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**Book Review: Louise Davidson-Schmich, *Becoming Party Politicians: Eastern German State Legislators in the Decade Following Democratization*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006.
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Dan Hough

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that the PT's leadership has made political choices that have prematurely neutered their social democratic project. The jury on this is still out, as it is on the broader question of the prospects for social democracy in developing countries.

Ultimately, however, this book is an antidote to fatalism. It is also very timely – the recent election of left-of-centre governments across Latin America offers the potential for further social democratic experimentation in the developing world. These are countries with different social structures and political systems, but are now set on a broadly social democratic course. These new governments have the opportunity to test the boundaries of what is possible and establish whether the social democratic success stories discussed here can be replicated or even surpassed elsewhere.

Rick Muir
Institute for Public Policy Research

Louise Davidson-Schmich, *Becoming Party Politicians: Eastern German State Legislators in the Decade Following Democratization*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006. ISBN 0 268 02585 1.

Much has been written since 1990 on the transfer of West Germany's institutional framework to the virgin democratic territory of what was once the German Democratic Republic. Much has also been written on how difficult it has been to convince eastern Germans to love the aforementioned institutions as their own. Louise Davidson-Schmich, Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Miami, puts one particular part of the transfer process under the analytical microscope; how have eastern German elites, socialized in a completely different political environment, adapted to the nuances and norms of behaviour that are required of them in the 'West German' political system? Do eastern German and western German politicians' contrasting values actually matter in terms of their political behaviour and substantive policy choices? Do Easterners gradually become 'Westernized', or is there any evidence to suggest that the institutions themselves either change (even if only in a relatively small way) or produce different behavioural and policy outcomes? These questions are obviously of interest to students of German politics, but they should also be of interest to both academics and practitioners interested in how democratic representation functions and how Western governments might want to impose it in non-democratic countries of the world.

Davidson-Schmich's thought-provoking analysis is based on a wide and varied set of sources, and she has left virtually no stone unturned in testing her hypotheses. She produces a systematic analysis of roll-call data across eastern and western German sub-national parliaments (*Landtage*) over time, deepening her analysis with data accumulated from interviews with politicians from all of the

major parliamentary groups (including parliamentarians from the liberal FDP and Greens – who can be few and far between in eastern Germany in particular – and even the German People's Union [DVU] and Südschleswigsche Wählerverband in Schleswig-Holstein!). The data from which the conclusions are drawn could, therefore, hardly be more impressive. Davidson-Schmich does not, however, let the data alone do the talking; she embeds her analysis in the literature on political socialization and develops hypotheses from sound readings of what has been produced before. She is particularly good at mixing bigger picture analysis of long-term trends in the behaviour of eastern German legislators with fascinating evidence on individual cases such as attitudes to, and behaviour towards, the passing of the same-sex partnership law.

Becoming Party Politicians is, therefore, a book that should be of interest to a much wider readership than those simply interested in German politics. Davidson-Schmich's convincing argument that institutions clearly do 'matter' may not be new in itself, but her attempt to understand what that means in the context of socializing eastern German legislators' behaviour is highly revealing. She convincingly illustrates that eastern German legislators have aligned themselves with, and have internalized, the norms and patterns of behaviour that came with the creation of democratic structures in 1990. She also highlights that the gap between eastern German citizens' values and those of their representatives is large and, so it would appear, unlikely to close any time soon. This finding alone should give 'democratic planners' the world over plenty of food for thought, because, while revolution in Germany is clearly not on the cards quite yet, widespread dissatisfaction with the democratic process would seem to be a natural development. The monograph is very well written and the argument both clear and persuasive. It is, therefore, an excellent piece of scholarship and will be accessible to advanced undergraduates, postgraduates, academics and also, should they be interested, practitioners the world over.

Dan Hough
University of Sussex