; Lepgold and McKeown 1995), and even sports (Markovitz and Hellerman 2001).

American exceptionalism makes a global claim—that the United States is fundamentally different from all other nations. But in fact, many of the politicians and scholars who invoke American exceptionalism have a more specific target of comparison in mind: Europe. The origins of the concept, whether you trace it to Winthrop, de Tocqueville, or Stalin, always had Europe in mind as the

comparative reference point. And today, Republican politicians who espouse American exceptionalism regularly warn that their Democratic opponents want to undermine American exceptionalism by turning the United States into a European-style social democracy.

Ultimately, the concept of American exceptionalism rests on the belief that America is different from Europe and that policies, institutions, and values found in Europe cannot or should not take root in the United States. Those who espouse American exceptionalism draw lessons from Europe all the time, but these are often false lessons based on inaccurate views of European policies. Those who believe that America is exceptional should be interested in actual comparisons of European and American public policies—if only to understand better what is truly exceptional about the United States. For as the great social scientist Seymour Martin Lipset (1996) put it in his book, *American Exceptionalism*, “Those who know only one country, know no country” (17).⁶

A Roadmap for Lesson Drawing

Lesson drawing is as old as the study of politics. Richard Rose begins his 2005 book on lesson learning in public policy, *Learning from Comparative Public Policy*, with a quote from Plato’s *Laws*: “It is always right for one who dwells in a well-ordered state to go forth on a voyage of enquiry by land and sea so as to confirm thereby such of his native laws as are rightly enacted and to amend any that are deficient.” Today, there is a rich academic literature on lesson learning in public policy—sometimes framed as policy transfer or policy diffusion. Most of that literature focuses on how and under what conditions policymakers learn lessons from other jurisdictions; what impact if any that learning has; and ultimately when, how, and why policies spread across jurisdictions.⁷ The contributors to this volume engage some those questions, and in his concluding chapter, Kent Weaver examines in detail the potential for European policy lessons to influence US policymaking. But this book is not designed to provide a contribution to the academic literature on policy diffusion. The primary aim of the case studies in this book is not to assess whether, or under what conditions, US policymakers *will* learn and apply lessons from Europe. Instead, their main aim is simply to enrich our policy debates by offering an analysis of what US citizens and policymakers *could* learn from Europe.

Richard Rose (1993), perhaps more than any other contemporary scholar of comparative public policy, has worked to offer advice on how policy makers can effectively draw lessons from other countries and apply them at home. As he puts it, “A lesson is more than a symbol invoked to sway opinion . . . A lesson is a detailed cause and effect description of a set of actions that a government can consider in the light of experience elsewhere, including a prospective evaluation of whether what is done elsewhere could someday become effective here” (27). He

provides a rich set of guidelines to those who would draw lessons effectively, emphasizing the importance of taking into account local culture, politics, and institutions and of adapting policies from other jurisdictions to local conditions. The contributors to this volume follow the spirit of that advice, identifying nuanced, contextualized lessons from Europe for the United States.

This volume brings together a group of policy-area experts with extensive knowledge of both US and European policies in their fields. While each chapter explores a different policy area, each asks a similar set of questions: In confronting major contemporary policy challenges, what can US policymakers learn from European experiences? Might successful policies adopted in European countries be applied in the United States? Can the United States avoid the pitfalls associated with failed policies in European cases?

In Chapter 2, Janet Gornick and Ariane Hegewisch explore lessons for the United States from European work–family reconciliation policies—policies that help workers balance the demands of employment and parenthood. They examine policies at the EU and national levels in three main fields: parental leave, working time regulations, and publicly supported child care. They demonstrate that US provisions in each of these fields is remarkably limited compared to the various provisions found in European countries and explore the impact of these differences on women’s employment. They suggest that while immediate expansion of such policies in the United States is highly unlikely, the longer-term prospects for developing European-style work–family policy in the United States may be greater than many assume.

In Chapter 3, Lawrence Brown compares the strategies the United States and various European countries use to regulate different aspects of their health care systems, including funding, governance and content of coverage, and payment of providers, and he explores how the Affordable Care Act (ACA, commonly known as Obamacare) will influence US regulation. In drawing lessons from several models of regulation in Europe, Brown emphasizes that where European systems seek uniformity and equity in their approaches to regulation, the US system is highly particularistic and fragmented, characterized by a variety of often uncoordinated funding, governance, and payment regimes. Compared to the more uniform approaches to regulation that prevail in European countries, the *regulatory particularism* of the US system is highly costly and the ACA—whatever its merits in expanding coverage and containing costs—only adds to this fragmentation and particularism.

In Chapter 4, Mitchell Orenstein casts a skeptical eye on the lessons from Europe in the field of pensions. First, he notes that in recent years, generous European pension systems have proven financially unsustainable, and governments have been forced to scale them back in the face of the economic crisis. European governments have drawn lessons from the United States and moved closer to the

US approach of combining modest public pensions with a system of individual savings accounts. The experience of pension crisis and reform in Europe offers important lessons for the United States. First, comparison of the state of the US Social Security system with European pension systems shows that—contrary to the fears of many Americans—Social Security is relatively healthy. Second, the experiences of European governments in reforming their private workplace pension systems provide important lessons on microlevel program design as American policymakers seek to improve on our workplace pension system, which suffers from high fees and low coverage.

