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Title: Book Review: Good Governance Gone Bad : How Nordic Adaptability Leads to Excess. By Darius Ornston.

Year: 2020

Version: Published version

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Please cite the original version:

Husu, H.-M. (2020). Book Review: Good Governance Gone Bad : How Nordic Adaptability Leads to Excess. By Darius Ornston.. *American Journal of Sociology*, 125(5), 1440-1442.

<https://doi.org/10.1086/707120>

between settled monopoly and total anarchy (see p. 239)—as both an empirical mistake and a theoretical dead end. As such, this is an essential book for scholars of the state, one that stands to deepen sociological conversations on legitimate violence, culture, and inequality.

Good Governance Gone Bad: How Nordic Adaptability Leads to Excess. By Darius Ornston. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2018. Pp. vii+202. \$95.00 (cloth); \$31.95 (paper).

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The Nordic countries have received praise for their successful economies, generous welfare states, and policy practices that have generated high levels of social trust and the best possible results in terms of social and gender equality. Countries such as Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and Iceland are regarded as exemplary and are rarely criticized by social policy makers, politicians, or academics. But in *Good Governance Gone Bad: How Nordic Adaptability Leads to Excess*, Darius Ornston calls into question the one-sided view of Nordic countries as representatives of good governance and economic success, drawing attention to unacknowledged weaknesses in the Nordic model. According to Ornston, these weaknesses are rooted in the very policy practices that are so often applauded.

Referring to literature on small states, Ornston understands Nordic countries as characterized by dense, interpersonal, and cohesive networks that enable them to quickly adopt new ideas and innovations, and to change the direction of economic policies. Public and private sector actors—such as policy makers, political parties, employers, employers' associations, and labor unions—form tight-knit networks characterized by cooperation and consensus seeking. It is this highly interconnected nature of Nordic societies that makes them quick to carry out institutional reforms when needed. Compared with southern European countries such as Greece or Portugal—which are also small states in this sense—Nordic countries are less polarized, fragmented, and divided and are better able to implement radical institutional changes.

For instance, Finland managed to emerge from a low-technology, resource-based economy to become one of Europe's top-ranking high-tech producers in the wake of Nokia's success in the 2000s. Similarly, Iceland transformed itself from a financial backwater that mainly invested in the fishing industry into a global player in the banking sector. Ornston argues that these types of reform are carried out through three methods. (1) With the politics of persuasion, networks effectively mobilize support and convince their opponents, for example, on the basis of shared values or high levels of trust. In Iceland, market-oriented economists and private sector actors were able to convince the government,

public sector actors, and labor unions to accept their agenda for trade liberalization, financial deregulation, and privatization, as well as to launch a successful campaign to shape public opinion. (2) The politics of compensation entails side payments to actors whose support is crucial, ensuring that forthcoming benefits are widely distributed. In Iceland's case, opponents such as labor unions were silenced with wage increases and compensating social policies, leading to weak opposition and high consensus concerning radical market reforms. (3) The politics of coordination is also needed to secure reforms, as tight-knit networks accelerate and direct policy practices.

However, the radical reforms that were carried out in Iceland and Finland proved to be highly problematic. Iceland focused too narrowly on its aggressive investment banks and spent far more than it was earning, leading to a collective bankruptcy that shocked Iceland's economy. Finland made itself vulnerable by mobilizing its public and private sector resources around Nokia, which was not able to handle the emergence of the iPhone. When Nokia fell, Finland's economy suffered significantly. Unlike other small countries, such as Austria and Switzerland, which have a tendency toward gradual institutional change and economic stability, the Nordic model and its capacity for rapid restructuring inclines these countries to "too much change" (p. 19).

Finland and Iceland are important examples of the bad governance that Ornston considers a higher risk in the Nordic model than elsewhere. In this fascinating, well-argued book, he provides accurate and welcome insights into the dysfunctional aspects of Nordic governance. He stresses that poor policy choices made within dense, cohesive networks—as in the cases of Finland and Iceland—easily lead to overinvestment, overshooting, and economic crises with serious outcomes. Central characteristics of the Nordic model, such as consensus seeking and high levels of trust, can easily turn into top-down implementations of power and forced agreements in which opponents are silenced and their criticisms glossed over. This implies the lack of an effective counterforce to elite-driven new ideas and policy innovations, which as Ornston argues "can be carried to dangerous extremes" (p. 19). Ornston considers it typical of Nordic countries to have consensual political systems, cooperative economic institutions, and high levels of social capital characterized by a narrowed gap between elites and ordinary citizens (p. 12). But do the cases of Finland and Iceland not prove that these countries are actually far more elite driven than is generally acknowledged and may even represent a Nordic form of crony capitalism? This raises the question of what makes nonelite actors compliant with upper-level decision-making. The politics of compensation is not the only answer, because not everyone wins. Ornston points out that the fear of exclusion and outsider status also suppresses opposing views. This seems accurate, but it merely scratches the surface.

Although Ornston focuses on Nordic policy making and reforms with regard to economic outcomes, his analysis can also be applied to other policy domains. At the beginning of the 2000s, Finland was a top performer in Pisa tests, but its ranking is now sliding. While the decline cannot be attributed to any one factor, recent discussions in Finland have drawn attention to "too

much change” in the national core curriculum, where the Ministry of Education has been emphasizing digitalization and other reforms. The critical views of educationalists, psychologists, and schoolteachers were not sufficiently taken into account. Ornston provides a framework to think through the less desired outcomes of these reforms within a system that previously functioned relatively well but that now shows signs of overshooting. Ornston’s book is a must-read not only for academics but also for Nordic policy makers, businesspeople, and all institutional actors who are keen to make rapid reforms in the name of innovation and change.

Understanding Trans Health: Discourse, Power and Possibility. By Ruth Pearce. Bristol: Policy Press, 2018. Pp. viii+258. \$105.00 (cloth); \$45.95 (paper).

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In *Understanding Trans Health*, Ruth Pearce examines how transgender (hereafter referred to as trans) patients mobilize knowledge and information online when navigating the U.K. health care system. For readers unfamiliar with the structure of trans health services in the United Kingdom, trans people can use the National Health System for transition-related services such as hormones, hair removal, and surgeries. However, as Pearce suggests, the existence of trans health clinics and services should not be conflated with trans people accessing health care without significant barriers. Instead, there is a clear disjuncture between policy and practice. To help disentangle these dynamics, Pearce builds on the concept of cisgenderism, or prejudiced ideologies that assume everyone has a cis experience of the world. This concept allows Pearce to examine the individual and cultural systems that shape trans experience in health care settings. In so doing, she demonstrates how medical communities are becoming more flexible in their approach to understanding trans, but significant barriers remain for those trans patients who cannot, or choose not to, fit within normative and binary understandings of trans embodiment.

Pearce focuses on three stakeholders within this study—community groups, trans activists, and health professionals—and shows how these groups bring differing knowledge bases and concerns to trans health. Some of these groups understand “trans” as condition or movement, which fundamentally shapes health care experienced at the individual level. Trans as condition assumes that trans is fixed and fixable and that trans bodies can be resolved through medical interventions. In contrast, trans as movement situates trans as fluid, changing, and malleable. This expansive redefinition of trans emphasizes change and contestation, rather than trans as a predetermined outcome.