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REVIEW OF MARCHING ON WASHINGTON: THE FORGING OF AN AMERICAN POLITICAL TRADITION

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Marching on Washington: The Forging of an American Political Tradition.

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Protest movements routinely organize mass marches and rallies in the nation's capital, confident in their right to do so and hopeful that a large turnout will help them build momentum and achieve their goals. This cleverly conceived, well-researched, well-written book shows how these assumptions are the product of past movements and marches. In *Marching on Washington*, Lucy G. Barber looks at a number of marches from Coxey's Army for jobs and public works in 1894 to the Spring Offensive antiwar marches of 1971, examining the complex interactions of protesters, political leaders, the mass media, and bystander publics.

Barber expressly emphasizes the changing spatial politics of the capital and the strategic uses of American citizenship. She develops these themes well. Barber shows how the use of public space in Washington has been a negotiated process, based on the changing physical layout and population of the city and on evolving strategies and tactics of protesters and the responses of authorities.

There is a mutual interaction between this process and the symbolic expression of citizenship and group identity.

In addition to Coxey's Army and the protests against the Vietnam War, Barber devotes chapters to the Woman Suffrage Procession and Pageant of 1913, war veterans' Bonus Army of 1932, the planning for the Negro March on Washington and its cancelation in 1941, and, of course, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom of August 28, 1963, whose recent 40th anniversary drew much national attention and commemoration.

These marches are interesting and important as events that have been more or less effective in changing policy, culture, and movements. They are also useful as windows into specific movements, the social movement sector, and American political culture. It is fascinating to compare and contrast the collective identities, self-presentation, goals, and issue framing of the various marches and the movements that gave rise to them.

In these chapters, Barber looks at the growing legitimation of mass protest, the routinization of the relationship between protesters, media, and authorities, changes in the goals of protesters and policy change to movement building, the development of a historical memory and the deliberate use of historical references among protesters, and the outcomes of these marches. She is cautious about developing broad conclusions about these themes, but she provides sufficient depth and detail in the individual chapters to enrich her brief discussion in a concluding chapter.

Barber, a historian, does not attempt to engage the sociological literature, although judging from her bibliographic essay at the end of the book, she has used some key works in the social movement field and other fields to help develop her major themes. Given the strength of the analytically informed narratives of each march, I think she could have ventured into some theory building with good results.

I also would have liked a fuller discussion of how Barber selected these specific marches. The impression she leaves is that these marches clearly fit some criteria of size and historical importance, but it would be useful to make these or other criteria explicit. Despite this concern, the cases she chooses are interesting and important, and Barber writes about them with intelligence and sensitivity. Therefore, I think that sociologists will be able to use this book to enrich theory as well as our understanding of these important historical episodes.