In Chapter 5, Tobias Schulze-Cleven explores potential lessons for the United States from labor market policies in Denmark and Germany. Schulze-Cleven argues that in an era of economic globalization, advanced industrialized democracies need labor market policies that both encourage flexibility and help workers adapt to economic dislocation by investing in training and education schemes that help unemployed workers rejoin the labor force and maximize their productive potential. He notes that while many European countries with disastrously high unemployment rates have negative policy lessons to offer, the high average rates of unemployment in Europe lead US policymakers to ignore positive lessons from successful economies such as Denmark and Germany. He notes that the success of Denmark's *flexicurity* approach to labor market policy—which combines the promotion of labor market flexibility with the guarantee of social security—shows that the combination of flexible labor market rules, social protection mechanisms, and public-private job-training schemes for unemployed workers can help maintain a highly skilled, competitive workforce. Schulze-Cleven also draws lessons from Germany for the process of reforming labor market policies. Germany's success in reforming labor market policy over the past decade shows how a strategy of *layering*—grafting *new* elements onto *old* policies rather than attempting direct, systemic reform—can overcome legislative gridlock and lead to incremental but transformative changes. He suggests that a similar reform strategy, built around the expansion of US Trade Adjustment Assistance programs, might eventually yield broad changes in American labor market policies.

In Chapter 6, Martin Schain compares US and European immigration policies and finds that US policies have been far more successful in most respects. He examines policies on immigrant entry, immigrant integration, and border control, and considers the potential impact of immigration reform currently pending in Congress. Whatever the shortcomings of existing US policies in these domains, he finds that on the whole, US immigration policy has been better defined, more consistent—and has found greater social and political support—than policies in Europe. Many European countries have maintained vague, inconsistent policies on immigrant entry and integration, which have heightened political discord over immigration and bolstered support for xenophobic political parties. While there is

far more consistent support for legal immigration in the United States, policies introduced because of mounting concern over undocumented immigration are negatively affecting legal migrants as well. Some European countries may have lessons to offer the United States on more effective tools to control undocumented migration, but these tools, often relying on identification cards and labor market controls, seem to be politically unacceptable in America.

In Chapter 7, Frank Convery provides an overview of the EU's far-reaching climate-change policies, including its policies on emissions trading, renewable energy, and energy efficiency. Convery highlights the importance of sustained public support for these policies and committed leadership from the EU and large member states. He offers a set of tentative lessons for the United States from the EU's experience in pursuing climate change policy. He draws specific lessons from the tumultuous history of the EU's emissions trading scheme for those who would craft a cap-and-trade scheme in the United States, as well as more general lessons about the economic impact of climate change policies. In particular, he notes that the countries in the EU that have pursued the most ambitious climate change policies (Germany and the Nordics) have not suffered economically as a result.

In Chapter 8 on sustainable urban transport, Ralph Buehler and John Pucher compare public policies in Germany and the United States that affect transportation behaviors and patterns of land use. They begin with a broad comparison of patterns of transportation in the United States and Western Europe, which highlights just how car dependent America is relative to European countries. They then turn their focus to a detailed comparison of transportation policy in the United States and Germany, a country that is comparable to the United States in many relevant respects but which has a far more sustainable transport system. To illustrate the impact of sustainable transport policy at the local level, they offer a detailed case study of Freiburg, Germany, a leading innovator in sustainable transport. Finally, they conclude by drawing seven specific lessons for the United States from the German experience. They emphasize that while it is unlikely that the United States will adopt German-style transport-sustainability policies at a national level, many American municipalities have adopted some of these policies at a local level.

In Chapter 9, Steven Hill turns the focus from public policy to the political process itself—the very process that may determine whether any of the policies discussed in this book are successfully reformed. Hill offers vigorous critiques of many American political institutions—from the system of campaign finance, to the winner-take-all electoral system, to the antimajoritarian Senate, to political media institutions—arguing that they increasingly undermine the quality of the democratic process in the United States. He points out important shortcomings of European democracies but maintains that many of them are “better adapted than America's democracy for the demands of representation, consensus seeking and policy formation in the twenty-first century.” Hill recognizes that US and European democratic institutions are

rooted in distinctive histories and cultures and that profound reforms of US political institutions, such as moving from first-past-the-post to proportional representation voting or relying on public financing of campaigns, are political nonstarters. Nevertheless, he argues that the United States might feasibly introduce and benefit from a number of microlevel democratic institutions that have proven effective in European countries, including automatic voter registration, Question Time before Congress, or more free media time for candidates.

