

## Society's Books of Note

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Cecilia L. Ridgeway, *Status: Why Is It Everywhere? Why Does It Matter?* New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 2019. \$35.00. 204 pp.

Status is ubiquitous in modern life, yet our understanding of its role as a driver of inequality is limited. In *Status*, sociologist and social psychologist Cecilia Ridgeway examines how this ancient and universal form of inequality influences today's ostensibly meritocratic institutions and why it matters. Ridgeway illuminates the complex ways in which status affects human interactions as we work together towards common goals, such as in classroom discussions, family decisions, or workplace deliberations.

Frank Dikötter, *How to Be a Dictator: The Cult of Personality in the Twentieth Century*. London: Bloomsbury, 2019. \$28.00. 304 pp.

Frank Dikötter examines the cults and propaganda surrounding twentieth-century dictators, from Hitler and Stalin to Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung. These men were the founders of modern dictatorships, and they learned from each other and from history to build their regimes and maintain their public images. Their dictatorships, in turn, have influenced leaders in the twenty-first century, including Vladimir Putin, Xi Jinping, and Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

Greg Weiner, *Old Whigs: Burke, Lincoln, and the Politics of Prudence*. New York: Encounter Books, 2019. \$23.99. 184 pp.

At a time when American politics, and American conservatism in particular, teems with a desire for boldness but also an innate resistance to schemes of social or political transformation, this book answers with a fuller and richer account of prudence as it emerges in the thought and action of two of the great statesmen and thinkers of modern times.

Deirdre Nansen McCloskey, *Why Liberalism Works: How True Liberal Values Produce a Freer, More Equal, Prosperous World for All*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019. \$28.00. 400 pp.

The greatest challenges facing humankind, according to Deirdre McCloskey, are poverty and tyranny, both of which hold people back. Arguing for a return to true liberal values, McCloskey defends, and demonstrates how embracing the ideas first espoused by eighteenth-century philosophers like Locke, Smith, Voltaire, and Wollstonecraft is good for everyone. In her view, liberalism leads to equality, but equality does not necessarily lead to liberalism. Liberalism is an optimistic philosophy that depends on the power of rhetoric rather than coercion, and on ethics, free speech, and facts in order to thrive.

Jonathan Todres and Angela Diaz, *Preventing Child Trafficking: A Public Health Approach*. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press. \$44.95. 320 pp.

Child trafficking is widely recognized as one of the critical issues of our day, prompting calls to action at the global, national, and local levels. Yet it is unclear whether the strategies and tools used to counter this exploitation—most of which involve law enforcement and social services—have reduced its prevalence. Todres and Diaz explore how the public health field can play a comprehensive, integrated role in preventing, identifying, and responding to child trafficking. They argue that public health frameworks offer important insights into the problem.

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