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## RECENT PUBLICATIONS

**THE PRACTICE OF CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT: VINCENT OSTROM'S QUEST TO UNDERSTAND HUMAN AFFAIRS.** Edited by Filippo Sabetti, Barbara Allen, and Mark Sproule-Jones. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books. 2009. Pp. ix, 261. \$28.95. Paying tribute to more than six decades of scholarship by political science Professor Vincent Ostrom, this thought-provoking new book collects articles influenced by his work. The collection — the second book from a conference honoring Professor Ostrom — includes three pieces penned by him, as well as eight pieces by other scholars. The collection highlights Professor Ostrom's career-long interest in the “constitutional level” of political analysis, which recognizes that “the choice of the rules of a game is a crucial variable in determining the nature of a game” (p. 15). Professor Ostrom forcefully argues that, “[i]f human beings are to be masters of their own fate, they can do so only if they learn to discern the causes of their own wretchedness, to paraphrase Tocqueville, and gain access to alternative ways to restructure patterns of order in human societies” (p. 56). The fact that the contributors to this collection are able to apply constitutional level analysis to topics as eclectic as the Alaska state constitution (pp. 73–104), policing (pp. 183–201), and local governance in Africa (pp. 203–26) is a testament to its wide applicability and relevance to struggles across time.

**RETHINKING ASYLUM: HISTORY, PURPOSE, AND LIMITS.** By Matthew E. Price. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press. 2009. Pp. x, 279. \$32.99. Over the past fifteen years, national asylum policies have shifted in two opposing directions: while courts have started to expand the groups of people offered asylum, popular reactions to this expansion have caused national legislatures to severely restrict the number of incoming refugees. In the context of this tension, Matthew Price uses the history of asylum and the policy purposes underlying it to critique both trends. His engaging new book advocates for a return to “asylum's traditional focus on persecuted people” (p. 11) but at the same time argues against recent restrictive measures. Price grapples with various circumstances and hard cases to develop a framework that defines persecution as “(1) serious harm that is (2) inflicted or tolerated by official agents (3) for illegitimate reasons” (p. 107). With this framework, Price offers policymakers, academics, judges, and the general public a clear and reasoned perspective on how to view asylum — not just as a humanitarian solution to extreme hardship, but also as a political tool to condemn oppressive regimes and induce reform.