In his concluding chapter, Kent Weaver draws on existing literatures on the policymaking process and on policy diffusion and learning to explore how and under what conditions American policymakers might effectively use lessons from Europe in crafting policy. Weaver begins by emphasizing the diversity of public policy across European democracies. There is never a single *lesson from Europe*: in any policy domain, various European countries will offer examples of effective and ineffective policies, ones that might be emulated and ones to be avoided. Weaver then emphasizes that in the United States, there are high political and institutional barriers to adopting policy lessons from Europe, even when European experiences offer clear and potentially transferable lessons. Weaver argues that those who would see the United States draw lessons—positive or negative ones—from Europe must craft strategies designed to overcome those barriers. He discusses a few such strategies: focusing on how policy reforms should be framed and how reform advocates might take advantage of *policy windows* to push for incremental reforms, sometimes at the state or local rather than the federal level.

Conclusion

The policy areas explored in this book—on work–family reconciliation, health care, pensions, labor markets, immigration, climate change, transportation, and political reform—are only a small sampling of the many policy areas where the United States might usefully draw lessons from Europe. Many other policy areas are ripe for such analysis. For example, we might look to Europe for lessons for education reform, investigating why it is that the United States lags behind European countries in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) comparative assessment of student achievement in math and science⁸ and why some European countries, such as Finland, regularly score at or near the top of the pack (Sahlberg 2011). We might investigate the role that cooperative industrial relations institutions such as *codetermination* played in helping Germany avoid a spike in unemployment during the global economic downturn and achieve tremendous success as an exporter (Panknin 2012; Rattner 2011; Schulz 2012). We might compare US and European criminal justice policies to better understand why the US rate of incarceration is so much higher than that of any west European country and to consider whether there may be

more effective (and far less costly) alternatives to mass incarceration (Hartney 2006; Mauer 2003; Tonry 2009). Likewise, we might usefully draw lessons from policy areas ranging all the way from antipoverty policies (Alesina and Glaeser 2007; Waldfogel 2010), to policies designed to prevent teen pregnancy (Darroch et al. 2001), to drug control policies (MacCoun and Reuter 2001), to counterterrorism policies (Art and Richardson 2007; Crenshaw 2010), to policies designed to combat racism while preserving freedom of speech (Bleich 2011), to policies to respond to banking crises (Jackson 2008), to the impact of austerity policies (Blyth 2013).

We make no claim that the case studies presented here are a representative sample of policymaking across Europe. Though the authors analyze policy in a number of European countries and at the EU level, the focus is clearly weighted to northern and western Europe, with less emphasis on lessons from southern or eastern Europe (though Orenstein's chapter is an exception). Finally, though Schain's and Orenstein's chapters consider clear negative lessons from Europe (mistakes to be avoided) and though other chapters also explore cautionary lessons, on the whole the case studies presented in this book focus on positive lessons.

Our emphasis on positive lessons from northern and western Europe is deliberate. Of course, European countries have many negative policy lessons to offer—from labor market regulation in Spain, to fiscal policy in Greece, to banking regulation in Ireland, to governance of a monetary union at the EU level. But given all the negative press coverage of Europe in recent years, these stories are relatively well known, while the many successes of European policymaking are less well recognized. Thus, our emphasis on the positive serves as a corrective and a reminder that—for all the serious problems facing the EU and its member states today—the United States still has many positive lessons to learn from European public policies.

Endnotes

1. There were of course important exceptions such as the analyses by T. R. Reid in his book, *The Healing of America* (2009), and the 2008 PBS *Frontline* documentary "Sick Around the World," and by Princeton economist Uwe Reinhardt in his *New York Times Economix* blog posts (<http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com>). But such analyses received little attention in the broader public debates over health care reform.
2. On standard of living see the United Nations Human Development Program's Human Development Index (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/humandev>); on economic competitiveness see the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness index (www.weforum.org/issues/global-competitiveness); on the quality of governance see the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (<http://info.worldbank.org/governance/wgi/index.asp>).
3. For more nuanced analyses of the European Social Model see Baldwin 2009; Hill 2010.

4. Twenty-five of the thirty-four member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the *club* of the world's wealthy democracies, are European countries; twenty-one of them are members of the EU.
5. For overviews of this literature see Schafer 1991; Lipset 1996; Koh 2002; Pease 2009.
6. Lipset was echoing a sentiment expressed earlier by Rudyard Kipling in a very different context. In his 1891 poem, "The English Flag," Kipling wrote, "And what should they know of England who only England know?" Students of British policymaking often invoke that phrase as a justification for comparative studies.
7. For examples of this literature see Waltman 1980; Rose 1991, 1993, 2002, 2005; Bennett and Howlett 1992; Haas 1992; Hall 1993; Dolowitz and Marsh 1996, 2000; Stone 1999; Evans and Davies 1999; Weyland 2006; James and Lodge 2003; Freeman 2007; Volden, Ting, and Carpenter 2008; Dunlop 2009; Dwyer and Ellison 2009; Gilardi, Fuglister, and Luyet 2009; Gilardi 2010.
8. The United States regularly scores at the bottom on math and science on the OECD's PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) tests. (See www.oecd.org/pisa)

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