

partisan display and consequences of having invited Mr Latham to launch the book.

If my trouble with the text can be reduced to one main difficulty then it is that I am left unsatisfied with the authors' support for their argument that citizenship is more than civics.

I so wanted to believe them but the undistinguished tone, the lack of colour, and the sparse use of sources other than the political all run counter to the claims made in the opening chapter of the book that citizenship is more than this. Unwittingly the authors are clearly more comfortable with the orthodox, 'official' line on citizenship than the brave new world that they would like to see.

Australian Citizenship is an uninspiring text written in leaden prose. I pity the undergraduates for whom this will no doubt become a set text.

**Reviewed by
D.J. Goodsir-Cullen**

Rebels with a Cause: Independents in Australian Politics

by **Brian Costar and Jennifer Curtin**
Sydney, UNSW Press, 2004,
96pp, \$16.95
ISBN 0 868 406 593,

Not many Australians wanted, nor thought they'd get, a House of Representatives in which independents would play a key role following the 2004 federal election. As it turned out, they didn't. But as Costar and Curtin point out in their introduction, independent politicians had been important in the governance of five states and one territory over the previous ten years, and had a significant presence in the Senate during much of that time.

While media attention on certain independents during the campaign was not enough to get them over the line, the three existing independents demonstrated the power of incumbency by being re-elected to the House of Representatives. The potential for them to hold the balance of power at some stage in the future, as their state and territory colleagues have done, remains.

Therefore, a comprehensive study of independent politicians—their motivation, those of their electors, and their impact on governance—would be a welcome addition to the literature. In its limited space, this volume touches on each of these issues, thereby going a small way towards providing such a study.

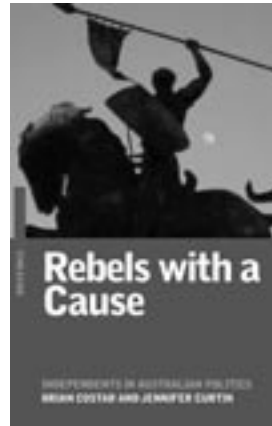
On the positive side, Costar and Curtin have provided a book that is an easy read and replete with interesting snippets of political history, mostly from the past two decades. The chapter on 'independents past'

delves further back over the past century, whetting the appetite for further reading. Few students of today would have heard of the likes of Coles and Wilson in the 1940s, while various fascinating mavericks from Queensland parade through in a sentence or two each.

The chapters on government and governance raise more questions than they answer. Costar and Curtin provide useful accounts of how independents came to hold the balance of power in various state parliaments, but there is little attempt to fathom whether the effects of this were positive or negative. The circumstances surrounding the Tasmanian Parliamentary Accord, and the memoranda of understanding in New South Wales and Victoria are given due treatment. However, it

was frustrating that the documents themselves were not reprinted in the book for reference. Their omission, and that of an index, was seemingly in the interests of keeping the book short and simple.

There is some original research in the form of qualitative interviews with a small selection of voters in regional electorates, a focus warranted on the basis of the location of independent members (both currently and historically). We discover views such as 'the Senate is just a remote and intangible thing' while the local independent member Peter Andren is seen as hard working and committed. It seems unlikely, however, that city and suburban voters, including those who vote for major parties, would think much differently. Previous surveys have established an ignorance of the parliamentary system, and the general popularity of local members notwithstanding a cynicism towards



politicians in general. Perhaps mass surveys rather than extensive interviews of a limited number of people would have better fleshed out why people voted for independents.

The question is raised as to whether voters support independent candidates in protest against policies seen as being anti-regional, or whether it is to keep pressure on the major parties to throw money at the bush. The authors manage to confuse themselves (and the unwary reader) in the process. For instance, in the introduction we read about how the major parties 'have largely abandoned traditional rural policies and now require regional communities to take responsibility for their own sustainability.' A few pages later, we hear of the hundreds of millions of dollars spent to appease regional and rural Australia in the lead-up to the 2001 election.

Three years down the track, we are no closer to the answer. It has been argued that the government continues to squander its fiscal dividend in regional areas, while failing to make tough reforms in agriculture that may benefit the country but leave certain areas (read 'marginal electorates') worse off. One suspects that it is an argument that Costar and Curtin hold little sympathy for.

Indeed, Costar and Curtin manage to portray themselves as rebels with a dubious cause via an unsubstantiated attack on (their own perception of) economic rationalism. Having criticised—quite validly—the arrogance of a senior public servant who argued that Australia could not afford to elect independents, the authors somehow draw a line from this view to 'an extremely "rationalist" paradigm derived from market economics, which regards efficiency rather than effectiveness as the ultimate good'.

Firstly, whether there is unfettered executive power over the parliament has little to do with any

particular form of economic policy. Secondly, few supporters of market economics of whom I am aware would laud its efficiency rather than its effectiveness. Perhaps Costar and Curtin should stick to their discipline of choice—politics.

This book is a start. A more complete study of independents in Australian politics, containing documentary material, a comprehensive index, and deeper analysis, awaits.

Reviewed by Peter Taft

In Defense of Globalization
by Jagdish Bhagwati
Oxford University Press
2004, 304pp, \$62.95
ISBN 0195 170253

Jagdish Bhagwati set out to write a book for the intelligent everyman that explores the nature and origins of anti-globalisation. He spends time 'understanding the anti-globalization movement and defining its concerns'. He explodes a few anti-globalisation myths and highlights the anti-globalist penchant for presenting fear as fact.

Wittily and eloquently, and using both empirical and anecdotal evidence, Bhagwati shows how globalisation helps the poor, reduces child labour, advances opportunities for women, improves third-world labour standards and wages, and aids environmental protection. So far so good. But nothing very good lasts forever.

Bhagwati has a fascination with putting a 'human face' on globalisation.

He argues 'Globalization has a human face, but we can make that face yet more agreeable'. This may or may not be the case, but how does one measure such a thing? Does a textile worker in Thailand really care whether globalisation is wearing a happy face, or whether they are paid three times what they could earn working in a rice paddy?

Bhagwati undoes his good work by warning of 'the perils of gung-ho capitalism' as if it was not gung-ho capitalism that brought about the aforementioned benefits of globalisation. From there it's all downhill. Bhagwati warns against the 'freeing of capital flows in haste without putting in place monitoring and regulatory mechanisms and banking reforms' and seems particularly haunted by the Asian economic crisis of the late 1990s. He uses this as an example of the dangers of 'imprudent