

Chapters 3–7 lay out the empirical evidence for the theory proposed. Chapter 3 uses survey data to show that Americans who “have experienced problems with their drinking water trust government less, and that failures in tap water provision predict local commercial water demand” (p. 32). Chapter 4 builds on this analysis, looking specifically at the location and use of drinking-water kiosks. The results show that “the effects of tap water failure on public trust transcend political and service area boundaries. In other words, tap water problems in one place affect citizen-consumer perceptions of tap water in other places” (pp. 32–33). Chapter 5 shows that when people distrust government, they are more likely to “exit” from tap water services to the commercial drinking water market, and that this choice is even more likely for low-income and nonwhite people. Further, the authors show that as bottled water sales rise, voter turnout declines. Chapter 6 shows that the groups most likely to be politically marginalized and alienated, and thus more likely to purchase bottled water, vary throughout the United States and have particular socioeconomic geographies. Chapter 7 shows that the cycle can be reversed and that “political support for public investment in water infrastructure is greater among people who drink tap water and lower among commercial water drinkers” (p. 33).

In chapter 8, the authors synthesize their findings and explore strategies for activating this virtuous cycle. They identify three key priorities for governments and utilities interested in restoring legitimacy and trust: excellence, openness, and equity.

This book and the arguments it puts forward are compelling and original. The authors draw on a wide range of data sources, creatively integrating these to ask novel and important questions about the status of public services and democracy in the United States. It provides a new and needed perspective on the importance of drinking water and the long-lasting and deep-reaching consequences of our failure to maintain these systems, particularly for low-income and racial minority communities. The book should be of interest to students and scholars of environmental justice, public policy, public administration, and urban politics; drinking water equity advocates; and practitioners in drinking water management.

Service above Self: Women Veterans in American Politics. By Erika Cornelius Smith. Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2022. 248p. \$32.95 cloth.
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America’s women veterans have emerged as a political force in the past decade—challenging popular conceptions of what women do in the military and, just maybe,

changing the political landscapes for their parties. Less than 2% of American women are military veterans, yet more than 4% of women in Congress have served in the military. Why is this? Who are these women who are excelling in America’s most traditionally masculine halls of power? Where do they come from? And how does their military service shape their candidacies and policies? These are the questions Erika Cornelius Smith’s new book, *Service above Self: Women Veterans in American Politics*, explores.

The emergence of these new candidates comes on the heels of a period of declining representation of military veterans in Congress, and concurrent with an expansion of women’s legally recognized roles in the U.S. military. Anecdotally, these women may be more electable than other candidates when nominated in purple districts. In 2018, Democrat Mikie Sherrill, a former Navy pilot, flipped New Jersey’s eleventh district, after more than three decades of it being in Republican hands. Or they may simply be more willing to run for Congress than other women, thus overcoming a problem Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox highlighted in their 2005 book *It Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don’t Run for Office*. To date, there are no published quantitative analyses testing these theories about veteran women as candidates. While that isn’t Smith’s purpose, she maintains that the factors political scientists have identified as preventing women from running for political office may not apply to women who volunteered for service in the male dominated U.S. military.

Smith provides a careful historical overview of women veterans in Congress to provide context for their military and congressional service and trace the impact of their military experience on their political campaigns and priorities. Her analysis is centered on two Republicans, Senator Joni Ernst and former Senator Martha McSally, and two Democrats, Senator Tammy Duckworth and former Representative Tulsi Gabbard, and draws on a variety of primary and secondary sources. Using a more personal approach, Smith traces each woman’s route first to military service and later to Congress, and the forces in her own life that influenced this trajectory and her eventual legislative agenda and approach. The thread that runs throughout the book, unifying the chapters, is the debt that the current generation of veteran women lawmakers owes to those who came before them (p. 163), and how they have paved the way for more American women to succeed in military and political service.

Smith’s chapter on Joni Ernst is representative of the approach she takes to contextualizing the congresswomen’s legislative agendas. Ernst’s support for expanding access to mental healthcare, might at first seem to stem from her military service and its association with PTSD, but Smith traces this instead to Ernst’s childhood in Iowa’s farm country and the high rates of suicide among farmers

(p. 88), while linking her bipartisan work with former Senator Claire McCaskill on sexual assault to her experiences both in college and in the military. Smith notes that Ernst, though “rated the second most conservative member of the Senate in 2019” (p. 112), proved willing to break with her party on issues of military readiness and well-being, as she did when she came out against the Trump administration’s ban on trans service members.

