

PLSC 541, Fall 2008
Baumgartner

Questions for week 15

Readings: Teles, *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement*

1. Review Teles' research. What did he do, exactly? What was the research design? Does it flow from the theory? Is it exhaustive, suggestive, or what? Are the measures appropriate? Is everything important to the theory included? Does he convince?
2. What is the motivating question that drives the research? Is it practical or theoretical? Is there some of each? Is the book more interesting because of its substantive findings or because of its theoretical implications?
3. Could you call this a book about a social movement? Can you have a social movement within a profession? Are theories of social movements useful here? Is rational choice or the discipline of economics a social movement? Are there similarities? Is it really about a mobilization within the legal community, or about the ambitions of economists to affect how everyone else thinks? (These questions may appear strange but they are serious questions to think of as you read the book.)
4. Teles has suggested that the archives of the Ford Foundation and other major philanthropies are treasure-troves of information that could inform many dissertations in the future. Discuss, based on his analysis of the actions of philanthropies. Is that a worthwhile area for political scientists to explore?

Note: The author will be with us in class. Class will be moved to start at 5pm and we should be done by 7:00 or 7:30 so he can get some dinner. We'll need to confirm the schedule based on your own availabilities.