The biographies of these four Congresswomen are eminently readable and informative, as is an additional chapter on the so-called “badasses” of the 116th Congress: three military veterans, Mikie Sherrill, Elaine Luria, and Chrissy Houlahan, and two former CIA agents, Elissa Slotkin and Abigail Spanberger. Smith evaluates all the women on their own terms—asking how they viewed their service in the military and Congress and how it fit within a larger tradition of “service above self.” The biographies are well-researched and will be of general interest to those interested in veterans, women, or women veterans as candidates and legislators. Smith addresses these women’s childhoods, military service, role models, entrances into politics, and congressional service, including the ways in which their military service impacts their legislative approaches and priorities. McSally’s class action lawsuit against the Pentagon for its policy requiring women serving in Saudi Arabia to wear the abaya is well known. Smith puts this lawsuit into the context of earlier suits filed by military women that expanded women’s career opportunities in the military, and McSally’s own congressional efforts to further gender equality in the U.S. military.

Smith’s handling of the Congresswomen, while humanizing, is perhaps too diplomatic at times. Notably, Smith repeatedly highlights Gabbard’s stated commitment to treat all Americans with respect (p. 150), stresses the “internal consistency in Gabbard’s ideology and principled approach to foreign policy” (p. 155), and emphasizes her commitment to the principle of “service above self”—Gabbard’s campaign motto (p. 151). Yet the evidence Smith presents, including Gabbard’s reference to fellow Representative Adam Schiff as a “domestic terrorist” and her inconsistent takes on foreign policy—if not Smith’s assessment of it—undermine this claim. Regardless, even when Smith pulls her punches in the analysis, she doesn’t shy away from presenting the candidates’ foibles, from Gabbard’s gaffes to McSally’s reversal on Trump to win her Arizona primary.

The thread that binds this book together is the concept of a tradition of women who serve their country through both military or quasi-military service *and* congressional service. Smith presents the veteran Congresswomen of the post-Gulf War era as a continuation of a trend begun much earlier. U.S. women’s military and quasi-military service goes back to the Revolutionary War, in which Margaret Corbin and Mary Hayes took the places of their fallen husbands while many others served in support roles.

Smith traces the roots of the current generation to veterans of the World Wars and subsequent eras, noting that women created the first veterans’ organization for women in 1921—codifying their identity as “servicewomen.” Smith identifies two cohorts of women. Ruth Bryan Owen, Edith Nourse Rogers, and Helen Douglas Mankin served in medical roles in the first World War before playing pivotal roles as Congresswomen in opening official military service to women. Smith’s second cohort consists of Margaret Chase Smith, who, while not serving in any quasi-military capacity, was nevertheless critical in expanding women’s military service while in Congress; and Mary Catherine Small Long, who served in the Women Accepted for Volunteer Military Service (WAVES) in World War II, but did not join Congress until 1985. Smith’s biographies of these earlier servicewomen in Congress are particularly valuable for the archival research that underpins them.

This book is the first to attempt to understand what motivates the veteran women in Congress and how they got there—though it doesn’t address those whose campaigns fell short. Smith’s exploratory analysis builds on work that separately assesses women in Congress and veterans in Congress, notably Jeremy Teigen’s (2018) *Why Veterans Run: Military Service in American Presidential Elections, 1789–2016*, and Peter Feaver and Richard Kohn’s (2001) edited volume *Soldiers and Citizens: The Civil-Military Gap and American National Security*. Smith is breaking new ground here, and this book has a place on the shelf of anyone studying this new wave of veteran Congresswomen.

Persuading the Supreme Court: The Significance of Briefs in Judicial Decision Making. By Morgan L. W. Hazelton and Rachael K. Hinkle. Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2022. 275p. \$32.95 paper.

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Morgan Hazelton and Rachael Hinkle’s new book, *Persuading the Supreme Court: The Significance of Briefs in Judicial Decision Making*, examines one of the remaining parts of the Supreme Court’s judicial process yet to receive a book-length treatment in political science: briefs on the merits. This is a significant gap in the literature given that these briefs are the primary opportunity for attorneys to inform and persuade the justices without interruption. Hazelton and Hinkle’s goal is to provide a thorough understanding of how the written information received by the justices influences their decision making, which the authors successfully do by the end of their book. To accomplish this mammoth feat, Hazelton and Hinkle collected more than 32,000 briefs from litigants (merits briefs) and outside interests (amicus briefs) on all cases